

Golden Nuggets

SACRAMENTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

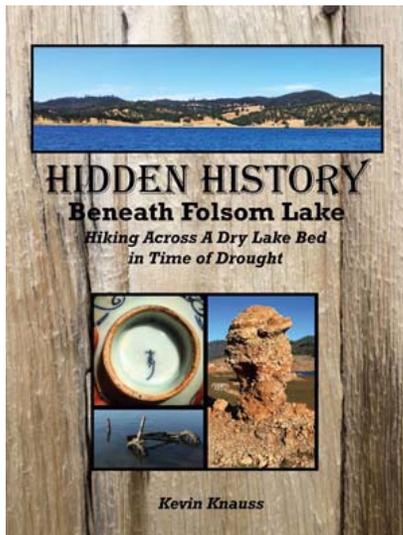
November-December 2017, vol. 13-14

SCHS Presents Kevin Knauss

Hidden History Beneath Folsom Lake

Tuesday, November 28, 7:00 PM (Doors Open 6:00)

Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society Building, 5380 Elvas Avenue, Sacramento



The North and South Forks of the American River were sites of industrious gold mining beginning in 1849. Whole communities sprang up to support the placer mining activity in the region. The rivers were literally diverted out of their channels in order to scour gold from the river bed. Monumental engineering projects were undertaken to build bridges and water projects for gold mining. A century after the height of the gold rush in the region, Folsom Dam was built at the confluence of the North and South Forks of the American River, forever covering many of these historical sites under lake water.

That was until the great California drought of 2014-2015. In 2015 Folsom Lake was drained to record low water levels, exposing many gold rush era sites to the light of day. In his many hikes across the dry lake bed of Folsom Reservoir, Kevin Knauss, author of *Hidden History Beneath Folsom Lake*, captured numerous photographs of the remnants of the gold rush era in the region.

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SCHS Presents George Raya

A Taste of History 2017: The Sacramento Barrio

Tuesday, December 12, Social Hour 6:00 PM, Dinner 6:45 PM, Presentation 7:00 PM

Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society Building, 5380 Elvas Avenue, Sacramento

For our annual Taste of History December event, Sacramento County Historical Society presents The Sacramento Barrio, a culinary examination of a vanished Sacramento neighborhood, featuring food, speakers, and sharing of Sacramento mealtime traditions.

Sacramento's Latino community grew from a busy neighborhood centered on L Street, between the State Capitol and the Sacramento River, in the early twentieth century. In a series of dramatic reversals, the neighborhood was lost after its destruction by redevelopment. This community proved their resilience by carrying their culture and traditions to new neighborhoods. The food traditions of Sacramento's barrio included grocery and specialty food stores, restaurants, and foods associated with community gatherings and special occasions.



New Year's Eve at the Zuniga household, 1954

(Photo provided by Socorro Zuniga)

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Hidden History Beneath Folsom Lake *(continued from page 1)*

He chronicles the important water works projects of the North Fork Ditch, Natomas Ditch, and Negro Hill Ditch that were instrumental in delivering water to the miners. Included in the book are pictures of the vestiges of the first dams on the American River that diverted water into the ditches and rock retaining walls, built by hand, to support the canals along steep river canyons.



Keystone arch aqueduct of the Negro Hill Ditch west of Salmon Fall on the north side of the South Fork of the American River

Knauss also documents the concrete and stone rubble foundations of several buildings and bridge abutments that were relegated to a life submerged underwater when Folsom Dam was built. He also came across numerous Native American grinding rocks along the river, which serve to remind us that long before there were immigrants tearing up the river in search of gold, there was a native community living in the area.

In order to give a deeper perspective of life along the American River in the 19th century, Knauss includes numerous newspaper articles from the 1800s about the mining activity and first-hand accounts of the landscape. Included in these stories from the 1850s are how a band of miners were forcing Chinese immigrants to abandon their mining claims



The North Fork Ditch from Auburn to Beals Bar was completed in late 1850s. In 1915 most of the ditch was lined in concrete to reduce water loss. This portion of the water canal is below Beals Point Park.

along the river and the murder of an African-American in Negro Hill.

Along with photos of historical items, Knauss captured the American River flowing free around Rattlesnake Bar and Salmon Falls. These images give a small glimpse of what early pioneers and Native Americans would have experienced before the introduction of gold mining and Folsom Lake. There are also images of the destruction gold mining created along the American River by the mounds of mine tailings that were left and river banks chewed away by hydraulic mining.

Knauss also augments his narration and photographs with lots of maps. Historical maps from the 19th century helped Knauss document that the artesian wells he witnessed bubbling up water during the severe drought of 2015 were actually Rose Springs and Rock Springs. Both springs were important watering holes for early pioneer travelers and later supported small communities. *Hidden History Beneath Folsom Lake* is destined to become a historical reference guide to future explorers of the Folsom Lake area as they look for remnants of California's early gold rush history.

Kevin Knauss is an independent health insurance agent living in Granite Bay, California. Most of his writing for his website, www.insuremekevin.com, focuses on health insurance, the Affordable Care Act, Covered California and Medicare. In addition to his hiking and history posts, he also maintains pages on his website devoted to railroad maps of northern California, his mechanical clock collection, and posts relating to his small mid-century modern home. Hidden History Beneath Folsom Lake represents over 20 hikes across the dry lake bed and up the North and South Forks of the American River.

