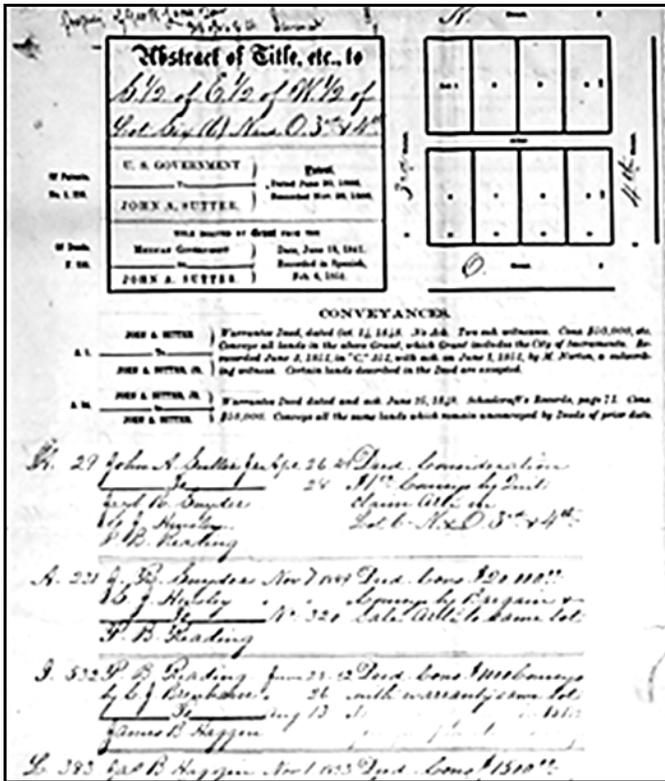


Golden Nuggets

SACRAMENTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NOV-DEC., 2016, VOL.3-4

SCHS Presents
Mark Davidson on Gold Rush Real Estate: People, Problems and Procedures
Tuesday, November 22, 2016 (Social Time, 6:30)
Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society Building, 5380 Elvas Ave., Sacramento



Mark Davidson's 30 plus years in the local Title industry gave him an up-close view of Sacramento Real Estate over recent years. But he has long been fascinated by historical land transactions and especially by the people and stories behind those transactions.

Join us for entertaining and informative stories about the challenges of Gold Rush era real estate. His program will be illustrated by many displays he created to show how real estate transformed local history. This is a follow-up to a presentation he gave about a year ago.

A fifth generation Sacramentan, Davidson's American family roots date to Jamestown, Virginia. He is proud to have seventh generation grandchildren. A working artist, Davidson's website is at markrdavidson.com.

Left: Portion of nineteenth century Abstract of Title conveying lot at the "South 1/2 of the East 1/2 of the West 1/2 of Lot 6 between N & O and 3rd and 4th streets" (now part of the Crocker Art Museum parking lot) from John A Sutter Jr. to Jacob A Snyder, S. J. Hensley and P.B. Reading, showing the beginning of the chain of title.

SCHS Presents A Taste of History: Japantown
 Slide Show, Wakano Ura restaurant stories, short film, AND Japanese food
THIRD TUESDAY, December 20: Food & Social @ 6:30, Presentation @ 7:30 PM
Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society Building, 5380 Elvas Ave., Sacramento

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED: 80 spaces available Members FREE, \$10 donation for guests

For our annual "Taste of History" December event, Sacramento County Historical Society presents "A Taste of Japantown," a culinary examination of a vanished Sacramento neighborhood, featuring food, speakers, and sharing of Sacramento mealtime traditions. **Note that event is on December 20, 3rd Tuesday of month.**

Sacramento's Japanese-American community emerged in the 1890s and flourished through the early 20th century in a busy neighborhood centered on M Street, today known as Capitol Avenue, between the State Capitol and the Sacramento River. In a series of dramatic reversals, the neighborhood was lost after the dual shocks of internment during World War II and the destruction of the neighborhood by redevelopment. Sacramento's Japanese-American community proved their resilience by carrying their communities and traditions to new neighborhoods.

The food traditions of Japantown included grocery and specialty food stores, restaurants, foods associated with community gatherings and special occasions, foods



Wakano Ura Chop Suey
 Author's collection

served around the family table, recipes borne of necessity, hardship and rationing during internment, the importance of rice as a California crop and a dietary staple, and even stories of bootleg sake production during Prohibition.

To guide us on this journey to Japantown, SCHS Vice-President William Burg will provide a slide show of historic photos planned for use in a 2017 Japantown exhibit at the California History Museum. Priscilla Ouchida, Sacramento native and former executive director of the national Japanese-American Citizens' League, will share stories of Wakano Ura, a restaurant founded by her grandfather that featured both Chinese and Japanese recipes during its 90 year history. CSUS history professor Jeffrey Dym will show his short film "A Neighborhood Lost—Sacramento's Japantown."

