

Golden Nuggets

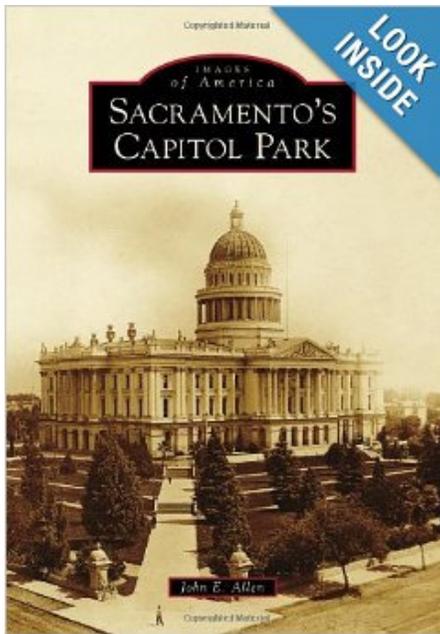
SACRAMENTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JAN-FEB 2014, NO. 5-6

Tuesday Jan. 28, 7:00 PM (Social Time, 6:30)

John Allen: Sacramento's Capitol Park

Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society Building, 5380 Elvas Ave., Sacramento



Construction on the California State Capitol began during the Civil War using stone, brick, and iron, showing confidence in the future. The capitol building showed that California had come a long way from the days of its transient, chaotic roots, born of the Gold Rush. Once the capitol was located in Sacramento in 1854, there was still no guarantee that the city would remain its permanent home. When it was completed in 1873, it was the largest structure of its day west of the Mississippi River. Its presence has continued to not only dominate the Sacramento landscape for a century and a half but has also come to shape the very outlook and future of Sacramento and of California itself. The state capitol and its majestic dome have become the iconic symbol of the city. John Allen will share his findings with us on Tuesday, Jan 28.

A longtime SCHS member who is currently a professor of history at American River College, Allen presented an in depth look at Fort Ross to SCHS last year. This book is a reflection of his dedication to his adopted home and an homage to a building he has always loved. Books will be available for sale and signing. The talk begins at 7, but come early for social time, snacks, and the best opportunity for off-street parking.

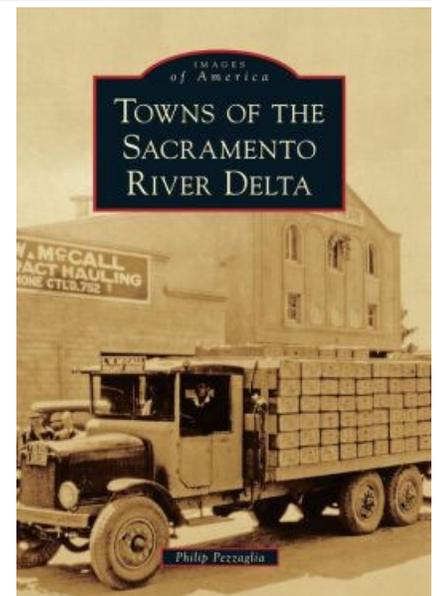
Tuesday, February 24, 7 PM (Social Time, 6:30)

Philip Pezzaglia: Towns of the Sacramento River Delta

Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society Building, 5380 Elvas Ave., Sacramento

What can be considered the first major exploration of the Sacramento River, from its mouth northward, began on May 13, 1817, when Padres Duran and Abella and 20 other men under the command of Lt. Louis Antonio Arguello sailed in two launches up the river. They continued north until May 20, 1817, when they turned back. The group recorded their point of farthest exploration by carving a cross into an oak tree; some believe this point is near the present-day town of Freeport. Three decades later, Clarksburg was established, followed by Walnut Grove, Paintersville, Rio Vista, Onsibo, Freeport, Courtland, Emmaton, Isleton, Vorden, Ryde, Hood, and Locke. Each one of the settlements has its own exciting tale about its founders and the origins of the name that it was given.

Philip Pezzaglia, author of the Arcadia Press *Images of America* series *Towns of the Sacramento River Delta*, is curator of the Rio Vista Museum and a well-known regional historian. He wrote a column entitled "Exploring Rio Vista's Past" for the weekly *River News-Herald* for a dozen or so years. He is a member of the board of directors of both the Rio Vista Museum and the Sacramento River Delta Historical Society and has served on the Boards of many other local historical, civic and charitable organizations. His family roots date to the early 1870s and his columns have often featured early settlers of the river delta. Please join us on Tuesday, Feb. 28th at 6:30 (for snacks and visiting) or for the 7 PM talk.



The Milk Bottle that Protected America

By Ray Oliver



The Milk Bottle was a vital part of the defense of the United States during the Cold War years.

No, not the glass milk bottle that many of us remember using before just about everything came in coated paper or plastic containers. The defensive “milk bottles” were titanium bolts used for fastening the wings onto Boeing B-47 Stratojet bombers that were part of the nuclear deterrence in the 1950s. The size—about 12 inches long—and shape of the bolts reminded many of the glass milk bottles, which resulted in their unofficial nicknames.

The B-47s were designed as high altitude aircraft but improvements to the Soviet Union's air defenses forced the bombers to operate at lower altitudes and use tactics that created new stresses on their structures and especially on the wing bolts. Numerous incidents showed the potential for failures of the bolts that could bring about possible failures of the wings themselves. Pilots just hate to have their wings fall off.

In 1958 the Strategic Air Command (SAC) grounded its fleet of more than one thousand B-47s and established Project Milk Bottle to replace the bolts and make other needed modifications. Normally the modification work would have been done at an Air Force depot in Oklahoma but that facility was involved in similar work on the B-52 Stratofortress that also had very high priority so much of the work had to go to other Air Force depots and contractors.

