

# Golden Nuggets

November 2008

SCHS Presents

## Bill Braun: The Kennedy Mine

→ Tuesday, November 18, 7:00 PM ←

Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Museum  
5380 Elvas Avenue, Sacramento

With a vertical shaft of 5912 feet, the Kennedy Mine in Jackson is famous for being one of the deepest gold mines in the world. Andrew Kennedy, an Irish immigrant, and three partners filed a claim for the mine, which was prospected in 1860, reorganized in 1886 and continuously run until 1942. The Kennedy Gold Mine produced over \$340 million in gold according to the California Department of Conservation. Its history reflects how the discovery of gold changed the way of life in California. Between 1848 and 1858, California exploded from a largely unpopulated agrarian state into a vital, fast growing and exciting part of the United States.



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Head Frame, Kennedy Mine Kennedy Mine Foundation

The mine area is open to the public weekends and holidays, offering both guided and self-guided tours. One of the tallest head frames in existence today (above) can be seen at the Kennedy Mine. It also had one of the largest stamp mills in the Mother Lode, moving tailings by means of huge wooden wheels, some of which are still standing.

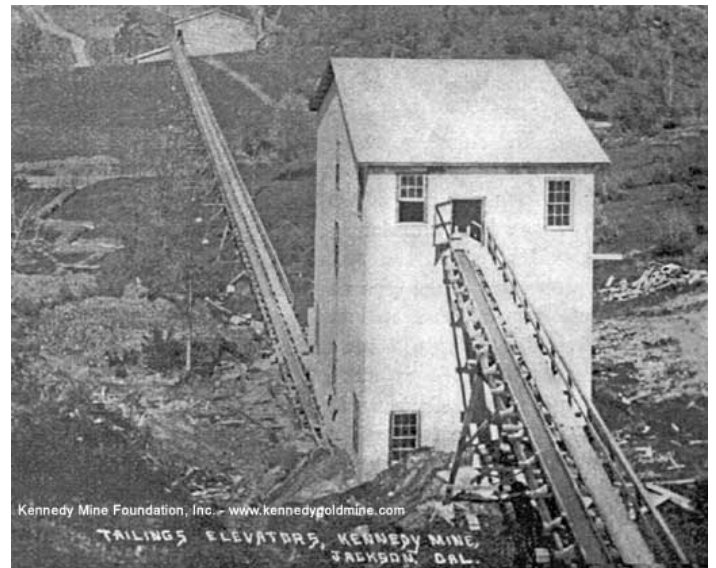


Kennedy Mine Foundation, Inc. - www.kennedygoldmine.com

North Shaft

Kennedy Mine Foundation

Bill Braun is president of the Kennedy Mine Foundation, the nonprofit organization formed in 1996 to preserve the mine. There are a great many interesting stories about this mine, and we should be in for a very enlightening evening. **Please note that the date of this program has been moved up to the third Tuesday in the month due to the busy holiday season.** The Medical Museum location is easy to find (about 1/2 mile north of the intersection of 56th & H St., which becomes Elvas) and affords ample free parking. See you there.



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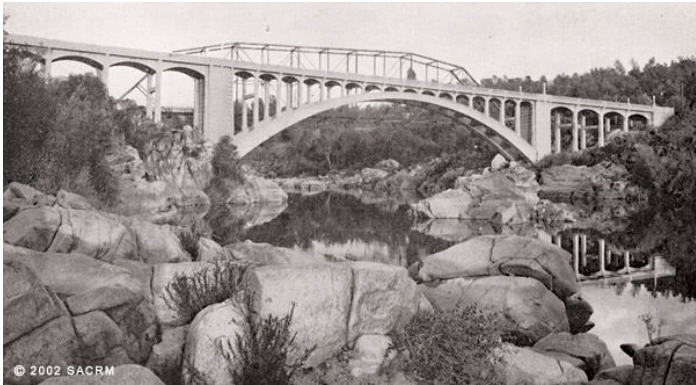
Tailings Elevator with covered wheel.  
Kennedy Mine Foundation

Kennedy Mine Foundation

## The Bridges of Sacramento County-Part 3

### The American River Bridge at Folsom

By Greg Voelm



The bridge over the American River at Folsom, circa 1924.  
-Sacramento Public Library

Being surrounded by water, the Sacramento area has to be surrounded by bridges. With the beginning of the 1900s, new bridges crossed the American River to support the development of suburban Sacramento, Carmichael and Fair Oaks.

