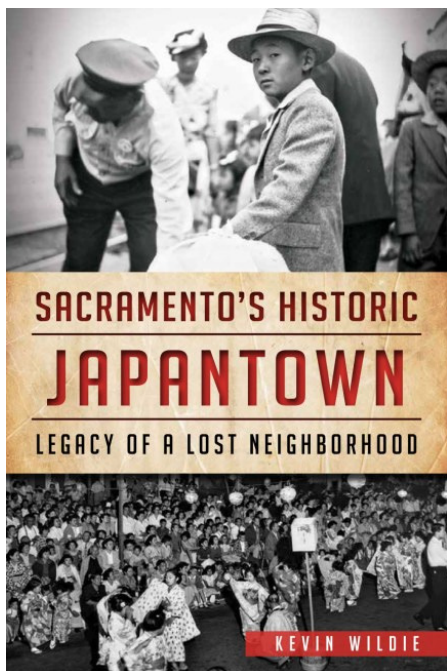


Golden Nuggets

SACRAMENTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NOV-DEC 2013, NO. 3-4

Tuesday Nov. 19, 7:00 PM (Social Time, 6:30)
Kevin Wildie: Sacramento's Historic Japantown
Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society Building, 5380 Elvas Ave., Sacramento



By 1910, Japanese pioneers had created a vibrant community in the heart of Sacramento—one of the largest Japantowns in California. Spilling out from Fourth Street, J Town offered sumo tournaments, authentic Japanese meals, Kabuki and eastern medicine to a generation of Delta field laborers. Then, in 1942 following Pearl Harbor, orders for Japanese American incarceration forced residents to abandon their homes and their livelihoods. Even in the face of anti-Japanese sentiment, the neighborhood businesses and cultural centers endured, and it wasn't until the 1950s, when the Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project reshaped the city center, that J Town was truly lost. Drawing on oral histories and previously unpublished photographs, author Kevin Wildie chronicles stories of immigration, incarceration and community solidarity, crafting an unparalleled account of Japantown's legacy.

Kevin Wildie is a history professor at Consumnes River College in Sacramento and Yuba College in Marysville, specializing in U.S. and Asian American history. This talk promises to be a thorough overview of a fascinating part of our history. Books will be available for sale and signing. Come early for social time, snacks, and the best opportunity for off-street parking. On street parking is also available.

Tuesday, December 10, 7 PM (Social Time, 6:30)
A Taste of History Holiday Social: Food, Food Stories, and Fun!
Panel Discussion with Food Experts
Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society Building, 5380 Elvas Ave., Sacramento

Holidays are about friends, family and indulging in an abundance of food and conversation. This year's annual **Taste of History Holiday Social** will be no exception. We'll be feted by local food writers, authors, and historians, who will share their stories about our region's rich agricultural and food traditions.

Come prepared to share your favorite food stories at StoryStation. Isaac Gonzalez and Kimberly Graham will interview you -or schedule an interview- to record your stories for posterity. With your permission, the stories will be edited into a podcast and posted on our website.

Since all this food discussion will make you hungry, we'll provide tasty, traditional holiday desserts. We'd love you to bring your friends and family - and a home cooked treat of your own to share - savory or sweet. If possible bring the recipe to share, too. We'd like to know how your recipe became part of your family tradition.

Board Member Maryellen Burns, author of *Lost Restaurants of Sacramento and Their Recipes* will moderate a panel that includes her co-author, Keith Burns; JoAnn Neft, author of *Placer County Real Food* and *The Art of Real Food*; and Elizabeth Nosek, from the California Museum. This promises to be a most enlightening evening, and (we think!) a great way to launch the holiday festivities. Be sure to come early enough to meet and greet. Doors open at 6:15, the talks begin at 7:00 pm.



Some Observations on Christmas Celebrations
In 1875 Sacramento

Compiled by PatTurse from Dec. 25, 1875 *Sacramento Daily Union*

The institution of the observance of Christmas as the anniversary of the birth of Christ ... has passed beyond the churchly intent, and is now recognized by all classes as a season of rejoicing, gift-making and general congratulation — a season when the rough edges disappear, the sharp corners are withdrawn, and the more generous impulses dominate. Especially is this so in the capital city of California. From Germany comes the custom, now most prevalent, of setting up ever-green trees, loading them with fanciful ornaments, and illuminating them with colored tapers. Indeed, in Germany Christmas eve early came to be known as the "Children's Eve," a festival occasion of especial note; and this element of the anniversary particularly has come to be a custom observed with great generality in our locale, and at the same time a merry-making period, domestic and social as well as religious.



