

SONOMA and PETALUMA ADOBE STATE HISTORIC PARKS



Docent and SPParks GAZETTE Spring 2024



SPParks UPDATE

Closing on my first year as SPParks President, I find myself busier than ever with Park projects. Petaluma's Butter & Eggs Day Parade will be on Saturday, April 20th this year. The Parade theme is "Greener Pastures - Sustaining Petaluma's Future". Our tagline is 'Petaluma Adobe was Sustainable before Sustainable was cool!' Our float, like Old MacDonald, (Old) Vallejo, will have a few animals on his ranch. SPParks members and State Park people will participate in bringing the float to fruition.



June 2, 2024, SPParks has slated a new event for us, a docent-led Toscano Hotel Tour, followed by the Toscano Kitchen Tea. Our tagline is 'Come for a cup of tea, stay for a slice of History'. Details TBA.

Music in the Mission is held on the 1st Thursday of the month and has been quite well received. Jerome Knill continues to find interesting and talented groups to play in the beautiful Mission Chapel. Welcome the Cork Pullers on April 4th. As always, non-SPParks members pay \$10 to attend concerts, while a benefit of SPParks membership is a \$5 admission fee.



Jerome also schedules our Lecture Series for the 3rd Thursday of the month. In March we heard April Farnham, Park Interpretive Specialist at SSHP (and independent historian) presenting a talk on "More than a Soldier's Wife" - a focus on the stories of Californio women who married Spanish and Mexican soldiers during the California mission era. How appropriate for March's Women's History Month!

(continued on page 2)

DOCENT ORGANIZATION UPDATE

The big news for the Docent Organization is our new co-chair, Karen Pregler, who will take over leadership duties in January, 2025. For the rest of 2024 Karen will work with Ed and Kit to learn the ropes. We are grateful to Karen for stepping up. [see below] Now, we need someone to join her in leading the group next year - start thinking about it, docents. Fortunately, an orientation notebook has already been put together so that future co-chairs will have some guidance for their job.

At our March quarterly meeting, Vera Svalgaard showed her progress on the (now defunct) altar cloth. And, Anne Cox, SPParks President, announced that while docents are welcome to attend SPParks monthly lectures free, as part of their continuing education, docents will not be admitted free to *Music in the Mission* concerts. If they are also a member of SPParks (memberships start at \$40 per year) they will be charged the member discounted fee of \$5 for Music in the Mission concerts.

Kit Foster & Ed Purkey, Docent Co-Chairs

Greetings fellow docents.

I'm **Karen Pregler** your new 2024/2025 co-chair. I volunteer at the Vallejo home, enjoy meeting people and learning so much about California history. A north bay native, I raised my son and practiced architecture in the Santa Rosa area prior to retiring. I landed in Sonoma three years ago.



My goals for the group are to strengthen communication and recruit new docents. I'm honored to serve our dedicated members.

MINECRAFT Mission Tour is now available! Tell your kids and grandkids! Learn more on Page 4

SPParks Update (continued from page 1)

The next Lecture is scheduled for May 16, with the always fascinating Arthur Dawson, talking on "Sonoma After the Mission". Intriguing.

Sue Vargas, our Vice President, has been busily exploring grants available to our SPParks mission statement 'Awareness, Interpretation and Preservation'. Suggestions are always appreciated.

The SPParks Board members were treated to a demonstration of the new Mission Minecraft project that Brooke Sullivan, Interpreter Specialist, developed and made as a virtual tour of our San Francisco Solano Mission. If you are not familiar with the Minecraft video game concept, ask a young person - they will gladly tell and show you! Innovating! [see also page 4]



In March we also enjoyed a very interesting event - 'Bat Night' at the Barracks Courtyard. Nor Cal Bats presented the program.

[photos on page 8]

Dave Duplantier planned this event as well as the popular Barracks Campfire Program. Park events in the month of April will include the Petaluma Adobe Sheep Shearing Day. It's amazing to see the shearer flip a sheep up and buzz away such a big coat of wool in so little time. Several other activities are also planned for that day.

