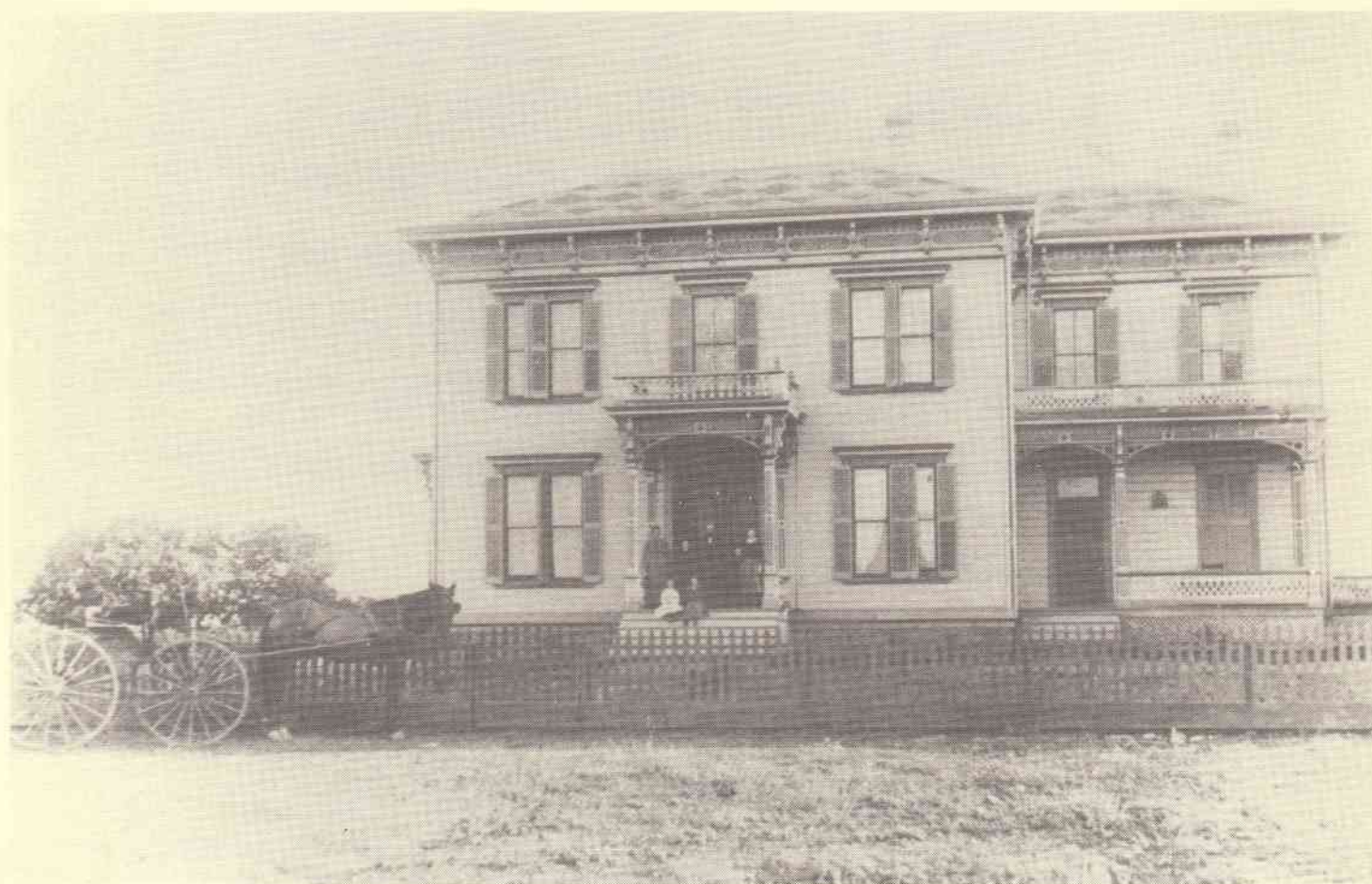


Vol. XLIV No. 1

Yuba City, California

January 2002



Sutter County Heritage
The Jacob Onstott House
Colusa Highway
Italiante Style - 1887



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*The year the director joined the Board.

The **Bulletin** is published quarterly by the Historical Society in Yuba City, California. Payment of annual membership dues provides you with a subscription to the **Bulletin** and the Museum's **Muse News** and membership in both the Society and the Museum.

The 2002 dues are payable as of January 1, 2002. Mail your check to the Community Memorial Museum at P. O. Box 1555, Yuba City, 95992-1555.

Student (under 18)/ Senior Citizen/Library	\$ 15
Individual	\$ 20
Organizations/Clubs	\$ 30
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President's Message

I am sure that the reality of "9-11" is the major focus of all of us as it is the beginning of a whole new challenge to America as well as to the world. We in Sutter County, while away from the center of tragedy and mass destruction, feel the acuteness of the horrible act of terrorism and feel the urgency to track down those responsible. Citizens first, and historians second, our role has been well-defined by the leaders of our country and I feel confident that Americans will rally to this challenge resulting in a continuation of a free society that we are so proud of.

Writing this message on Veterans' Day, 2001, America is experiencing a great resurgence of patriotism. It is our responsibility as patriotic Americans to acknowledge the role that our military veterans have played over the history of our country and for those now serving in "harm's way" in our war against terrorism.

In our efforts to preserve the past, it is important to become a part of the history challenges that we are faced with today. On this note, I ask that members of SCHS become involved in the challenge of eliminating the threat of terrorism in our country and in the world. The diverse ethnicity of our county allows each of us to reach beyond all social and religious beliefs and live in the harmony that has been a part of our lives since our forefathers came to settle in and develop Sutter County.

I am pleased to report that the Society continues to enjoy a positive posture; the Nicolaus meeting in October was a great success with a turnout of around 80 people. Learning about the first settlers from their direct ancestors was a rewarding experience. Thanks to the speakers and to all in attendance.

The directors are starting to plan for the January 15th meeting at the museum. We're looking forward to seeing you there!