IN SACRAMENTO, the occasion has always been one of more than usual importance, and the people have here made it a very marked season of the year. Socially, this community has been, and is, constituted for making the anniversary a peculiarly happy one. For days the streets have been thronged with people purchasing tokens to evidence affection and friendly feeling; the shops have been thronged and the fancy stores nearly depleted of their varied stocks.

The children have had but one thought for a week, and that was of Christmas. Impatience grew laggard and the heels of time seemed loaded with slothfulness. Last evening time long looked for festival dawned as night settled — dawned in hundreds of homes by the cheerful glow of firelight and the blaze of jet and taper. From estimates closely made by the dealers in evergreens we ascertain that fully 600 Christmas trees were sold during the week, one dealer alone selling over half that number, it is fair to presume that fully 200 others have been set up. and that in all, some 800 trees have been, or will be in the coming week, decorated for Christmastide.

Throughout the city we found, from richest to poorest, a hearty season of rejoicing, and not greater

with the former than the latter, though the tokens of affection were measured by more costly gifts and more pretentious observance. In some homes the children's festival amounted to a lavishing of the rarest and most expensive gifts, and the Christmas trees were bazars of great beauty and worth. At some of the churches the eve was celebrated, at others the event is yet to come under other date, for all the week is deemed fit for such celebration.

AT THE SIXTH STREET M. E. CHURCH there was a long programme. At 7 o'clock there was a large gathering of Sunday-school children, and it would have been greater still but for the inclement weather. The church was elaborately decorated. Festoons of evergreen were woven across the church in various directions from wall to wall, drooping with graceful curves beneath the groined roof. At three points where the festoons crossed were hung three large emblems worked in evergreen and twined with ivy; a six pointed star, a cross and a crown wreath. On either side of the rostrum stood a large pine tree, each loaded with presents for the children and ornamented with various articles. Between the trees hung in mid-air in evergreen and gilt the words, "Merry Christmas. — Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men." Until order was called by Superintendent Young, all was buzz and whispering expectation, suppressed joyful feeling, and a heavy undercurrent of congratulation and "happy-wishing." [A detailed description of the program followed. It included prayer, scriptural reading, songs, poetry and other recitations.]

Then came a distribution of the presents, which was accomplished by four persons at the trees and eight in the aisles as messengers. All the children received gifts, and nearly as many of the adults were treated likewise. Some of these were very amusing, and caused great...merriment. As when Mr. Davies received a doll, put up as a modern belle, with all the "fixings," and Dr. Clayton was compelled to stand up and receive a Jumping Jack and so on with a number of others. The pastor was remembered with a new hat, and most of the prominent members of the congregation with gifts, useful as well as ornamental. The children received toys, candies, books, clothing, etc. After the gifts were distributed, a song was sung and the audience dismissed with the benediction, all departing well pleased with the conducting and result of the festival....

Other church celebrations described included Westminster Presbyterian, M.E. South, Calvary Baptist, First Baptist, the German Lutheran church, and the Kingsley Chapel, where cages of live canaries hung from festoons of evergreen, filling the air with "joyous wailings."

Rancho del Paso Historical Society Disbands

By Ray Oliver

We were saddened to learn recently that our fellow historians of the Rancho del Paso Historical Society have disbanded their society after 20 years of events and contributions to the Sacramento area's historical knowledge.

Bob Kent, founder and several times president of the Rancho del Paso group, explained that they simply ran out of people willing or able to take on the leadership jobs necessary to maintain an active organization. There have been no elections for officers or board members for two years because nobody would accept a nomination for an office. The incumbents simply continued to serve after their terms expired. "We just got worn out" Bob said, "some of us have been involved for the entire history of the society."

Earlier this year the society sent a mail survey to the membership asking if the group should continue and if so, would the recipient accept an office. There was only one "yes" response but that person lived in the Bay Area. The society's board then decided to disband.

