

Golden Nuggets

September 2008

SCHS Presents

Sacramento's Brewing History
Tuesday, September 30, 7 PM

→ **Sacramento History Museum** ←
 101 I Street, Old Sacramento



City Brewery on the northeast corner of 12th and H Sts., 1881. Established about 1865, it was one of only two Sacramento pioneer breweries to survive past 1900. SAMCC

Please join us for an illustrated presentation by historian Ed Carroll at the Sacramento History Museum (the former Discovery Museum in Old Sacramento) highlighting its latest exhibit, "Capital Brew: Hops, Barrels, and Bootleggers." The Museum will be open free of charge to SCHS members and guests. After the program, take time to enjoy the interesting artifacts and photographs assembled for the exhibit. Sacramento has a rich history associated with brewing, including farming the hops so vital to the brew. This evening promises to be a great start to SCHS' 2008-2009 program year!

Note: This month's program will be held on the 5th Tuesday of September—and at 101 I St.

Fast Connections by Stage

By Mary Helmich, Past President, SCHS

Butterfield. We all recognize the name, but most of us only know that it was a stage line. One hundred and fifty years ago this month, John Butterfield of Utica, New York, launched the Butterfield Overland Mail Company and revolutionized mail and passenger service. He offered stage service twice a week between St. Louis, Missouri and San Francisco, covering the 2800-mile distance in a record 25 days!

Before then, the San Antonio and San Diego Mail Line, begun in July 1857 by James Birch, provided the first transcontinental service, crossing 1,475 miles of desert and mountains between Texas and California in 52 days. What the two stage lines offered in mail delivery could be likened in today's terms to the contrast between a fiber optic network and a dial-up computer connection. In the mid-19th century, bridging the continent with such unheard of speed elicited excitement and tremendous national pride. (Continued, page 2)



Concord stagecoach on a mountain road.

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The Overland Mail Company followed the so-called "Oxbow Route," skirting the Rocky Mountains and heavy winter snows by traveling south through Texas, the New Mexico Territory, and Southern California, before rolling on to San Francisco. Butterfield, in association with the principals for Wells, Fargo & Company (for the American Express Company) invested more than a million dollars organizing the stage line. They cleared mountain passes, dug water wells, set up about 150 stations, purchased vehicles, horses, mules, and feed, as well as hired 800 employees!

Mail was the stage company's first priority and it went through almost without exception in the 25 days required by federal contract. Adventurous passengers could also travel the entire route for \$200. However, individuals could carry only 25 pounds of baggage. Rolling at breakneck speeds, the stages traveled twenty-four hours a day with no overnight hotel stops—only hurried intervals at stations where the teams were changed and quick meals taken.

Although the Butterfield Overland Mail Co. did not come to Sacramento, it did have an impact on the City. Mail and passengers from the stages traveled up river from San Francisco by steamboat. Here on Sacramento's waterfront, other stage lines vied to transport them further. Butterfield's speedy stages promoted the value of fast connections—something still appreciated in California.



Loading passengers in San Francisco
Harper's Weekly, December 11, 1858

The Southern Pacific Shops Railyards Project National Register Update

By William Burg



C. P. R. R., Shops, Sacramento, Cal., J.J. Reilly, Marysville, Calif., [187-?]. View looks northwest across Sutter Lake. At left are Hammer shop and Rolling Mill. Power House Tower is at right rear.

Photo © CSRM Library

For the past year, difficult negotiations have been underway between four local preservation groups—including the Sacramento County Historical Society—and Thomas Enterprises, the developer of Sacramento's historic Central Pacific (later Southern Pacific) Railroad Shops. Discussions of the footprint of the historic district proposed for the National Register of Historic Places also involve the Sacramento Old City Association (SOCA), the California State Railroad Museum Foundation, and the Sacramento Trust for Historic Preservation. In recent months, these partners have met with Thomas Enterprises and representatives of California's Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) to try to finalize boundaries for the district. OHP will make recommendations to Registry officials. Opinions remain divided, but discussion continues.

