

# Golden Nuggets

SACRAMENTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2010

## Seasons Greetings

With the approach of the very busy holiday season, we have decided to move both the November and December programs to early in each month. Both programs are during the daylight, and on Saturdays, so we hope more people who 'can't make evenings' will join us! Please mark your calendars for these dates and times. We'll return to our usual Elvas Avenue location and 4th Tuesday, 7 PM time in January. - P.Turse, President, SCHS

### SCHS AFTERNOON AT THE EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER

**SATURDAY November 6, 2:00-4:00 PM**

**Archeologist Chris Corey: Prehistoric Mounds of the Sacramento Valley**

2850 San Lorenzo Way (off Tarshes Drive), Carmichael

**FREE for SCHS MEMBERS**



Image: [www.effieyeaw.net](http://www.effieyeaw.net)

Join us for an early fall afternoon of Native California culture. We'll meet at the Nature Center and stroll through the replica Nisenan summer village and the outdoor interpretive trail sites, led by Brenda Protze. The second part of the program features California State Archaeologist, Christopher Corey, who will present a slide talk on the prehistoric mounds of the Sacramento Valley and its Indian communities.

As many people know, Sacramento County transferred the entire operation of the Nature Center to the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) in July of this year, due to budget issues. A revisit to this local gem is a vote of support for ARNHA. This program is a good reason to make that visit.

### DECEMBER SCHS MEMBER EVENT

**SATURDAY, December 11, 9:00 AM to Noon**

**Preservation Roundtable featuring Mark Gaffney:  
Sacramento's Historic Holiday Window Displays, Then & Now  
Cosmopolitan Cabaret, 1000 K Street, Sacramento**



Gaffney Holiday window, 1948  
Center for Sacramento History

Sacramento's Preservation Roundtable is a quarterly gathering of local history and historic preservation organizations, intended to share current information on local preservation topics, public policy, events, and plans in progress. Everyone is welcome to attend. After brief reports from attending organizations, Mark Gaffney, Gaffney Display Company, will give an updated version of the slide presentation delivered to SCHS last year. Since more than a few attendees of last year's program mentioned they wanted to bring others but couldn't, this is a second chance. You can also see the nifty adaptive reuse of the Woolworth building as the new Cosmopolitan Cabaret.

Even better, the SCHS Sacramento holiday window campaign results will be right across the street! Come for the whole meeting and enjoy a continental breakfast courtesy of SCHS, or drop in around 11AM (this is a guess, but speakers are at the end of the meeting) for Mark's talk. Or just come at noon to see the recreated Sacramento Holiday Window display, the NOW part of Mark's program. And—we do expect—bask a bit in the glow of what a grassroots campaign can accomplish. See also current campaign status on page 2.

## Holiday Display Campaign Gains Momentum

By William Burg

A team of SCHS members and community volunteers has convened to plan and create the new holiday display. We have permission of the property manager to use the corner window of 1001 K Street, the historic Roos-Atkins Building, and have picked up the



The Roos-Atkins building, 1946 version, replaced a 1902 structure. Both buildings housed upscale department stores.  
Center for Sacramento History

key to the site. We are asking local businesses and community organizations to contribute funds and materials for the project, and as of October 20 we are just short of reaching \$6,000 of our \$10,000 funding goal. A deposit has been paid to the Gaffney Display Company, and historic photos provided by the Center for Sacramento History will be printed at poster size for display at the site.

By the first weekend of November, work will begin at the display site. Construction of the display will be visible from K Street, and signs will explain the project to passersby. Historic photos of Breuner's and Weinstock-Lubin display windows and of downtown Sacramento during the holidays will appear in windows all along K Street. During the week of November 22-25, the window display will be covered with curtains while the Gaffney figures are added.

At noon on Friday, November 26, the curtains will be pulled back and the display revealed to the public. Our private event for contributors will follow the grand reveal of the display at 1:00 PM. The display will remain in place until January 8, 2011.

If you are interested in helping, contact SCHS at (916) 443-6265 or [info@sachistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@sachistoricalsociety.org) for details. We definitely need skilled volunteers for carpentry and painting of the display backdrop.