The Rancho del Paso Historical Society came about because Bob and other history minded residents of the north county- some of them members of the Sacramento County Historical Society- felt a need to preserve the history of the area. The society's first meeting was in October 1993 at the McClellan Aviation Museum when some 40 interested people heard a former McClellan AFB historian speak on the history of the 1844 Mexican land grant of some 44,000 acres. The grant area now includes Cal Expo, North Sacramento, Arden Arcade, McClellan Park, North Highlands, Rio Linda and about half of Carmichael. Membership grew to about 200 but declined in recent years. It was a nationwide society with members in several states including Virginia and Hawaii.

Society members soon became involved in their own research of the area's history for articles for their newsletter, *The Rancho Rambler*, and a periodical entitled *Rancho Journal*. Regular programs featured local history speakers, bus trips to nearby historical sites, essay contests for high school students, pot luck suppers, spaghetti feeds with musical and history programs, and annual garden parties.

Nellie Jellison edited most of the issues of *The Rancho Rambler*. It featured the usual news of meetings, speakers, programs and events as well brief articles by members. Subjects included Mexican land grants in the Sacramento area, local bridges and buildings, Lloyd Tevis, the Lincoln Highway, the Globe Iron Works, Town and Country Center, Sutter's Fort, the Denver-Gilbert duel, Samuel Norris and the winning history essays by local high school students. Nellie also did much of the editing and preparation for the *Rancho Journal* that compared favorably to the Sacramento county Historical Society's *Golden Notes*, especially the 2008 issue on Del Paso Park written by Nellie.

The annual garden parties were very popular and always well attended. One of the more memorable was at the Neillo home in Carmichael, said to be the oldest house in Sacramento. It was the home of John Mackey who managed the rancho when it raised some the best racehorses in the world. The grounds include the last undeveloped land of the Rancho del Paso. The last two garden parties, last June and September 2012, were at Guy and Nellie Jellison's ranch behind Del Paso Park.

Again, we are saddened that the Rancho del Paso Historical Society will no longer be a part of Sacramento's history community. It will be missed. Archives of *The Rancho Rambler* and *Rancho Journal* are in the Sacramento Room of the Sacramento Public Library and in the California State Library.

Ray Oliver has been a longtime member of the both the Rancho del Paso and Sacramento County Historical Societies. Historian/journalist Lance Armstrong wrote a two-part series on the history of Rancho del Paso published in the Valley Community Newspapers in the spring of 2011. Both Bob Kent and Ray Oliver were quoted in the articles, which may be of interest to those who have not seen them as well as those who would like to revisit them. A link to both articles as well as to a number of others related to the Arden Arcade Carmichael area is at www.valcomnews.com/?s=%22rancho+del+paso%22. Those who wish to find the articles at a library should view 44343 the April 28 and March 11, 2011 issues.

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Please deliver by Nov. 14, 2013

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GOLDEN NUGGETS

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Online at www.sachistoricalsociety.org/#!/newsletter

Out & ABOUT

DATE	TIME	EVENT	PLACE & CONTACT
November 19 Tuesday	10 AM	Meet President Lincoln Celebrate Veteran's Remembrance Day and the 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address, as Sons of Union Vets of Civil War recall Lincoln's elegy to vets. Free parking opposite 10th St. entry	Old City Cemetery, GAR Plot 10th & Broadway, Sacramento 916-808-5621 www.oldcitycemetery.com
November 29-30 Fri- Sat	10 AM-5 PM	Small Train Holiday Scale and model train displays, interpretive handcar rides, music, more. Adults \$10, kids \$5	California State Railroad Museum 111 I Street, Sacramento 916-445-6645 californiastaterailroadmuseum.org
December 1 Sunday	6 PM	Black Tie and Santa Preview Elk Grove Historical Society 8th annual Old Fashioned Christmas with wine, caviar, hors d'oeuvres and good friends. Tickets, \$25, but they are limited so act soon.	EGHS 9941 East Stockton Blvd, Elk Grove Reserve your tickets at www.elkgrovehistoricalsociety.com/contact/?msgSubject=367
December 15 Sunday	1:30 PM	La Pastorela de Sacramento Modern retelling of Mexico's traditional Christmas pageant, then a festive holiday ballet folklorico. New, exciting free holiday cultural program sponsored by La Raza Galeria Posada.	Convention Center Plaza 13th & K Street, Sacramento Info: 916-446-5143 www.lgrp.org