The original proposed district was to include a football-shaped area, following the historic route of the Central Pacific main line on the

north, and the southern edge of the existing Shops buildings to the south, with a long tail of land extending to Front and K Street, where the Central Pacific Railroad officially began with the 1863 groundbreaking. All parties agree that the Shops buildings in the center are significant, and should obviously be part of a district, but the outer boundaries are less clear. Over the past year, the nomination area has changed, moving closer to the Shops buildings and existing tracks to the south and east, but retaining the old railroad line as its northern boundary.

To be included in a National Register Historic District, a property must exhibit both significance and integrity. Significance is defined as the importance of the site to history. This includes consideration of its relationship to the general patterns of American history, the lives of historically significant individuals, its artistic or craftsmanship values, or the potential for archaeological remains to be discovered. Integrity is a measure of how intact the site is, compared to its state during the period of its significance. The Shops buildings are largely intact, but the remains of the Transcontinental Railroad right of way are a more complex issue.

Even though there are currently rails on part of the route, and rails were only recently removed from much of the right of way, railroad tracks are hard to justify for historic districts.* Often this is because railroad tracks, ties and roadbed are replaced over their operating life, leaving little original historic material behind. Unless the applicants can clearly show that there are existing artifacts along the railroad's route, objects that can be protected, preserved and interpreted, the district's proposed boundaries will be difficult to defend.

Thomas Enterprises is open to the idea of a historic district, but is concerned that a district could limit future uses of the land around the Shops. They are also worried that a National Register District that differs from the City of Sacramento's current more narrowly defined historic district would invalidate the Environmental Impact Report generated for

the Railyards project. If a National Register district is approved, tax credits for historic preservation would significantly aid the efforts of Thomas Enterprises—along with State Parks and the Railroad Museum Foundation—to restore the Shops buildings. A property cannot be declared a National Register Historic District unless a majority of property owners agree to the nomination, so without Thomas Enterprises' agreement, the nomination will not take place.

For all parties, this process is a learning experience. OHP staff must base their considerations on the significance and integrity of the site, not its potential future uses, marketability and current plans, or the desires of the community. Their recommendations regarding the nomination are passed along to the State Historical Resources Commission and the Keeper of the National Register. A successful nomination will require more meetings, more information, and more work by all parties to reach a mutually beneficial agreement.

William Burg is a graduate student in the CSUS Public History program, a board member of the Sacramento Old City Association, and author of **Sacramento's Streetcars** and **Sacramento's Southside Park**, Arcadia Publishing. He has been a docent at the California State Railroad Museum for five years.

*Editor's note: Promontory Point, Utah, where the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroad lines joined to complete the transcontinental railroad in 1868, is now part of Golden Spike National Historic Site.



Looking east from the Jibboom Street bridge, over the yard tracks of the Southern Pacific shops complex. The historic shops buildings, center of the proposed district, are to the right beyond Interstate 5.

SACRAMENTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Out & About

Date	Time	Event	Place & Contact
SEPTEMBER 13 Saturday	10 AM to 4 PM	Columbia Gold Rush Days Volunteers in period attire, special tours, stage-coach rides, period bowling, a fire bucket brigade, children's activities and a concert by the Great Motherlode Brass & Reed Band.	Columbia State Historic Park Off Highway 49, three miles north of Sonora Information: 209-588-9128
14 Sunday	11AM to 4 PM	Bridging the Past to the Future Chinese Culture Fair with music, dance, special programs, demonstrations, games and hands-on activities from cooking to tai chi. Biographical talks by noted Asian American writers.	Sacramento Chinatown Mall 3rd-5th & I-J Streets www.yeefow.com/culturefair/index.html
26 Friday	6 PM to 8 PM Ongoing Capital Brew exhibit, 10-5	Octoberfest (yes, in September) Sample brews from leading local microbreweries and celebrate Sacramento's rich brewing history while you enjoy the Capitol Brew exhibit. A benefit for Museum educational programs.	Sacramento History Museum 101 I Street, Old Sacramento Call for details: 916-264-7057
OCTOBER 28 Tues	7:00 PM	"Knights of the Lash" Gary Kurutz, Director of Special Collections at the California State Library, will present an illustrated talk on noted California stage drivers. SCHS event open to all at downtown venue. Mark your calendars.	Wells Fargo Center 400 Capitol Mall, Sacramento www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=25065