John V. Reische
President

From the Editors

In this issue you can see the wonderful benefits to our readers when members provide us with old diaries and other documents written by their ancestors, or talk with us about their memories of Sutter County. Perhaps you too have something to share, a story to tell, an idea that we could develop. Don't be shy - call us!

Sharyl Simmons 743-3741
Phyllis Smith 671-3261

Director's Report

Happy New Year! We are looking forward to a great year at the Museum. It will mean the completion of some long-term projects, the agricultural wing exhibits and the memorial patio, which will cause great rejoicing throughout the land. This year will bring some great new exhibits and events at the Museum.

Be sure to get your membership renewal envelope to us if you have not already done so. The Museum is offering a great membership incentive this year. As a renewed or new member, you can come by the museum and pick up an attractive license plate frame that announces to the world that you are a member of the Community Memorial Museum. It is also a great way to let others know about the Museum, as well as proclaiming your support. We appreciate very much the support you demonstrate by becoming a member. Thank you!

We will start the year with the exhibit *John Smith, Ohio to California Gunmaker*. It will be up by mid-January and remain through February. Gun historian Bob Butterfield has been kind enough to loan the exhibit, which consists of the contents of a gunsmith's shop of a century ago. He purchased the shop contents, which had belonged to John Smith of Sheridan on Highway 65. Many of the tools originated in the early 19th century. The exhibit has been shown at gun shows in other parts of the country, and we are pleased to be able to present this fascinating part of local history here at the museum.

Be sure to locate and fill out the *Love's Messenger* form in this issue, because Valentine's Day is just around the corner. All your gift needs can be filled by the museum fundraiser *Love's Messenger* gift bags. They are suitable for men or women, sweethearts or special friends or as a special thank-you gift. They come in a beautiful heart-shaped bag with matching card, and, as always, they feature champagne or sparkling cider and chocolates. The little gifts that fill out the bag change each year, so there is no chance of repeating a gift given in prior years. The museum volunteers will deliver the gift bags anywhere in Sutter County and Marysville. Delivery is included in the \$25 price. What a wonderful surprise for that special someone and easy as pie for you! Just bring or mail the form with \$25 in check or cash to the museum, and it will all be taken care of efficiently.

We look forward to exhibiting the work of the Yuba City High School Art Department students in late March. Through a variety of media, the art students will take a close look at footwear. The resulting exhibit is called *Art and Sole*, and, along with some vintage footwear from the Museum collection, we expect it will be a *tour de force* of the world of shoes. An opening reception is set for Friday, March 22 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. Reserve that time to get a sneak peek at a fun-filled exhibit.

Julie Stark
Director

Memorials

In Memory of **"Red" Andrews**
Sam and Becky Anderson

In Memory of **Jack L. Arnoldy**
A. F. Petzinger

In Memory of **Barbara Baird**
Eleanor Holmes

In Memory of **Harry Barr**
Liz and Everett Berry

In Memory of **Margie Bishop**
Betty Taylor

In Memory of **Lila Crerar**
Marie E. Fuller

In Memory of **Melville Earhart**
Eleanor Holmes
Jim & Gene Taresh

In Memory of **Bev Epperson**
Peter and Margit Sands
Randy & Shirley Schnabel

In Memory of **Traynham Hatcher**
Helen Heenan & Family

In Memory of **Elizabeth Duffy Hawk**
Helen Heenan & Family

In Memory of **Paul Henson**
Dorothy Ettl

In Memory of **Thelma P. Johnson**
Howard & Ruth Anthony

In Memory of **Elizabeth Kajley**
Joni Adams
Christy Carlos

In Memory of **Elizabeth Kajley**
Dorothy Ettl
Ida J. Philpott
Marian Regli
Julie Stark
Danetta Washam

In Memory of **Eddie F. Lang**
Bob and Pauline Masera

In Memory of **Paul H. Maag**
Dorothy Ettl
Mr. and Mrs. L. G. Harris

In Memory of **Loretta McClurg**
Mrs. E. Ashley
Kenny Brasher
Marc DeNeo
Robert and Christine Fong
Larry Philip
Ida J. Philpott
Lynda Smallwood
Gene and Jim Taresh
Ron Tripe

In Memory of **Clyde A. Moore**
Tom & Norma Krull

In Memory of **Audrey Myers**
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Boone

In Memory of **Maureen Sannar**
Tom Pfeffer

In Memory of **Anna Ulmer**
Dorothy Ettl
Ida Philpott
Marian Regli

In Memory of **Frank Woody**
Jane and Fred Boone

October Meeting

Attendees at our October luncheon were treated to a wonderful roast pork meal and a marvelous presentation by four Sutter County residents.

Our speakers were Helen Heenan, Kenny Engasser, Loadel Piner and Bruce Capaul, who brought along his uncle, George Capaul. Each speaker presented information about how his or her family came to live in Sutter County. We hope to be able to offer more of their stories in upcoming issues of the Bulletin.

Historical Society's Permanent Storage

The Historical Society now has a large cabinet located in the Museum's new Agricultural Wing, dedicated to the permanent storage of SCHS records. This will provide a safe and central location for minutes, fiscal records, and other significant records the Society would like to maintain.

Treasurer Dorothy Ettl is reviewing old binders and folders and keeping what is relevant to the history of the Society. Members, particularly past officers, are asked to look through their personal records of the Society and either donate them to this project or allow Dorothy to make copies so that we can establish an accurate history of the SCHS. Right now our library is very limited and does not reflect a complete history. Of particular interest is a list of Charter Members and a copy of the charter granted by the State of California.

Please call Dorothy Ettl, 673-3412, or President John Reische, 674-8106, for information and/or donations. Thank you!

Looking for Back Issues of the Bulletin

Do you have back issues of the SCHS Bulletin and wonder what to do with them? We sometimes receive requests for back issues from libraries, museums and individuals. We recently sold an entire set of the Bulletin to the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana - at \$5 an issue, this can be quite a money-maker for the Society! However, we don't have enough copies of back issues, which means we must make photocopies from the Museum's records, and that is a very time-consuming chore. Any old issues you'd like to donate back to the Society would be greatly appreciated. You can leave them at the Museum, or call Phyllis Smith at 671-3261 to arrange for pick up.