At Folsom, a wire suspension bridge was constructed in 1857. It was destroyed by a flood after only five years. More bridges followed, culminating in the amazing steel truss bridge that first spanned the canyon in 1893. Said to be the finest bridge in California when it was built, it carried horses, cattle, early bicycles and even a few cars across the American River until the job was taken over by the present concrete Rainbow Bridge in 1917.

For years the 1893 steel bridge stood unused as traffic poured over the newer bridge a few feet away. Finally, in 1931, since the former bridge was so sturdy, it was carefully taken apart and moved 200 miles to span the Klamath River in far northern California.

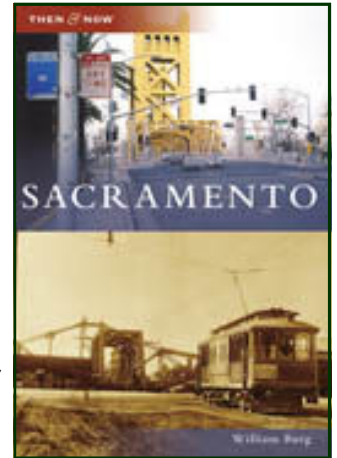
Eventually it was no longer needed on the Klamath. However, the city of Folsom wanted a bicycle bridge. So more than 100 years after it was built, it was painstakingly taken apart by workers whose great grandfathers probably were not even born when the bridge was first built. It returned to Folsom and was carefully set on the same piers on which it had stood over a century earlier. It fit perfectly and be-

came the Little Steel Bridge That Came Home.

Greg Voelm (who uses the pen name Greg Velm) is a Board member of SCHS and a past member of the Sacramento County History Commission. The above material, except for the photo, is excerpted from his 2006 book, **True Gold, History and Adventure in Sacramento and the Gold Country** ([www.truegold.org](http://www.truegold.org)).

### Arcadia Publishing Announces *Sacramento Then and Now*

Historian William Burg, whose update on the Railyards Project you may recall from the September Golden Nuggets, has found the time to research and write his third Sacramento local history book for Arcadia Publishing's popular Images of America series of local photo histories.



The publisher's description of Bill's latest—released on September 29—reads:

California's capital city, Sacramento, has played many roles over time, including Gold Rush boomtown, railroad terminus, regional industrial center, and seat of state government. These varied roles meant dramatic changes as the city grew outward and upward. Using photographs provided by the Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center, historian William Burg, author of Arcadia's **Sacramento's Streetcars** and **Sacramento's Southside Park**, shows how a Gold Rush trading post and a crumbling fort quickly became a metropolitan center and the capital of California.

All three volumes may be purchased online from Arcadia ([www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com)) or in many local bookstores. They may also be available at SAMCC or other local museums. Just in time for early holiday shopping.

## Why Was McClellan AFB Named for a Civil War Army General?

By Ray Oliver

George B. McClellan,  
circa 1860-65.  
Matthew Brady



The above question seemed to be one of the most frequently asked while I was working at McClellan Air Force Base as a historian and museum curator. And the question was almost always posed as, "Why was it named for..." instead of, "Was it named for..." That Civil War general, of course, was Major General George B. McClellan, commander of the Union Army of the Potomac during the first part of the war, and the 1864 Democratic candidate for president. However, the base was not named for him. Nor was it named for John McClellan, a member of the first Sacramento City Council. Finally, it was certainly not named for some man named McClellan whose grand-daughter called to tell me he had donated the land for the base and to ask why there was no monument to him.