Sacramento County Historical Society will provide appetizers, sides, and desserts from Oto's Marketplace, including traditional items that may have been found in Sacramento's Japantown, in addition to more contemporary selections. To order accurately, it is vital that we know the number attending, so **RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED**. Free entry to this event is a benefit for SCHS members who reserve online. Non-member tickets are \$10. Space is very limited so please reserve a seat as soon as possible at tasteofjapantown.brownpapertickets.com. Member reservation "cost" will be 0, nonmembers will pay \$10, including the brownpapertickets.com fee. The attendees list will come from the website.

If you do not have internet access, you may leave your request at 916-572-9858, but please speak clearly, spell your last name, and leave a callback number so we can confirm your reservation. We expect to fill up quickly, as admission is limited to the first 80 reservations. **Reservations close Dec. 13 or when we have 80 people.**

Remembering Bill Mahan

By Clare Ellis

William E. "Bill" Mahan, who taught generations of Sacramentans as a high school history teacher for 14 years and at Sacramento City College for 22 years, died August 18th in Sacramento at the age of 85. Educator, historian, writer, voracious reader, and art lover, Bill was also an avid runner and cross-country coach, a tour guide at the Old City Cemetery, a volunteer in the Central Library's Sacramento Room, and a friend to many.

Born in 1930 in Illinois, Bill grew up there and in Wisconsin. He received his undergraduate degree from San Jose State University and his master's in history from Stanford University.



Bill's love of history did not begin and end in the classroom. He had his students research early Sacramento pioneers interred in the Old City Cemetery and with the students developed a tour he presented annually for many years. He was the first person to utilize the cemetery as a historical resource, helping pave the way some years later for John Bettencourt, Bob LaPerriere and others on the Old City Cemetery Committee to organize its popular public tours, which in turn eventually led to the revitalization of the Old City Cemetery.

Bill published articles in *California History*, the journal of the California Historical Society, the *Sacramento Bee*, and elsewhere, and wrote and produced television programs on local history and public art. In the 1980s he and artist Darrell Forney, who both taught at Sacramento City College, spearheaded the effort to have the 1937 Ralph Stackpole WPA mural in the college auditorium restored. Bill served on the board of the Sacramento County Historical Society and compiled a comprehensive index to the SCHS periodical, *Golden Notes*. He was appointed to the Sacramento Historical Landmarks Commission.

After he retired Bill continued to give to the community. He worked at the voter registration table at Sacramento City College, and volunteered at Happy Tails animal adoption center as well as the Sacramento Room, the rare book room at the Central Library. He came to the Sacramento Room every week for years and was a great asset. He worked on many projects and was outstanding at assisting people who came in to do serious research.

Bill Mahan lived an active full life, touching many other lives. What is written here does not begin to detail all of his interests and accomplishments. Our sincere sympathy to Penny Harding, his partner of 35 years, and his family, and many friends. These thoughts from Ms. Harding sum up my friend perfectly:

He was truly a good man, ready to change if it was the right thing to do, always eager to hear opinions which differed from his own, fearless until he took his last breath. His positive attitude made him a joy to live with.

Editor's Note: Clare Ellis is a longtime SCHS Board Member and a retired Sacramento Room Librarian. Bill Mahan's passing occurred just after the September-October *Golden Nuggets* went to the printer. In lieu of a memorial service, Bill suggested that donations be made to the Sacramento Room of the Sacramento Public Library where he spent so much of his volunteer time.

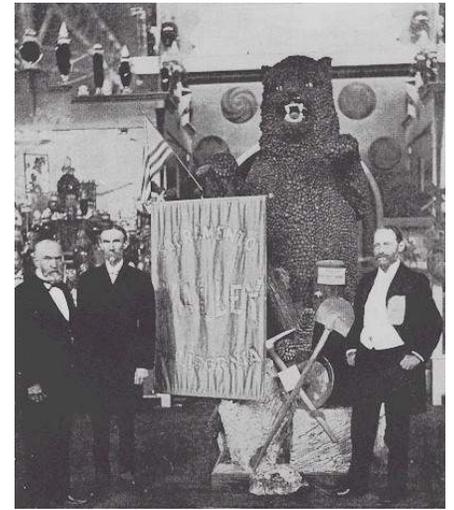
THE GREAT PRUNE BEAR OF SACRAMENTO

By William Burg

The “Great Prune Bear” was a little known but memorable Sacramento exhibit displayed at two World’s Fairs, held in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1904, and Portland, Oregon, in 1905—a huge bear made entirely of prunes!

The 1904 St. Louis fair was held to honor the centennial of the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis & Clark Expedition. In this era, California was becoming an agricultural powerhouse. After the Gold Rush, settlers realized the enormous potential of our fertile soil. Los Angeles oranges became the national symbol of California, and the Central Valley transitioned from cereal grains to fruits and vegetables.

The California display showed the full bounty of the state’s agricultural products, but its centerpiece was a life-sized model of a grizzly bear made of prunes reared up on its hind legs. Prunes were provided by the Sacramento Valley Development Association, a regional consortium of farm owners. The “Prune Bear” had gleaming teeth and flashing electric eyes, attracting visitors to enter the exhibit. Visitors could enter a contest, guessing the number of prunes used to build the bear. Winners took home boxes of prunes.