Volunteers are the hands that make things happen. Join the fun!

Anne Cox, Board President



Professor Jim's History Mystery Quiz

1. What was the original name of the building we now know as the Toscano Hotel?
2. What is the oldest hard rock gold mine in California?
3. Besides Italian, what type of food was the Swiss Hotel known for from approximately 1937 to 1980?
4. Who coined the phrase "Golden Gate?"



Answers on page 7

UPCOMING EVENTS

LECTURES: Third Thursday of the month, 7 pm Mission Chapel. \$10 general public, \$5 SPParks members, Docents and Park staff free.

- May 16: **Arthur Dawson** - "Sonoma After the Mission"
- June 20th - **Breck Parkman**, retired State Park Archeologist will return to share new research
- September 19 - **Damian Bacich** tells us about Chief Solano

MUSIC IN THE MISSION Series: First Thursday of the month, 7 pm Mission Chapel. \$10 general public, \$5 SPParks members.

- April 4: **The Cork Pullers** with Tim Curley and Friends
- May 2: **Carlos Herrera's** trio, a tribute for Cinco de Mayo
- June 6: **Tim Long** and Friends - good time rock and roll
- August 1: **Taras Lumiere** and the Big Luv Band
- Sept. 5: **Carlos Pereira** and son: guitar and cello
- October 3: welcome back **Jazelle** and her 12 string guitar!!!
- November 7: **David Aguilar**

Butter & Eggs Day Parade:

April 20, 2024, Noon in Downtown Petaluma – look for the SPParks float

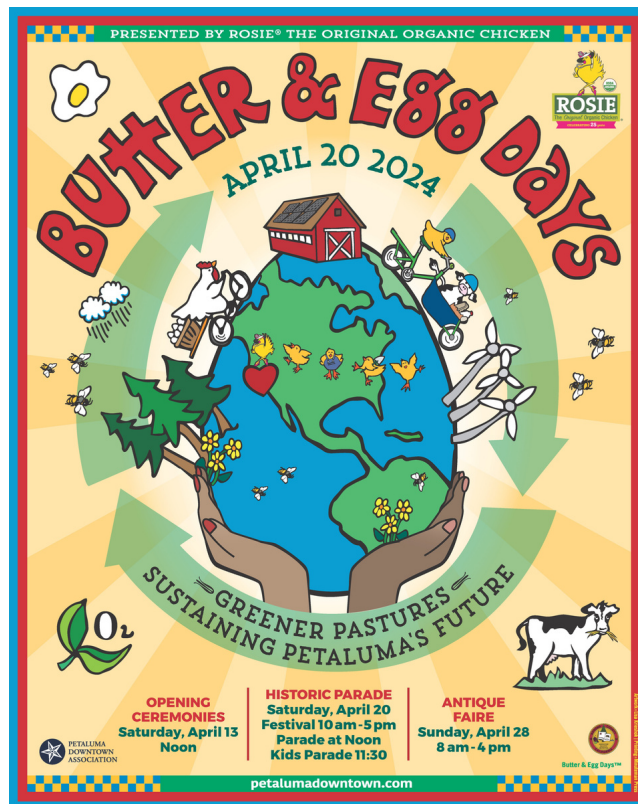
Sheep Shearing Day: April 27, 2024, 11am-2pm, Petaluma Adobe, Adults \$3, Kids \$2, under 5 free

Children's Day at the Barracks: May 4, 2024, 11am-1pm, Sonoma Barracks, Free

Living History Day: May 25, 2024, Petaluma Adobe, Adults \$3, Kids \$2, under 5 free

Toscana Tea – a SPParks Fundraiser: June 2, 2024 at the Toscano Hotel & Kitchen. "Come for a cup of tea, stay for a slice of history"

Please look for SPParks volunteers and Petaluma Adobe SHP staff in the Butter & Egg Days Parade, Downtown Petaluma Saturday, 4/20/24