The base's namesake was Major Hezekiah McClellan, an Army Air Corps pilot and aviation pioneer who died in 1936 while flight testing an experimental aircraft over Ohio. He lost control of the aircraft and tried to bail out but his parachute got caught on the aircraft's tail. Although McClellan had no connection to the base or Sacramento, it was War Department policy to name new air bases for pilots who had died in aircraft accidents.

Major McClellan was one of the Air Corp's rising stars and seemed on his way to becoming a general. In 1934 young Lieutenant McClellan was among an elite group of pilots chosen by Lt. Col. Henry "Hap" Arnold for a historic flight

of ten Martin B-10 bombers from Washington DC to Alaska and back. This was the first such flight of a formation of these bombers. The last portion of the flight to Alaska was over water—another first. McClellan was a pilot and the supply officer of the flight. While in Alaska he participated in flights making aerial photographs of 20,000 miles of territory in just three days, a record for such photographs.

In 1935 then-Captain McClellan and a crew of two flew a twin-engine aircraft from Washington, D.C. to Alaska, making the first landing of a military aircraft above the Arctic Circle, at Point Barrow. He took more aerial photographs and mapped routes for later flights. He had to land and take off on a crude runway on the tundra, later commenting that Point Barrow was the worst terrain for an aircraft he had ever seen. On one flight over rugged mountains one of his aircraft's engine stalled, giving him and his crew several anxious minutes until he got it going again.

In 1937, the year after his death, the Air Corps recognized McClellan's achievements with a posthumous award of the Distinguished Flying Cross. During the base's 50 year anniversary in 1986, McClellan's widow, Madelaine, visited for a memorial ceremony. She recalled a time in 1918, before they were married, when "Hez" called her to go for a ride. She put on her best silk dress and fur stole. He took her to the airfield and put her in the front seat of an open cockpit aircraft and off they went. She came back covered with dirt and grease. But she married him anyway. Major McClellan is now a part of Sacramento history. No good electronic image of Major McClellan was available. -Editor

### Short Research Articles Wanted

on aspects of

### Sacramento Regional History

400-750 words, or by agreement

Email [news@sachistoricalsociety.org](mailto:news@sachistoricalsociety.org) with questions or ideas



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## Out & About

Date	Time	Event	Place & Contact
<b>NOVEMBER</b> Through April 26	10 AM to 5 PM Tues to Sat  12 PM to 5 PM Sunday	<b>The Dreamers: Inspirational Stories of Southern Californians</b> Evocative portraits of Southern Californians, both historic and contemporary, by photographer Harry Brant Chandler.	The California Museum 1020 O Street, Sacramento 916-653-7524 <a href="http://www.californiamuseum.org">www.californiamuseum.org</a>
7 Friday Through 17 Monday	9 AM to 5 PM Daily	<b>Historic Flag Exhibit</b> In honor of Veterans Day, a 10-day-long exhibit of California flags including some from the Civil War, Spanish American War and the World Wars	State Capitol Museum 10th & L Street Sacramento <a href="http://capitolmuseum.ca.gov/">http://capitolmuseum.ca.gov/</a>
30 Sun through 18 Jan	12:30 to 5 PM Wed to Sun	<b>Thirty Years of Rock and Roll, AND Portraits from the Golden Age of Jazz</b> Historic photo exhibits of musical greats by Larry Hulst and William Gottlieb. Call for additional special programs.	The Haggin Museum 1201 N. Pershing Ave Stockton, CA 209-940-6300 <a href="http://www.hagginmuseum.org">www.hagginmuseum.org</a>
<b>DECEMBER</b> 13 Sat	Time TBA Afternoon	<b>That's Entertainment—Gold Rush Style!</b> SCHS Holiday Event with costumed docents, video, and refreshments. More details later.	Eagle Theatre 111 I Street Old Sacramento