We have also added some new premiums for donors; in October, the Board agreed to create a new picture postcard of the 2010 holiday display, based on the annual picture postcards of Breuner's window displays. All contributors at all funding levels will receive a set of two color postcards recording the holiday display. In addition to the funding levels on the flyer you received last month, two new levels have been added, a **\$25 Window Shopper Level** and a **\$250 Helper Level**.

**Window Shopper Level** contributors will have their names listed on the Grand Reveal event program, and receive a set of two full-color photographic postcards of the 2010 Holiday Display window. **Helper Level** contributors will have their names listed on the event program and a panel at the Holiday Display site, receive the postcard set and a copy of the Sacramento History Journal Vol. 5 No. 2-4. They will also receive a two-year membership in the Sacramento County Historical Society (existing members will have their memberships extended). They will also be invited to a gala event to be held the day of the Grand Reveal of the display.

We are still actively seeking funds and support to complete the holiday display. In addition to promoting the mission of SCHS in a colorful and visible way, this display is a holiday gift to the people of Sacramento County. Please help us deliver this gift by contributing—in whatever amount fits your budget—or volunteering. A revised donation form is enclosed. Feel free to share it with friends.

### SACRAMENTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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#### GOLDEN NUGGETS

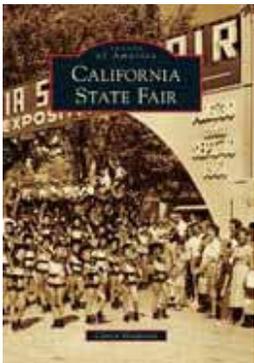
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Email: [info@sachistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@sachistoricalsociety.org)

## A Trio of Arcadia Book Reviews

By William Burg

*California State Fair* by Carson Hendricks, *Sacramento's Chinatown* by Lawrence Tom, *North Sacramento* by V. Ehrenreich-Risner, 128 pages each, Arcadia Publishing, 2010

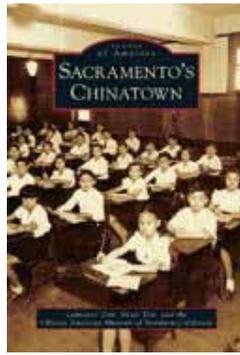
The three latest Sacramento-themed books from Arcadia Publishing cover very different aspects of our city with different approaches. Externally, they share the features of Arcadia's *Images of America* series: sepia cover, standard length, designed to fit well with other *Images of America* books on a store display or bookshelf. Inside, they use the standard Arcadia format, with plentiful historic photos. Arcadia's format is successful and accessible, often because they are entertaining even if one does not read the captions or text. For those who do read the text, the books become very different in approach, tone and level of detail.



*California State Fair* shows the fair's growth in conjunction with California's growth. Hendricks documents the complete history of the Fair, from its earliest days as a roving fair and its permanent establishment in Sacramento, ending with photos from the 2009 fair. Each chapter captures an era's aspirations. The first State Fairs were intended to promote California's agriculture when we

were best known for gold mining. Hendricks devotes the most attention to the Fair's days at Stockton and Broadway, from 1909 to 1967. This site reflected an era when cities showed their modernity by building idealized "City Beautiful" fairs, reflecting California as a land of cities and industry. The Stockton & Broadway era closed with many exhibits featuring satellites and rockets, showing California's high-tech industries and the space program. This move to modernity was fully expressed in the move to futuristic, high-tech Cal Expo, with its monorail and Brutalist concrete architecture. Its location, closer to the new suburban highways, reflected California's postwar growth as a land of cars and suburbs. Hendricks' only judgment of the Fair is that he, along with millions of other Californians, had fun there.

*Sacramento's Chinatown* includes photos of the old Chinatown near I Street, but its real story is not about geography or buildings. Author Lawrence Tom suggests that our Chinatown was unique. Other Chinatowns were closed societies: residents of



San Francisco's Chinatown could spend their whole lives never setting foot outside the neighborhood. While Chinese in Sacramento still faced hostility and discrimination, our Chinatown was open. Their children attended school with other Sacramentans, and their businesspersons traded with non-Chinese. Their success with neighborhood grocery stores

grew into greater success as regional supermarket chains. Our Chinatown thus became a path to Americanization. Chinatown also gave generations of Sacramento-born and immigrant families a connection back to China, through cultural education and community festivals, and political advocacy for democracy in China. As a neighborhood that transcended its borders, Sacramento's Chinatown is shown through its families, businesses and civic leaders.