Kenneth Nelson Owens (6 June 1933 - 10 September 2017)

Husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, historian/scholar, author, Professor Emeritus, musician, flyfisher, boatbuilder, philanthropist, activist, a kind and generous man.

Born in Tacoma, Washington, Ken Owens attended Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon, and the University of Minnesota where he received his doctorate as a Woodrow Wilson Scholar. He had a distinguished teaching career, including over 30 years in the History faculty at California State University Sacramento, where he was instrumental in the creation of a degree in Public History, founded the California Council for the Promotion of History, and helped institute a joint doctoral program in History with UC Santa Barbara. He authored a number of books on the American West, including his final work *Empire Maker*, a biography of the founder of Russian settlements in colonial Alaska and Northern California.



In his early years, he aspired to be a musician. He played in jazz bands as well as in the Oregon Symphony, and later in the Camellia Symphony in Sacramento. Ken was a good friend, and a great storyteller who will be deeply missed by his wife of 63 years, Sally Owens, his daughters Victoria Owens and Melissa Owens (Paul McWhirter), grandchildren Geneva Stevahn, Avalon Owens, Ryn and Seth McWhirter, brother Jim Owens, and sister Judy (Wayne) Smoot as well as a large extended family and many friends. Colleagues and friends participated in a memorial celebration of Ken's life at the CSUS Alumni Centre on November 6.

A Taste of History 2017: The Sacramento Barrio *(continued from page 1)*

To guide us on this journey, SCHS Vice-President William Burg will provide a slide show of historic photos of downtown Sacramento, including Christmastime photos on K Street, department store holiday window displays, family photos of holiday celebrations, and images of the Sacramento barrio. Featured speaker George Raya will share stories of the El Rancho, the restaurant that belonged to his grandmother, Guadalupe Cervantes, where he spent summers as a youth in the old West End, and family food traditions of the Latino community. Other speakers will be announced as the event is finalized.

Dinner will be provided by Cielito Lindo (menu pending), served buffet style.

Because space and seating are very limited, this event will be restricted to a total of 75 tickets sold. Sacramento County Historical Society members may purchase tickets for \$25; price for non-members is \$40. (If you aren't sure whether or not your membership is current, contact us or join online!)

Tickets are available at <http://SCHStaste2017.brownpapertickets.com>.

Theatre of Lights Returns to Old Sacramento

Clement Clarke Moore's classic Christmas poem will come to life from Thanksgiving to Christmas Eve on the balconies and facades of Old Sacramento at K Street and Front. Visitors in Old Sacramento can view the production from the center of K Street as the story is performed from the balconies of the buildings around them. Discover how early pioneers experienced the calamities—and revelry—that befell the new city in the 1850s, the sounds of the fires, floods and parties will surround the audience as the 150-year-old building facades light up with color. The highlight of the 20-minute production is a live dramatization of "'Twas the Night Before Christmas," on the balconies above K Street.

This year's show will premiere the night before Thanksgiving with the grand lighting of the Umpqua Bank Christmas Tree at 6 p.m. The event will include the premiere performance of this year's Theatre of Lights at 6:15 p.m. Theatre of Lights shows will continue throughout the holiday season, Thursday through Sunday nights. For more information, visit <http://oldsacramento.com/special-events/theatre-of-lights>.



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GOLDEN NUGGETS

Published bimonthly, September to June

OUT & ABOUT

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION & OTHER INFO
Sat Nov 18	9 AM to 12 PM	<i>Preservation Sacramento Roundtable</i> Greg Taylor, from the City of Sacramento, will discuss the Historic Sacramento Valley Station Restoration project.	St Johns Lutheran Church 1701 L St, Sacramento www.preservationsacramento.org
Tue Nov 28	7 PM	<i>The Hidden History Beneath Folsom Lake</i> SCHS presents Kevin Knauss, to discuss his book on the remnants of the gold rush era that lie beneath the waters of Folsom Lake and are found elsewhere in the region.	Sierra Sac Valley Medical Museum 5380 Elvas Ave, Sacramento www.sachistoricalsociety.org Doors open at 6 PM
Sat Dec 9	10 AM to 4:30 PM	<i>Hands on History : A Simple Emigrant Christmas</i> Participate in hands-on activities such as dipping holiday candles and crafting holiday ornaments . Demonstrations of black powder weapons incl. firing Sutter’s cannon.	Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park 1701 L St, Sacramento
Tue Dec 12	6 PM	<i>A Taste of History 2017: The Sacramento Barrio</i> Sacramento County Historical Society presents The Sacramento Barrio, a culinary examination of a vanished Sacramento neighborhood, featuring food, speakers, and sharing of Sacramento mealtime traditions. Tickets \$25 members, \$40 non-members. Tickets available at http://SCHStaste2017.brownpapertickets.com	Sierra Sac Valley Medical Museum 5380 Elvas Ave, Sacramento www.sachistoricalsociety.org Social Hour 6 PM Dinner 6:45 PM Presentations 7 PM