January Meeting

Tuesday, January 15, 7:00 p.m.
Sutter County Memorial Museum
1333 Butte House Road, Yuba City

Our quarterly winter meeting will again be at the Museum. You are invited to come early and see the progress in the Agricultural Wing, where most of the artifacts are in place, the cabinets are installed and, most importantly, the John Sutter Gun and Bowie Knife exhibit is completed.

In keeping with our preservation project, Mr. Mike Hubbartt, President of the Middle Mountain Foundation, will be our speaker. He will tell us about the foundation, its purpose and objectives, and how it is helping to preserve the Sutter Buttes. He will have a slide presentation and be open for questions.

Following the program we will partake of desserts, under the direction of Vice President Audrey Breeding.

Community Memorial Museum Endowment Fund Acorn Fund

"The heart of a buried acorn...bursts forth from its prison wall." - W. J. Bryan

Now celebrating a quarter century of continued growth, the Museum stands at the threshold of an exciting new venture to preserve our heritage. The Community Memorial Museum Endowment Fund has been established to ensure the vitality of the Museum for the future.

Any gift to the Community Memorial Museum will be kept separate from, and in no way be commingled with any other assets of the Museum, its Commission, or the County. Endowment dollars remain intact as principal, with only earned income ever used. This fund's mission is to ensure continued long-term operation and sustained vitality of the Museum in its commitment to the preservation of the heritage of Sutter County.

Thus far the endowment fund has grown to nearly \$5,000. For information on the benefit to you, the community, and the Museum, contact Julie Stark at the Museum.

Update to the Thomas Dean Story

by
Don Burtis

The September 2001 Bulletin published an article I wrote about Thomas Dean. After I submitted the article for publication, I received new information from Jane Pinkerton, who was mentioned in the story. This information adds significantly to the story.

- **Correction**

In August of 1852, Thomas Dean and his uncle (Dean & Co.) bought 320 acres of land, not 640 as written in the bulletin on page 6.

- **Explaining the reasons Capt. Dean and his uncle traveled to Colombia**

They were on their way back to Ohio and planned to cross Colombia instead of Panama or any other route. This lesser known route included traveling partly by trail and partly by river. It can be acknowledged that Capt. Dean continued on after the death of his uncle and it is recorded that he delivered his uncle's will to his wife in Ohio (bottom of page 6).

- **Correction to Capt. Dean's pension application**

In checking a copy of the pension application submitted by Thomas Dean, some of the words he wrote can now be identified. The underlined words are corrections or additions to what was in the bulletin on page 7.

"In 49 came to Calif worked in Southern mine (not Sutter mine) until 51 when I came to Marysville. Started stable and came out to tules took up Hay ground sold out in 52."

- **Regarding personal information about me offered on page 3 (From the Editors)**

I would like to correct the part about the positions I held in the various Yuba City Schools where I served. I was never the Vice Principal of Tierra Buena School. I became principal of Tierra Buena School in 1973 and retired from that position in 1988. Prior to that I served as Principal of Robbins and Central Gaither and as vice principal at Gray Avenue.

Editors' Note: We wish to thank Don for taking the time to provide these corrections and amendments to his original article.

Order of Hermann's Sons

The Order of Hermann's Sons in Nicolaus celebrated its 104th anniversary in October, 2001. The 100th anniversary celebration was delayed by a little event in 1997 that impacted so much of the Central Valley.

The Hermann's Sons Lodge has hosted a number of Historical Society dinners and luncheons, so we are pleased to take this opportunity to present a brief history of the Order, gathered from previous Bulletin articles.

The Order of Hermann's Sons was founded in New York in 1840 by German-speaking Americans wanting to preserve their German heritage. The first California Lodge was formed in 1878. The Von Moltke Lodge No. 24 was organized in Nicolaus in 1897. In 1929 a sister lodge followed, Sutter Lodge No. 36. Today that name designates the combined Brother-Sister lodge, which is one of 13 lodges in California.

The *Sutter County Farmer*, a local newspaper, reported on activities of the Hermann's Sons. The paper reported on the Lodge's first picnic, in May of 1898, by saying "quite a number from here attended the Hermann Sons picnic at Nicolaus last Friday and reported a fine time. The Hermann Sons picnic and ball was a great success. Wheatland, Pleasant Grove and Central being well represented. All reported a good time."

The following year the *Farmer* had a longer article, reporting the winners of the girl's race, the boy's race, the young lady's race, the young men's race, the three-leg race, and the fat woman's race. "Needless to say, all

had a good time."

The current Hermann's Sons Hall was purchased by the lodge in 1924, and had been previously used as a skating rink. In 1930 a dance hall was added to the rear of the building. Today the building is for sale; the Lodge doesn't expect it to sell soon, and they have not yet decided where they'll hold their meetings.

Members of the Lodge are adults who speak or are learning German, Germans who may have forgotten their mother tongue because they immigrated at an early age, or anyone who is of German descent.

The Lodge has 52 members who live in Sutter, Yuba, Placer and Sacramento Counties. The Lodge strives to maintain their German heritage. Members practice their German skills by conducting at least parts of their meetings in German and having German conversations before and after the meetings. However, when there are non-German speaking members and guests present, everyone makes sure no one is left out.

The Lodge holds two social events for its members and invited guests. In the spring they have a dinner-dance in conjunction with installation of their officers. In December they serve a Christmas dinner with home-baked cookies for dessert, followed by a sing-along of German and English Christmas carols. For the benefit of the English-speaking guests, Santa also speaks English.

The Hermann's Sons Lodge is proud of its motto, "In Friendship, Love and Loyalty."

Life Near Tisdale Weir

an interview with
George Capaul

At our meeting in October, four speakers described how their ancestors came to Sutter County. One of the presenters was Bruce Capaul, who brought along his Uncle George. At the luncheon we heard only a fragment of the family's story, so following is more detail and some of George's memories of life in Sutter County in the early 20th century. Thanks to both George and Bruce for an interesting report on life in rural Sutter County!