NEXT DOCENT QUARTERLY MEETING

Saturday, June 8, 2024, 10:00 AM

BARRACKS A/V ROOM

MINECRAFT Mission Tour Goes LIVE Online

Sonoma State Historic Park has unveiled a groundbreaking educational initiative: a FREE Minecraft server designed to provide an immersive virtual tour of the San Francisco Solano Mission. This digital platform created by Brooke Sullivan, SHP Interpreter Specialist, with support from Tyler Markley, SHP Interpreter 1, represents a significant leap in educational innovation, aiming to make history both engaging and accessible to audiences of all ages. At its heart, this project seeks to captivate fourth-grade students and ignite a passion for learning about our state's rich heritage.

The digital re-creation of one of California's historic landmarks, Mission San Francisco Solano, offers users a unique opportunity to explore history in a dynamic and engaging manner. The project's launch marks a significant moment for California State Parks, positioning Sonoma State Historic Park as a pioneer in utilizing Minecraft for educational purposes. This endeavor aligns with the park's mission to preserve California's cultural treasures and to offer educational and recreational opportunities.



Brooke Sullivan: The development process has been an enjoyable and challenging experience. I poured my heart into this project because I wanted to create something that people would enjoy and take their time exploring. Pixel by pixel, I reconstructed the mission with meticulous attention to detail, ensuring a faithful representation of its historical significance. This initiative is not only about innovation but also accessibility. It allows individuals unable to visit the physical site the opportunity to see the mission from the architectural design to pixelated renditions of artifacts and the Jorgenson painting collection.



Tyler Markley: The project's objective is to meet young learners in their digital playground. Our goal is to bridge the traditional educational gap by integrating the interactive world of video games. By constructing the mission within Minecraft, we're engaging kids in a familiar environment, making learning about California's history appealing and relevant. We at the state parks want to provide high-quality programs for the public that help them learn about the amazing cultural and natural history across our state. I see this as a great opportunity to try to engage kids in a new way and I am sure we will see positive results as this project gets in front of more people.

For those unfamiliar with Minecraft, it's akin to a digital set of Legos that offers a limitless playground for the imagination. Picture a vast world made of blocks where you can build anything from a humble home to sprawling virtual cities. This versatility makes it an ideal platform for educational projects like the recreation of Mission San Francisco Solano.

Those interested in taking the tour of Mission San Francisco Solano need to either already have Minecraft or will need to purchase and download the game. Once Minecraft has been installed, you'll need to download the Curseforge app. Within the Curseforge app, you'll find the modpack specifically designed for our server. Downloading this modpack is crucial as it contains the necessary modifications and enhancements for your Minecraft experience on our server.

MINECRAFT - continued from page 4

The server is active every Saturday and Sunday from 10:30 AM to 4:30 PM. To join, you will need to email SonomaMissionMinecraft@gmail.com by 4:30 PM on the Friday before your desired visit. Let us know your preferred time, and when that time arrives, we'll send you the IP password required to access the server.

In summary, this Minecraft server serves as more than just a link between the past and the digital era; it also showcases the commitment and ingenuity of its creators. By transforming the way we learn about history, Sonoma State Historic Park aims to inspire a new generation of students, encouraging them to explore California's rich heritage in a new and entertaining way.

For any inquiries or to express your interest, don't hesitate to reach out to us at SonomaMissionMinecraft@gmail.com. We look forward to welcoming you to this unique educational experience!

- Brooke Sullivan

[Editor's note: See also [Sonoma Index-Tribune](#) article of March 1, 2024]



ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES - Near and Far

From Tamra Rollins, docent:

Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park is only a couple of hours away up highway 50, in Coloma. We were there on a beautiful sunny Halloween day. There were very few visitors, so we basically had the entire park to ourselves. The historic buildings and mining machinery were in great shape. Walking along the American River, it was possible to imagine the "rush for gold" in 1848.