Veronica Ehrenreich-Risner, author of *North Sacramento*, repeatedly describes North Sacramento as the "Frank Capra city," although she never explains the reference to Bedford Falls, the town in *It's A Wonderful Life*, or notices that the director of that film's last name is spelled "Capra." This lack of explanation and occasional inaccuracy are reflected elsewhere

in the book, which detracts from its well-selected photos and insightful profiles of North Sacramento residents. North Sacramento began as a streetcar suburb, and for about 40 years was an independent city before annexation by the city of Sacramento. The social and political story of North Sacramento receives little attention, and while the struggles of the African American community in North Sacramento and Del Paso Heights are hinted at, they are not explored. The book's greatest strengths are the attention given to families, businesses, and daily life in North Sacramento.

Arcadia's neighborhood books are not intended as rigorous histories, but skilled writing and careful proofreading can make them more than just charming picture books. They can document a period like *California State Fair*, or argue a central thesis like *Sacramento's Chinatown*. *North Sacramento* has value as a slice of life, but its undeveloped thesis and occasional inaccuracy suggests unrealized potential.



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P.O. Box 160065  
 Sacramento, CA 95816-0065  
 Message phone: 916-443-6265  
[www.sachistoricalociety.org](http://www.sachistoricalociety.org)

Please deliver by Oct. 27, 2010

## SHORT & SWEET

DATE	TIME	EVENT	PLACE & CONTACT
Saturday, November 6	2:00-4:00 PM	SCHS at Effie Yeaw - Special Program Tour interpretive facilities Slide talk: Prehistoric Mounds of Sacramento by archeologist Chris Corey. Free for SCHS members & free parking	Effie Yeaw Nature Center 2850 San Lorenzo Way (off Tarshes) Carmichael Directions: <a href="http://www.effieyeawcenter.org">www.effieyeawcenter.org</a>
Friday, Nov. 26	Noon  1:00 PM	<b>“Grand Reveal” Event</b> The unveiling of the finished, recreated <b>SCHS Holiday Display</b> windows, open to all. Reception for major donors	1001 K St., Sacramento <a href="mailto:info@sachistoricalociety.org">info@sachistoricalociety.org</a> SCHS message phone: 916-443-6265  Crest Theater lobby
Saturday, Dec. 11	9:00 AM 11:00 AM +/- Noon	<b>Sacramento Preservation Roundtable</b> Mark Gaffney: Historic Holiday Windows View the 2010 Holiday Window!	Cosmopolitan Cafe 1000 K Street, Sacramento  On the mall at 1001 K St.
Tuesday January 22	7 PM	<b>The Golden History Series</b> Folsom’s Ric and Jody Hornor will present their exciting series of Greater Sacramento area history books	Sierra Sac Valley Medical Society Bldg 5380 Elvas Ave, Sacramento Directions: <a href="http://www.ssvms.org/directions.asp">www.ssvms.org/directions.asp</a>

## Sacramento County Historical Society Holiday Display Window Campaign

By William Burg

This holiday season, **Sacramento County Historical Society** will recreate a full-sized holiday display window, using animated figures that once graced the windows of Breuner's department store in downtown Sacramento. The display will occupy the window of the former Roos Bros. department store building at the



northeast corner of 10th and K Street. Setup will take place during November 2010, with a "grand reveal" of the completed display the day after Thanksgiving, November 26. The display will remain in place until the first week of January, 2011. The **Downtown Sacramento Partnership** is an active participant in this project. The property management firm, **Collier's**, has provided access to the window space at 10th and K Street, the historic Roos-Atkins Department Store. This enormous window on a feature corner, adjacent to recently completed projects and active businesses, is an ideal place to celebrate K Street's legacy.

The theme for the 2010 Holiday Display Window is "Winter in the City," an urban scene set in downtown Sacramento during the era of 1910-1920. The window design is based on Sacramento prototypes of the era. The display includes a department store with windows containing period-appropriate gifts and merchandise, lighted architectural elements to reflect the holiday season and, most importantly, animated Gaffney Display Company figures who will interact with each other and their surroundings. The display will share Sacramento's rich heritage and K Street's historic role as a shopping, entertainment and cultural destination. We also hope to recreate the sense of wonder of holiday seasons past, as expressed by Sacramentans who witnessed the original displays firsthand, for people of all ages to experience and enjoy.