Ullrick Capaul came from Switzerland in 1894 and settled in Humboldt County near Ferndale. Although he had trained to be a carpenter, he couldn't find work in his field so he started milking cows. He went on to start a dairy with his brother-in-law. He went back to Switzerland in 1906-07, married and then returned to Ferndale with his wife. They had five children - Johnny, Mary, George, and Joe (Bruce's father) were born in Ferndale, and Barbara was born in Marysville.

George was born in 1912. In 1915 his father decided to move, so he packed up the family and headed south. They left in November, traveling in a spring wagon that is still on the Capaul ranch. George remembers crossing the Eel River at Fortuna - there was no bridge, so the horses pulled the wagon through the water. They brought their cattle too.

After first living in Sacramento, the family settled near the Tisdale Weir. They lived in an old farm house already on the property, then in 1920 built their own home, where George

still lives. Although they didn't get electricity until 1925, the home did have an indoor toilet. In order to build the house, they had to take down six very large walnut trees that were probably planted in the 1840s.

The indoor plumbing was fed from a water tank built in 1917 (it is still there). The tank was filled by a gasoline-powered pump. A simple float gauge showed the water level, and when it started to get low they would fire up the pump and refill the tank. The water then fed by gravity into the house. The tank holds about 5,000 gallons and measures 8 feet deep and 12 feet in diameter.

George's father tried farming beans, but after a year decided it was not profitable, so he again started a dairy. The cows were milked by hand until the ranch got electricity.

Starting about 1917, George attended what he calls the old Winship School - the "new" one was built in 1926. He went to high school in Sutter, riding the new bus, but only for three years - he needed to work on the ranch, or help out the neighbors when they had work. His older brother Johnny didn't attend high school because at that time there was no bus and he couldn't get to school. George says the only reason boys went to high school was for the shop - he made furniture from his own walnut trees, and also made tools. His sister Mary boarded at a Catholic girls school in Woodland.

After school George would milk the cows - they had between 35 and 40

head at that time. Even during the depression they were able to sell dairy products. Everyone had cows, because it was the only way to get cash.

During the 1930s, after he had left school, George worked on the ranch. He also did work for neighbors, earning from 15¢ to 25¢ an hour. That seemed like plenty of money to him at the time, because everything he had to buy was inexpensive.

Living as they did in a rural area, the family had to make quite an effort to go to town for shopping or banking. They did most of their business in Grimes, taking their horse and wagon to the ferry, then crossing the river and going on to town. The ferry was large enough to carry a harvester and tractor, so it had no trouble with a horse and wagon. When the water was low in summer the ramp onto and off of the ferry was so steep, it was sometimes difficult to get the wagon, or a car, off the boat. Sometimes cars would roll down and have to make a second try.

The trip to Grimes usually took about a half day and they made it perhaps once a week. They didn't go to Yuba City or Marysville until they got a car, about 1918 (a new Ford, a very exciting acquisition!). The road to Yuba City was not paved until 1938 or so, and there was no direct route. They had to drive up river to Meridian, then east into Yuba City. That trip usually took all day.

George remembers that before the levees were built in the 1920s the tule water would come to about 200 feet from the barn. Because the house is at the highest point in the area, about the same elevation as the river, it never flood until 1940, when there was a levee break. The water took ten

hours to get there, and in that time they moved everything first from the cellar to the first floor, and then upstairs. George took their cows to the levee to get them onto high ground. The water was about three feet deep inside the house, which is set up several feet from ground level, and was in the house about two days.

The basement had several specific uses. During prohibition the family made wine from their own vineyard. They also made whiskey from the wine - George called it "gropple," and it was like brandy.

They also used the basement for dairy work - making butter and cheese - and to make sausage. They would kill a cow and a pig, grind the meat, mix the two together, and make link sausages. They bought the casings, then stuffed them, tied them into small links, and hung them in the tankhouse to dry. In the summer they would store the sausages in grain for insulation. George's family was used to having sausage to eat and thought nothing of it, but their neighbors were jealous of the sausages.

George remembers great swarms of ducks and geese, far more than are in our skies now. He says he used to look up and see a solid sky of geese, and at times they were so loud it was impossible to sleep.

Except for four years in the Air Force during World War II, George has lived his life on the Capaul ranch. He and his brother worked the ranch themselves, working long hours, with only occasional help when a chore had to be done on a certain schedule. The ranch is still a going concern, worked now by George's nephews. George himself continues to take care of his few cows and walnut trees.

My Travel to America and What Has Happened

by

John Mindermann

In 1851 Johann Mindermann, 16 years old, left his home in Borstel, Niedersachsen, Germany, to sail to America. Along the way and for the next few years he kept a diary of his travels and life in America. His daughter, Adelheit Elise Mindermann, saved the diary, a small book about 2½" x 4", and passed it on to her nieces, one of whom, Elizabeth Smith, lives in Yuba City. She shared the diary with us.

The diary was written not only in German, but in the old script, no longer used in modern Germany. When Elizabeth wanted to get it translated, she asked a German student at Chico State, but the student could not read the script. She sent the diary to her parents in Germany, who translated the script into modern German and sent it back. The student then translated it from German to English.

The diary takes us from the time Mindermann left his home until he reached San Francisco in 1855. Later he took a homestead near Biggs. He did return to Germany for a time - he married Metta Maria Hoops there, and they had their first child, Adelheit, in Germany in 1877. Their other children, Anna Margaretha (Elizabeth's mother) and Johann Hermann Dietrich, were born in Butte County. All the children anglicized their names - they became Dee, Margaret Ann and John, or J.H. The elder Johann died in Marysville in 1883.