The visitors' center and museum had some terrific interactive exhibits and a movie highlighting the gold rush, local native tribes, and families whose history is connected to the Coloma Valley. We borrowed a State Park Pass from the library, so there was no charge to enter and park. In the summer you can pan for gold.

And a shout out to our local treasure. I never pass the Barracks without going in for a few minutes, and as I drive down Spain Street I marvel at the Mission, Toscano Hotel and Kitchen, Plaza, and Vallejo Home. Such historic significance right here in Sonoma.

From April Farnham, Park Interpretive Specialist:

In honor of Women's History Month, I want to share with you some wonderful educational resources for teachers/students I've discovered online about California/Californiana, mixed Spanish-Mexican-Indigenous women in Alta California.

[Apolinaria Lorenzana & the California Missions](#)
| PBS LearningMedia

[Three Californianas You Should Know](#) - Early California Resource Center (californiafrontier.net)
(a Dr. Damian Bacich podcast)

Visitor Stories - *Tales from the Tours*

Meeting the Descendants of Sarah:

Sarah Henderson Bigelow Flint Cooper Harris came to California in the 1840s with her small son and worked as a governess and teacher for the Bale family in Napa. She eventually moved to Sonoma, married James Cooper and helped him to run the Blue Wing Inn, which served as their home until they built a house south of town in 1849. She survived four husbands, had seven children and is an example of the sturdy women settlers who came West in the 1800s.

One day in late 2023, I was working at the Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau and a group of five people came by and told me that they were in town researching their great-great-great uncle James Cooper. I gave them some suggestions on how to gather more information on him.



**Sarah Henderson
Bigelow Flint Cooper
Harris**

Then I mentioned that one of my favorite historical figures in Sonoma history was Sarah Henderson Bigelow Flint Cooper Harris. As I said her name they started saying it with me. They were stunned and one of the women in the group asked "How do you know of her?" I mentioned that her portrait and story were on display at the Toscano Hotel.

We talked for a while about her life and where she was buried (Sonoma Mountain Cemetery with the Coopers) and then that same woman held out her hand to me and said "I'm Sarah, named after my great-great-great aunt."

That was one of my most memorable moments at the visitors bureau - so exciting and so touching that it brought tears to my eyes to meet the descendants of Sarah – a remarkable woman!

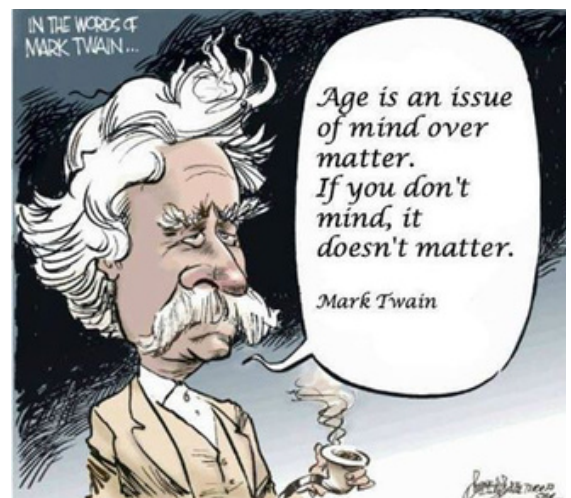
*Sharon Douglas, Toscano Docent
& Visitor Services Representative at the
Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau*

Ukrainian Encounters at the Barracks:

Visitors and docents who read the interpretative panel in the Soldiers Room at the Barracks know that General Vallejo was sent to Sonoma by the Mexican government, in part, to protect Mexico's northern frontier from incursion by Russian nationals living at Fort Ross on Sonoma's coast. As a Barracks docent, I have wondered ever since the 2021 Russian invasion of Ukraine if the topic of Russia could engender any particular reaction or comments from contemporary visitors.