The depot at McClellan AFB (officially the Sacramento Air Materiel Area) was tasked with a four-month, high priority program to modify 291 of the bombers. McClellan usually worked on fighter aircraft but the commander saw this as an opportunity to give the workers training and experience to show the depot's capabilities.

When the B-47s arrived McClellan workers found the wing mounts so heavily corroded that many of the Milk Bottle bolts and nuts were fused together. Rather than looking for more costly and time consuming ways to remove the bolts the McClellan workers were able to modify available tools, such as a wrench with a handle long enough to be pushed by three men, and an instrument to inject a solution to help loosen the oxidant within the pin fittings with minimum structural damage to the aircraft. Some of the techniques developed by the McClellan workers were later used to correct structural problems with the B-52 and C-5A aircraft.

One day the McClellan commander happened to see some of the used Milk Bottles being used as doorstops and paperweights. He ordered that all of the bolts be turned in for salvage.

In 1983 when we were building the McClellan Aviation Museum—later renamed the Aerospace Museum of California—we hoped to find a Milk Bottle for display. An item in a local newspaper resulted in a call from a former employee who just happened to have one of the bolts, which she donated to the museum. She had kept the bolt in her smoking patio so it was stained yellow from the nicotine. Perhaps a lesson about the effects of



smoking? We cleaned it to its original metallic grey and made it part of the museum display. The Milk Bottle is not currently on display in the Aerospace Museum but there are many other items of historical interest to be seen there.

Left: “Milk Bottle” bolt image, c. 1983 by Ray Oliver

Request for Nominations

Sacramento County Historical Society Annual Awards of Excellence

Each year the Sacramento County Historical Society recognizes deserving individuals and organizations for outstanding achievements, generally over the preceding year, that further interest in and preservation of the unique history of the Sacramento Region. You are invited to submit nominations in the categories of media and publications, education, and preservation pertaining to Sacramento History. You may offer nominations in one or more categories. You may also submit nominations for **Special Achievement** in an area that does not readily pertain to the categories below, if it can be demonstrated that a significant contribution to history has been made. Primary categories follow.

EDUCATION: For achievement in educating students and/or the public in Sacramento area history. Activities may include formal and informal classes; docent and tour guide programs; and development and installation of exhibits, works of art, and other educational and interpretive displays. Last year's recipients were Shawn Peter and Michael Munson of the Downtown Sacramento Partnership for the Downtown Walking Tours program.

PRESERVATION: For achievement in preservation and restoration of sites, structures, artifacts, documents, and memorabilia of historic significance to the Sacramento area. Activities may include research, physical preservation or restoration, and outreach to the public, organizations or individuals. Last year's award went to Carina Lampkin and family (of the Blackbird Restaurant) for adaptive restoration and re-use of a historically significant structure.

MEDIA: For achievement in research, writing, editing, and publishing historical (nonfiction) books, scholarly papers, articles, informational brochures or producing documentary films or videos or other communications media that further interest in the history of the Sacramento area. Last year's recipient was Annette Kassis for her in depth book, *Weinstock's: Sacramento's Finest Department Store*.

Awards Nominations should be submitted to SCHS postmarked by Feb. 19 using the form below or a photocopy of form.

SACRAMENTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY Awards of Excellence Nomination Form

Please write or print clearly. Use this form or a photocopy of it.

Nominee _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Category (select one):

- Preservation Award of Excellence
- Education Award of Excellence
- Media/Publications Award of Excellence
- Special Achievement

Submitted By _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

IMPORTANT: Describe the outstanding achievement on reverse or on attached sheet.

Please do NOT exceed 1 page. Please mail to SCHS, PO Box 160065, Sacramento, CA 95816-0065, postmarked by Feb 19th.

2013 Board of Directors

Please deliver by Jan. 11, 2013

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GOLDEN NUGGETS

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 September to June
 Editorial & Layout: Patricia Turse

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

Out & ABOUT

DATE	TIME	EVENT	PLACE & CONTACT
January 16 Thursday	7 PM	Devoted to the Union: Sacramento & the Civil War Photo exhibit kickoff lecture, The Civil War at 150: Remembering Sacramento & California Stories by historian Glenna Matthews & more. Limited space, tix online, \$15 or \$100 sponsor package	Center for Sacramento History 551 Sequoia Pacific Blvd, Sacramento 916-808-7072 www.centerforsacramentohistory.org
January 19 Sunday	10 AM	Sasha Abramsky: Stories From My Family From Siberian Labor Camps to London's Beth Din; From the Yeshiva to the Communist Party to Social Democracy.	Jewish Genealogical Society of Sac. Albert Einstein Residence Center 1935 Wright St., Sacramento www.jgss.org
Feb 1 Saturday	10 AM to 5 PM or similar	Sacramento Museum Day Get ready to discover, explore and appreciate the rich and amazing variety of museums available in the area at little or no cost during this hugely popular annual event. Participant list online at right.	Downtown Sacramento Partnership 916-808-7777 www.downtownsac.org/events/sacramento-museum-day-5 OR www.sacmuseums.org
Thru Feb. 28 Daily 10-5	10 AM to 5PM	California State Parks: 150 Years Exhibit featuring compelling and diverse historic images of parks along with a variety of important cultural and natural history objects illustrating role State Parks plays in California's history and identity	California State Railroad Museum 101 I Street, Old Sacramento www.csrmf.org (What's New link)