On May 1, 1851 very early in the morning, I started my travel to America. I said goodbye to my mother in Krusens Hause, which was very hard on her, but in youthfulness (I was only quite 16) I was not worried at all. My father came with me to Bremen - we were so happy - and had lots of fun singing along the way. We arrived that very night in Bremen and the next day headed for Bremerhaven in a steamboat. When we arrived at the port there were so many passengers there already, we couldn't find accommodations. We had to go to the Passengers House and had to spend the night sleeping on planks so that we could feel every single bone in our bodies the next morning because we had never slept on planks before. After getting used to it, though, I didn't notice anymore. Then May 6 at 3 p.m. we sailed and at 4 we got stuck in the middle of the river and had to stay and wait there for 2 nights and one day. Then on the 3rd morning we sailed. We started at 4 a.m. and by the time all the passengers came up on the deck later, we had gone already quite a ways. Then after sailing for a while we saw a lighthouse - then only the water and the sky above us.

We have a pilot who steers the ship into the North Sea. When he was about to leave ship, we stopped completely until he had left, then we sailed on, setting all the sails we had. Such a beautiful sight.

On May 8th in the morning, I got sick so badly that I couldn't leave the rail for 10 minutes. It was that very

day that the Town Fair was in progress in my home town which I had been a little homesick for, and of which I had been thinking, but after my sickness got so bad, I forgot it. The next day I didn't feel well at all, but in the afternoon I finally got better. On May 10 I got the same sickness again, and this time so badly I didn't know what to do. Although I tried, I couldn't upchuck and I wished I could. We had such a storm that the waves came over the deck, and I thought the ship would sink.

We were just entering the North Sea and on the 11th we could see the shores of England and France, while we were passing along both countries. We saw castles and forts and a big cliff where they dig chalk.

On the 15th we reached the wide ocean, but we barely moved because the wind had dropped. It was a beautiful day. The fish had a good time playing in the water. On the 17th the sea was rather rough so that the ship was tossed by the waves. It looked as if we would sink any minute. We were like a little mosquito floating in a big river. The ship was heaving wildly. You could see the water reaching as high as the highest mast on the ship. In a situation like this you are aware of God's Almightyness, if only you are ready for it. You realize there must be a Supreme Being who watches over all of us. Yes, a Being who commands the storm and the sea - or otherwise you must be completely unbelieving.

On the 23rd, the sea was calm again and the fish were playing in the water again. We saw thousands and thousands of them. There were the so-called Pig Fish, given this name because they are as big and fat as a bull, literally.

On the 26th we saw, because we were so far north, fish that spout water from their noses about 25 to 30 feet high. As we learned in school, it must have been whales. On the 28th there were some spotlights turned on on our ship so they could shoot them with harpoons. One got hit and they managed to drag him on deck, but as he was so heavy, the harpoon broke and he got away at a very fast speed.

On June 1 very early in the morning, there was suddenly so much noise up on deck, I jumped out of bed at once and went up on deck, where I could see what was going on. We were so far north and as it was still Spring all the big icebergs had not yet melted. We were just between 3 or 4 huge icebergs and I thought we were doomed. The icebergs were as big as a whole village in diameter and about 200 or 300 feet high. If they would hit the ship it would surely mean the end of us and no help would be available. It was cold too, we were just freezing and our teeth were chattering. Yes, it was horrible and all the time we could see death in front of us.

When we stood on deck looking to the north we could see nothing but icebergs in front of us. Yes, it was horrible. Some people prayed to God to beg Him to help, which He did, before the icebergs came on us. He led the icebergs in such a way that they floated out of our way and we sailed right through the middle of them. When we had passed, we were so happy from the bottom of our hearts that we sang songs of joy.

We sailed on in a happy mood and had rather a good wind and it was warm again. On the 6th and 7th of June the water where we were was so warm that it could have been heated by fire.

It is a stream which goes straight through the sea and is so warm the whole year around. On the 8th it was cold again.

When the holiday of the Pentecost came we had such a storm that all the sails had to be pulled in and we couldn't get out of bed in order not to be washed away by the water being washed over the deck. We had to hold onto our beds to keep from falling out and at first I laughed, but then later it was not funny anymore. I was glad when the weather calmed down again! On June 15 in the evening, when I was in bed already, the passengers were still on deck. All of a sudden they made such a noise, I jumped out of bed, even without shoes. When I arrived on deck all the people were at the front rail of the ship and were screaming Hurrah! I too saw the lighthouses of America, which were in a straight line right in front of us. I stood there for quite a while to see this spectacle, but at 11 p.m. I went to bed and slept till early morning. I got up and first thing, I went on deck to look around. I saw land at some distance and we came closer and closer. We were traveling between two islands. When we realized that we would reach New York that very day and that we would have to leave the ship, all the straw mattresses had to go overboard and at the same time everybody took off their old traveling clothes and then threw them overboard too. That was a sight that would make a dead pig laugh!

Next we came to an island which lies in the middle of the river and we cast anchor there and stayed there from 10 until 2 in the afternoon. Then a physician came on board to check if anyone was sick. There were 200

passengers but no one of us was sick. Then came a little steamship and brought us to land. I should mention too that I was very amazed because what we saw first were big fort walls right along the water, which had many holes in them where the cannons were lodged and there was a row of cannons on top of the wall too. It came to my mind and to the others too that if the cannons would be fired, we would be lost in a few minutes. In the afternoon of June 16 we went on land after not having set foot on ground for 6 weeks. Many of the passengers thanked God, but again many just landed like pigs and went away thoughtless of doing so. We too left the ship and went downtown. After walking around the town for quite awhile we went back to the ship. Then we went to town again. The girls said, "You might walk around so far you might get lost and not find the ship again," and then I said, "You are just a bunch of old ladies," and so went back to the city by myself. The moment I got there, I met F. Kohte from Borstel. He asked others to come over to his brothers but I had to go back to the ship because I still had all my things on the ship.

The next morning John Wrede came on board to meet me and take all my luggage. He brought me to my brother, William, who lived in the country. There I spent quite some time. After having learned to speak English pretty well, I went to another place. There I had nothing else to do but work with horses. Because I was rather good at that they allowed me to go ahead with my job with the horses. When the farmer saw that I could drive horses well he asked me if I would like to drive to the city for him as he had to go to New York every day with his fruit.