The scene will depict a street corner with two primary walls. On one wall is a department store, with lit display windows. These windows will contain toys, winter clothes and other gift items appropriate to the period: antique sleds, skis, coats, stuffed animals and toy trains. On the other wall is a movie theater, with playbills for period-appropriate movies and a marquee. Both walls will include electric holiday lights along the architectural elements of the department store, marquee lights in front of the theater, and lighting within the windows to display products and the ticket booth of the theater. Gaffney Display Company's original figures, utilized in the original Breuner's department store display windows, provide a direct link to the historic Christmas season displays. These restored historic animated figures, dressed as shoppers and theater patrons of the era, will react to the window displays and the movie marquee. Other animated figures will include a theater usher selling tickets, a streetcar motorman in the front of the streetcar, and directly on the corner, a Salvation Army "Santa Claus," ringing a bell.

We will also include interpretive panels to tell the story of Gaffney Display Company and local department stores like Breuner's and Weinstock & Lubin. These panels will include historic photos provided by the **Center for Sacramento History**. The display will also explain the historic role of K Street as a center for entertainment and shopping, and highlight contemporary efforts (both public and private) intended to bring business, residents, life and light back to downtown Sacramento. This celebration of K Street's past can also serve to inspire its future.

Sacramento County Historical Society is organizing the fundraising effort, and our volunteers will build the display. In addition to starting funds provided by SCHS and several private contributors, two local nonprofits (the **Capital City Preservation Trust** and the **Sacramento Old City Association**) have pledged \$1000 each towards this project. Over 65% of our \$10,000 funding goal has been pledged or collected, but **we need your help** to reach our goal and bring a piece of local history back to life on K Street. The next page shows how. **If you have questions**, leave a message on the SCHS message phone at 916-443-6265 (checked daily) or email [info@sachistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@sachistoricalsociety.org).



Sacramento County Historical Society  
Holiday Display Campaign



**“GRAND REVEAL” EVENT TAKES PLACE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26 AT 12:00 NOON, 1001 K STREET!**

\$25: Window Shopper Level contributors will have their names listed on the Grand Reveal event program and receive a set of two full-color photographic postcards of the 2010 Holiday Display window.

\$100: Contributor Level contributors will have their names listed on the event program and a panel at the Holiday Display site, receive a one-year membership in the Sacramento County Historical Society (existing members will have their memberships extended by a year), the postcard set and the Sacramento History Journal Vol. 5 No. 2-4 featuring photos of Breuner’s and Weinstock & Lubin holiday displays and essays on the history of Sacramento’s department stores.

\$250: Helper Level contributors will have their names listed on the event program and a panel at the Holiday Display site, receive the postcard set and the Sacramento History Journal Vol. 5 No. 2-4. They will also receive a two-year membership in the Sacramento County Historical Society (existing members will have their memberships extended). They will also be invited to a gala event to be held the day of the Grand Reveal of the display.

\$500: Supporter Level contributors will have their names listed on the event program and a panel at the Holiday Display site, with the option of a company or organization logo (8”x12” maximum logo size.) They will also receive a three-year membership in the Sacramento County Historical Society (existing members will have their memberships extended), the postcard set and the Sacramento History Journal Vol. 5, No. 2-4. They will also be invited to the gala event to be held the day of the Grand Reveal of the display.

\$1000: Patron Level contributors will have their names listed on the event program and a panel at the Holiday Display site, with the option of a company or organization logo (12”x24” maximum logo size.) They will also receive a five-year membership in the Sacramento County Historical Society (existing members will have their memberships extended), the postcard set and the Sacramento History Journal Vol. 5 No. 2-4. Contributors at this level will also be invited to the gala event to be held the day of the Grand Reveal .

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**I Want to Help Bring Back the Breuner’s Holiday Display!**

Contribution amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I would prefer that my donation be anonymous. \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to SCHS. Mail to SCHS- Holiday Display Fund, PO Box 160065, Sacramento, CA 95816-0065