The answer came with a bang on a recent Sunday when a well-dressed couple with strong Slavic accents approached me with a barrage of questions about the relationship between the Mexicans and the Russians during the 19th century. Soon the couple explained that they are from Kiev (but currently living in San Francisco) and then proceeded to "school" me in why the Russian central government is illegitimate (as the husband continually referred to the "ugly bird" on Russia's flag): Kiev, they explained, was a 2000+ year old center of an empire that Russia basically co-opted and then moved its capital to Moscow, and the wife derisively added that Moscow's name actually means "swamp" or "bog"!

Lisa Tremblay, Docent



A Brief Remembrance of Leo Carrillo

The Carrillo name is one of the oldest Spanish European surnames of Southern California. Arriving with the Portola expedition in 1769 at San Diego, members of this Californio family involved themselves with Spanish-Mexican military and politics. Carrillos served as Presidio comandantes (San Diego and Santa Barbara), as city mayors (Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and Santa Monica) and later in the early California state senate. Another Carrillo, Francisca Benicia Carrillo, married Mariano Vallejo.

Leopoldo "Leo" Antonio Carrillo (1880-1961) was one of 11 children born to Juan Jose Carrillo (1842-1916) and Francisca Roland. After college, Leo pursued a career as a cartoonist for the San Francisco Examiner. He then went on to New York to work as a Broadway actor. He eventually moved back to California and on to the movie stages of Hollywood where he worked in over 90 films. He was a dialect specialist for many films and with a baritone voice spoke perfect English without any accent. His television persona in the 1950's was the role of Pancho in The Cisco Kid.



Leo Carrillo, actor

During this time, he also served for 18 years as a commissioner for California Beaches and Parks (today, California State Parks) and played a key role in acquiring Hearst Castle as well as the Los Angeles Arboretum and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Leo was present in Sonoma on March 10, 1946 as Governor Earl Warren raised the Bear Flag in the Sonoma Plaza and signed legislation for a Bear Flag Centennial commemoration.

Leo Carrillo State Park along Highway 1 in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties is named in his honor. Leo Carrillo Ranch Historic Park in Carlsbad, California is a historic rancho and a registered California Historical Landmark.

Jim Danaher, SPParks Board

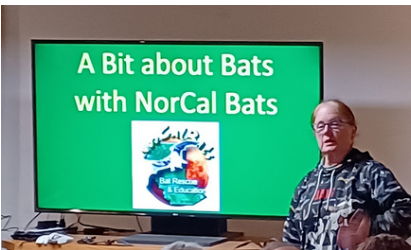
History Mystery Quiz Answers

1. Nathanson's General Store
2. Empire Mine (Grass Valley).
This mine is a State Historic Park.
3. Chinese
4. John C. Fremont

Sonoma goes batty for **BAT NIGHT AT THE BARRACKS**

A standing room only crowd filled the Barracks A/V room to learn all about the bats in our midst on Saturday, March 23, 2024. Mary Jean “Corky” Quirk from NorCal Bats in Davis, CA, brought several of her winged friends to delight the families in attendance. [NorCal Bats](#) is dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation, and release of bats, as well as public education on the environmental benefits of bats. For those who didn’t listen to the warning, “Don’t Touch the Bats”, a brave little girl named Jordan described her encounter 2 years ago with a sleeping bat which she petted, and then had to endure a series of rabies shots! If you missed our program, they will be doing a program later this year at Olompali State Park in Novato.

Dave Duplantier, Sonoma SHP Interpretive Specialist



LINKS

GAZETTE Editor: Dee Katson:
administrator@sonomaparks.org

Sonoma Petaluma Parks Association (SPParks):
sonomaparks.org

Sonoma State Historic Park
<http://parks.ca.gov/sonomashp>

Petaluma Adobe State Historic Park
<http://parks.ca.gov/petalumaadobeshp>

MEETINGS

SPParks Board meets 2nd Tuesday of the month,
 10 AM

Docent Quarterly Meetings at 10 AM in the Sonoma Barracks A/V room on the 2nd Saturday in March, June and September and on the 1st Saturday in December

Sonoma Petaluma Parks
 P.O. Box 1702
 Sonoma, CA 95476