I said "yes" and I went the very next night, leaving at 1 a.m. with the best horse and a wagon load of fruit. He told me to be very careful and I said I would. The next morning at 10 a.m. I arrived home. When he saw me coming he came to the gate at once and asked me how I got along. Quite O.K. I said, and then I had to go each day into the town.

I made my horses look so healthy and beautiful, as I've ever seen other horses - much to the delight of the old man. We had 18 horses. That made 9 teams of two, and no team was as good looking as mine. Before they had always looked too poorly. Nobody knew how I managed that, but I knew it very well. All of us got the same amount of food to feed them with but I fed them first with what I got, and then before I left on the trip into town, I went to the corn room and fed them as much corn as they wanted. This was what made them so strong. I did this for quite a while.

I went to town every day in early morning and drank as much as I wanted, so I hardly had to work at all. That was very nice for me to go every day to New York. So I came to know quite a few other young men who said, "You are quite stupid if you go on driving around all night every night. You could have so much more fun if you would stay in the city and work in a grocery store." At first I didn't want to listen to them but finally they persuaded me, and I quit my job and went to New York City.

To go back, when I went to my boss to ask him for my money, he asked me what I wanted to do with it. I told him I wanted to go to New York. Then he said he wouldn't have any money so I had to wait until the next day or two.

He did this only to give me some time to think about it, because I knew he had money enough and he also wanted me to stay. I didn't say anything more and went to the stable as usual, and left for the city again the next morning. The next evening I went to him again, and told him I really wanted to go to the city. He asked me then what I wanted to do there. I told him I would like to work in a grocery store. Then he said I shouldn't be so stupid. I was just about to make better money with him, he said, and in fact, I had made good money already. It would really be too bad he thought if all the money I had made would be lost again. I said, yes, I know you are right but I have set my mind on leaving now and when I set my mind I have to do it. He asked me if I would at least go that night to the city for him and I did. Then I got my salary and said good-bye to him - went to New York and stayed there.

I got a place I didn't like at all at first and stayed there only two months. I began thinking of the country again where I still could have returned to any day but I also thought of the wintertime when it would be freezing on my wagon in the night and now I could stay in the warm store. I tried to find another job and finally found one where my salary was a little higher and besides it was a nice place, I liked it very much - it was almost as if I were in a new world I liked it so much. I stayed for 2 years in that job. I had a good life and nobody told what to do. I could do as I wanted and besides it was the finest grocery store in New York. I had two clerks working for me who had to take my orders. I liked this very much and I dressed like a gentleman. Every day a fresh shirt, etcetera.

Then it became bad times in New York. The money got scarce and the banks closed and so it happened that the bank where I had my money went into bankruptcy too. That made me really mad because from all the money I had worked for there was not much left except as I had asked my first boss for when I left him. I said to myself you have saved all your money and now the rich people have taken it and had a good time with it. It probably would have been so much better if I had done as so many others did who spent it right away and got so much fun out of it. These thoughts mulling around in my mind I left my place and moved on March 1, 1855. This was the first time since I was in America that I tried a boarding house. There I stayed for one month. I got bored there with nothing to do and I decided to go to California. Many of my friends dissuaded me from this plan but once an idea enters my mind I have to do it.

On May 1st I had gotten the idea to go to California; on May 5th I was on a ship already. Every one of my friends said I was crazy but I had to always carry out whatever came into my mind. I'm that kind of a person.

We started out on our trip to California on the steamship George Law. John Wrede and Bosche Kothe went with me to the ship. The debarkation was at 2 p.m. and there were quite a few people at the deck. Every passenger brought a relative along I think and I was standing there all by myself. That again reminded me of my leave from Bremerhaven. I didn't have a travel companion at that time either. John Bosche kept telling me that I was a daredevil and a gayblade. I laughed but didn't care

and enjoyed the situation. There were so many people crying! One had a son and a daughter leaving, another a fiancée, and so everyone had somebody to cry about. Some were kissing and hugging which made them even more unhappy so that some actually fainted. There was a girl near me who probably had her sweetheart on dock. Her eyes were red. I was standing next to her and started talking to her. She certainly cried a lot over nothing.

Now the plank between the land and the ship was pulled up and everybody left. Then the wheels were moving from the heat which was in the boiler and we soon got started. I jumped on land once again to say goodbye to my friends and wished them health and happiness. Then I jumped on board again. Then many friends threw cakes and apples on board, but instead of the older people they were intended for, we young people caught most of the things. I personally caught quite a lot. This was all very gay. The cannons fired on both sides of the ship and we slowly got underway. Waving of hats and crying prevailed. I was glad to get moving. As we sailed out, we turned more to the right this time instead of to the left if we had been going to Germany. Then we had to show out tickets. After this dinner was served and some of us went down but we didn't like the food. The bread was hard and you could hardly drink the tea. So for the first two or three days no one ate much. Seasickness put me down again. I was sick with every little storm we had.

After a few days, I recovered a little. On the 9th the island and big cliffs of Cuba were on the right hand side. On the 10th we sailed along the land so closely that we could see the

people working and the cattle in the pastures. The land was flat and beautiful. The weather was hot. Yes, it was so hot that everyone was perspiring so much that the sweat was running down our faces. And it stayed like this the whole trip. On May 15th we came to more land. The cannons were first fired and made fireworks and everyone had a good time. We ate all together and sang in German and the musicians played German pieces. The Americans were standing around us and couldn't understand what made us so happy.

All of a sudden there was a crash. We had hit a big rock! This was 10 o'clock at night. We were only 400 feet from land. I thought we would sink - and if we did, I decided that I would swim to the land anyway. Fortunately, we hadn't hit the rock very hard - only stuck on it. The fire was put out at once and everyone made suggestions as to how to get her off the rock. The order was for us all to go the rear end of the ship - about 1200 people - and then the enormous heat was made in the boiler. When it got going the wheels were moving with such straining that I thought we would all break into pieces but we didn't move an inch. Then we were ordered that all the heavy stuff which was in front of the ship would be brought to the back. This was done. The ship's bow lifted up this time and the boiler was heated again. This time for sure I gave up all hope because they made it so hot the ship nearly exploded. The wheels went round and round and fortunately the ship moved.