St. Louis Prune Bear Exhibit , 1904

In 1905, Portland hosted the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition celebrating the 100th anniversary of the explorers’ arrival. California was well-represented at this fair with its own building. Sacramento County displays included a model hop farm made of hops by Lovdal Brothers, a pyramid of beer bottles from the Buffalo Brewery in the shape of a giant beer bottle, a 12-foot high mural of the Great Seal of California made of dried beans, and a model of the California State Capitol made of nuts. Other displays included Pioneer Pickle Works pickles, Capitol Paste Company’s pasta, and T.H. Burden Company’s “Grandma’s Pepper Sauce.”

In the California Building’s rotunda, guarding the Capitol Building model, stood a new Great Prune Bear. In addition to its electric eyes, the 1905 Prune Bear featured a “graphophone” in its jaws (an early Edison record player.) Reports do not document whether the bear played music, spoke a pre-recorded speech, or simply emitted bear-like growls, but photos and stories of both Fairs prominently featured the Great Prune Bear.



Editor’s Epilog: The Great Prune Bear recently returned, complete with flashing electric eyes, at the Farm to Fork Festival on Capitol mall, where the Sacramento County Historical Society and Sacramento Book Collectors Club shared a booth. The text and photo above came from panels created by William Burg (far left), who also built the bear, to share a splendid story of the Sacramento Valley’s early promotions of its agriculture.

Announcing New *Let’s Make History Together* Volunteer Programs

SCHS has decided to boldly take its volunteer program to the next level. By the end of 2016 we will be unveiling a new, comprehensive volunteer program, along with exciting new volunteer opportunities. Please join our focused regional effort to elevate our unique history toward greater national recognition!

Right now, we’re looking for a few brave souls to help us initiate and develop programs and projects, working directly with our Board Members as we recognize and spotlight our regional heritage. Together, we can make a difference in building a brighter future through projects and programs that teach all of us the value of learning about where we’ve been in order to understand where we want to go. If you are interested in taking on a leadership role now on a new events committee or in helping the volunteer program coordinator develop the comprehensive program, email volunteer4schs@gmail.com, or call Gregg at (916) 799-2400.

By early 2016, more volunteer opportunities will be available in events and program planning, as well as in IT and web design, archivist/historian work, California Historical Landmark survey and more. Contact us about these future opportunities too. **Not restricted to members only.**

Check out our new web pages!



P.O. Box 160065
 Sacramento, CA 95816-0065
 Message phone: 916-572-9858
sachistoricalociety.org
 To email Board members, go to
sachistoricalociety.org

Non-Profit Org
 US Postage Paid
 Permit No. 674
 Sacramento, CA

Please deliver by Nov. 5, 2016

2016-17 Board of Directors

President: Greg Voelm
 Vice President: William Burg
 Treasurer: Eric Bradner
 Secretary: Gregg Lukenbill
 History Consortium: Dr. Bob LaPerrière
 Membership: Jenan Saunders
 Newsletter Editor: Patricia Turse

Members-at-Large

Clare Ellis, Marshall Garvey, Bill George, Tom Herzog
 Rande Tavarez

GOLDEN NUGGETS



Published at least bimonthly,
 September to June

OUT & ABOUT

DATE	TIME	EVENT	PLACE & CONTACT
Opens Sat. Nov.5 thru Sat. Dec.17	Tu.&Thur.10-6 Sat. 10-5 Wed. 12-8 Fridays 1-6 Library hours	<i>Forty Years of Preservation</i> Photographic exhibit highlighting several major preservation projects that contribute to Sacramento's unique historic identity and evolving neighborhood character. Showcases some of the collaborative achievements of the Sacramento Preservation Committee & many local groups.	Ella K. McClatchy Library 2112 22nd St., Sacramento saclibrary.org OR sacheritage.org
Saturday Nov. 19	10 AM Then make it a day... ↓	<i>Fall Color in the Old City Cemetery Gardens</i> Tour the cemetery's historic rose garden and its Hamilton Square garden. Enjoy brilliant late color, lovely rosehips, birds, and the serenity of a place where time stands still and history lives. Meet at front gate.	Sacramento Old City Cemetery 1000 Broadway at 10th, Sacramento Information: 916-448-0811 oldcitycemetery@hotmail.com (Lots of free on street parking)
Saturday Nov. 19	10 -5	<i>The Donner Party & Westward Migration</i> Interactive hands-on history program allows guests to pack a wagon, write in their journals with a quill pen, make a corn husk or rag doll, and create their own pioneer souvenir item to take home. Special Events fees: Adult \$7, youth (6-17) \$5.	Sutter's Fort State Historic Park 2701 L St., Sacramento 916-445-4422 suttersfort.org
Continuing thru Fri. Feb. 15	Monday-Friday 9-5 Closed Nov.25	<i>Afflicting the Comfortable: California's Editorial Cartoonists</i> It's been said that the duty of newspapers is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. Arguably, no one does that better than the editorial cartoonist. CA State Library and Sacramento Bee present the work of 15 talented CA cartoonists.	Stanley Mosk Library & Courts Bldg. 914 Capitol Mall library.ca.gov/calhist/exhibits 916-651-6466