We came to Aspenwall at midnight. In the morning we took everything off the ship at 5 a.m. Our travel across the Isthmus was

interesting. We saw first what surprised me very much, the beautiful coconut trees with nuts on them and it was so nice to see them. At 10 o'clock the train left on which we went to Panama. The locomotive stopped several times on the way to get water and wood. We jumped out of the car and picked oranges and lemons which were growing wild - and you can pick them just as they are. We stuffed lots of them into our pockets and then we jumped back into our cars and had a good time eating. Our greatest delight were the Indians who were running around naked just like the cattle in the pasture. They live on fruit which nature produces here without working for it and all year long. Summer and winter are equally cold and warm here. Then it often is so hot that no white men live in this area.

We arrived at Panama where we stayed overnight. The next day when the passengers from New Orleans came we all boarded the Golden Gate which sails from here to San Francisco. We left in the evening and sailed along between two big mountains which were all solid rock. I tell you that that was a dangerous place there. When we finally got through we were all very relieved and happy because only two weeks before the beautiful ship Golden Age ran aground at the very same spot.

On May 17 we had a rather heavy storm and rough water. On the 18th we saw something floating on the water. The captain said it was a ship that had tipped over, probably in the day before's storm. We stopped our ship at once and made a small boat ready to go to see if anyone was stranded. Two small boats went over and finally our own ship slowly came so close we could see clearly without glasses that no

living persons were on the ship. We took an axe and made a hole in the wall. We went inside, found food and some rope. These were taken to our ship and then we spied something swimming in the water about 15 minutes from us. We went to it fast because it looked like it was some people who had managed to stay alive. But guess what it was? Four pigs swimming around. We drew them on board one after the other. They swam away and we had a hard time to catch them. Most of the time we could see land and islands as we sailed on. Eight days after we left Panama we were in Mexico.

We landed and got coal and water and took some bulls on board

and bought some oranges. We had so much fun watching the Indians swimming around the ship, just like fish. Yes, it was really fun to watch them.

Then when we had loaded our coal and gone in, it was 7 days later when we came to California and San Francisco.

When we were close to the town the cannons were fired and we had a whole group of musicians come on board. They came altogether and played and it was music for dancing. They played until we actually landed.

We had made the whole trip in 25 days from New York to California, 6000 miles.

Can You Help?

by
Barbara Stengel

My name is Barbara Stengel. I am a member of the Sutter County Historical Society and a graduate student at CSU Chico. I am currently working on my thesis, a history of Nicolaus, and am very interested in additional materials, such as diaries and journals, correspondence, memoirs, merchants' account books, contracts and agreements (i.e. pertaining to hired help, leases, rental arrangements, etc.).

I am also interested in documentation on any organizations that were active in and around Nicolaus, for instance organizational charters, by-laws and standing rules, membership rolls, and minute books. Election memorabilia, as it pertains to Nicolaus (town and township) is also of great interest, as are memoirs in general as well as transcripts of interviews and personal recollections (oral history).

If you have any items that you could make available to this academic endeavor, it would be greatly appreciated. Please contact me at 673-0545, or by e-mail at barbjoe@otn.net.

Awakening from the California Dream

An Environmental History

Program Reports

The traveling exhibit on California's environment opened at the museum on September 28 and ran through November 19. As part of the exhibit, the museum hosted two programs discussing the exhibit and related topics.

The first program featured Robert Dawson, the exhibit's photographer; Gray Brechin, who wrote the text; and Phil Mumma, of the Oakland Museum, who curated the original exhibit.

In 1991 Bob Dawson and Gray Brechin were awarded a grant from Duke University to investigate and document the state of California's environment, past and present, with the hope of anticipating the future. They spent the next five years flying and driving all over California, photographing many sites most people never see and investigating what has happened to California's environment since it became a state. Their book was published in 1999 and is available for sale at the Museum. At the same time their original exhibit opened at the Oakland Museum. Following its run the California Council for the Humanities provided funding to display the exhibit around the state.

The authors hoped to write a book that would be a popular environmental history. They wanted to show how California has changed, how it might change in the future, and what that means for all of us. The book was

conceived as an awakening of the California spirit, a call to action.

The authors looked at the California they grew up in and what has happened since. Mr. Brechin is originally from the Santa Clara Valley, which was once very rich agricultural land and is now paved over as the Silicon Valley. Part of his motive in writing the book was to prevent the same fate from happening to other parts of California, especially the Central Valley.

Even though California is a large state, what happens in one area has an impact on others. Through photographs and discussion, the speakers focused on how the hydraulic mining of the upper Yuba River 150 years ago continues to impact the San Francisco Bay Area.

When gold was first discovered in California, gold mining was an individual effort, and that is how it has been romanticized in history. By 1852 even individual miners had begun to ruin rivers, but the placer mines played out and gold mining became a corporate endeavor. With the invention of the monitor, a nozzle that forced large amounts of water onto the mountainside to wash out the gold, mining tore away whole mountains. The larger monitors were made by the Empire Foundry in Marysville, measured 13 to 18 feet long, and could shoot 5000 pounds of water per square inch a distance of 400-500 feet. Water was brought to the mines up to 40 miles

from its source in large flumes. The mountain was washed into a sluice system and the gold was separated from the dirt and rocks.

Malakoff Diggins, in Yuba County, is now a State Historical Park. Eight times the dirt moved to dig the Panama Canal was moved out of Malakoff by the North Bloomfield Mining Company. The diggins are 7000 feet long, up to 3000 feet wide and up to 600 feet deep. At that altitude with the steep run-off the Yuba River is very efficient at moving the overburden, the remnants of the hydraulic mining, so the river there is clear but all that overburden was pushed downstream. And though hydraulic mining stopped there over 130 years ago, the scarred landscape, with nothing to stop erosion, continues to erode and send overburden down the river.

In 1860s the California legislature noticed the damage that was being done to the rivers, but the prevailing thought at the time was that private property owners had a right to do what they wanted on their own property, regardless of the impact to neighboring properties. In 1884 after prolonged court battles hydraulic mining was finally outlawed.

Mining continued with the use of dredgers. One local dredger moved 25 million cubic yards of dirt in eight years, and recovered \$7 million in gold. Some bucket chains on the dredger were 140 feet long and could dig 170 feet deep. Most worked non-stop, 24 hours a day and nearly 365 days a year. Some dredge tailings are seven stories tall. They changed the nature of the streams and rivers, and impacted the wildlife. Mercury, a toxic substance, was used in the gold recovery process

and was dumped in the waterways. It is still there.

The impact of the hydraulic mining and dredging continues to have ongoing economic and environmental costs. In the 20th century our area has had twelve major floods. San Pablo Bay still gets the overburden from Malakoff and other areas. San Francisco Bay is half its historic depth and has to be dredged to allow ocean shipping. The lesson to be learned is that when environmental decisions are made we need to remember the impact goes well beyond the immediate area, and lasts for centuries.

What is California's master plan for land use? Perhaps surprisingly, there is none. All land use planning is done by county or by region, piecemeal. Developers and others who want to build in ways that are damaging to the landscape can shop between areas until they find a place that will accept them.

So is it possible to make sound environmental decisions? More and more people are concerned about the environment, and because local decisions are important, anyone can make a difference in their own community that will be felt across the broader region. In addition to local cleanup efforts, it is important to vote intelligently. Everyone can be stewards of California and its environment.

While the first program examined damage done and the need for understanding cause and effect with regard to environmental planning, the second program, an evening with environmental filmmaker Judith Irving and local historian and college professor David Rubiales, focused on

current efforts in habitat restoration in California.

Ms. Irving has received both Emmy and Sundance awards for her films. She presented two films as part of the Traveling Environment Film Festival.

Partners on the Land showcased a new method of habitat restoration called natural process restoration. The film focused on the San Pablo Baylands, showing what baylands are and how wetlands advocates work with farmers to protect the landscape. The Baylands are home to dairy cattle, grain farming, Pinot Noir grapes, and are a waterfowl habitat.

The wetlands are a vital part of our waterways, relieving pressure when rivers threaten to flood. The greatest threat to them is not farming but suburban developments. Only half the original area is left.

An area that was slated for 4500 houses in Napa County is now a refuge. The area was originally marshland, but was then pumped annually to keep it dry for a hay ranch. As part of the natural process restoration, the pumps were turned off, then when rains came the area began to recover its natural tendencies. In Sonoma County 90 acres of seasonal wetlands have been restored in the same way.

David Rubiales said the marshland is not that different from how Sutter County was before settlers came. We had permanent tule ponds, but they were drained after the gold

rush and we lost our ability to store water.

Ms. Irving's second film was about land with shared uses - both agricultural and "natural." Farmers grow rice, and wildlife lives there along with the rice. Waterfowl help with rice growing by eating leftover straw and creating fertilizer.

In Riverside County a reservoir for drinking water has a marshy shore with birds and other wildlife, rather than the clean-shaven shore we are used to along our reservoirs.

Fire is used to allow land to return to its natural state. When levees are broken and the river runs free, forests come back. When fire burns away European grasses, the native grasses recover quickly. Animals return to the area after a fire and thrive in the habitat.

Mr. Rubiales explained that the local Indians used to burn the land each year, which encouraged and discouraged certain plants. This made the area green all year long - the "summer landscape" we're used to did not exist. With our agricultural situation we can't do the burn, at least on the same scale.

The combination of the exhibit and programs offered a powerful reminder of the changes to the ecology of California and illustrated methods and practices available to Californians concerned about restoring the environment.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are always needed at the Museum. If you're interested in history, in preserving our past, and in meeting interesting people, the Community Memorial Museum would like you as a volunteer! Please call the Museum at 822-7141.

Sutter County Historical Society Financial Report

December 3, 2001

Checking Account Balance 09/10/01 \$10,121.09

INCOME

Interest	7.49
Memorial Fund	50.00
Memorial Building Fund	90.00
Ornaments	230.50
October Luncheon	768.00
Bulletins Sold	855.00
October Raffle	262.00

TOTAL INCOME 2,362.99

EXPENSES

October Luncheon	825.00
Treasurer Expense	38.03
Printing Sept Bulletin	513.60
Preservation Committee	8.34
Membership Envelopes	89.41
Agricultural Wing Cabinets	1,260.00

TOTAL EXPENSES 2,785.66

Checking Account Balance 12/03/01 \$9,698.42

Edward Jones Accounts

Certificate of Deposit	15,091.63
Money Market Account	3,149.07
Judith Barr Fairbanks Memorial Essay Account	9,239.07

Total assets at Edward Jones \$27,479.77

SCHS Total Net Worth **\$37,178.19**

Prepared by Dorothy Ettl, Treasurer

Puzzle Page

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

BURTIS
LODGE
TISDALE
CAPAUL
MINDERMANN

WHALE
AMERICA
IMMIGRATION
PANAMA
NICOLAUS

ENVIRONMENT
FOUNDRY
MALAKOFF
RESTORATION
JUDITH

MERCURY
VOLUNTEER
MOUNTAIN
MEETING
ATLANTIC

Coming Events

All events except the Historical Society's April luncheon take place at the Museum.

January

John Smith, Ohio-California Gunmaker exhibit opens

15 Historical Society meeting at the Museum

Program, 7:00 p.m.; dessert to follow

Michael Hubbartt, Middle Mountain Foundation

February

- 14** *Love's Messenger* Valentine Gift Bag museum fundraiser
see flyer inside for details

March

Art and Sole exhibit opens – Yuba City High School students
take an artful look at footwear

9 Hike in the Buttes

17 Hike in the Buttes

April

13 Historical Society Luncheon

11:30 a.m., Veterans' Hall, Meridian