

ARGONAUT GAZETTE

“KEEPING THE PAST ALIVE”

SACRAMENTO, January 2010

Happy 15th Anniversary!

Janessa West, Program Coordinator

Welcome to 2010! A new decade is dawning and now is the time to reflect upon our past. The Old Sacramento Living History Program has been around for 15 years, so happy birthday living history! Thank you to our charter members who were there at the beginning, as well as those who have joined in along the way. Let's make the next 15 just as much fun as the first 15!



Plans for the New Year

January is usually a slow month for OSLH, however it is our month for planning. At our January 9th meeting we will discuss our new calendar, and anyone with an idea of a new event or activity is encouraged to come and speak up. Tentative plans for the 2010 calendar include adding back Saturday strolls, living history days, a lyceum, a variety show, costume workshops, dance lessons, choir, and who knows what else! Please bring your calendar and any ideas you may have.

Coming on the heels of January is Free Museum Day, taking place on the first Saturday in February. In the past living history has opened the doors and engaged audiences of all sizes. Plans for Free Museum Day will also be discussed at the January meeting.

So in short, enjoy the month off and Happy New Year!

From the President

Jill Quinn, President

Where has 2009 gone? It has certainly been a very busy, active year for Old Sacramento Living History. Despite all of the financial challenges presented to us during the year, we remained strong in doing our signature events as well as adding some new ones. Heartfelt thanks to everyone for your precious time and efforts in making 2009 a wonderful year for our group. It would not have happened without the talent and time of each and every one of you.

Looking forward to the New Year, we have a great deal to anticipate. We have use of the Eagle Theatre, which brings us a whole new dimension of activities that we can offer to the public. It also seems that the media and other groups have “discovered” us and are now requesting our presence at events such as the Sacrament Ballet and the Theatre of Lights. Our alliances with other groups are also bringing opportunities to our doorstep that we would never be able to consider before. 2010 promises to be a very good year.



Mark Twain gets fresh with our president.

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

History and Holiday Cheer!

Janessa West

A wonderful time was had by all on the raining day of December 12th. Living History was joined by our new friends from the Sacramento Ballroom Society, the fabulous band Claudia's Kitchen, the Cavalry, and members of the Pony Express Association. Everyone had a turn on the dance floor, and there were plenty of cookies to go around. Father Christmas delighted us all and the music kept the party going. It was a wonderful day and a fun way to make new friends and learn a new dance or two.



Line dance.



Waltzing.



Under the bridge.



Gossiping?



Waiting for mail.

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD



Can you see Mark Twain up there on the balcony?



Father Christmas at the Tree Lighting



Before the first Theater of Lights performance.

Holiday Events

Doug Peterson

Father Christmas was on the streets of Old Sacramento at the Tree Lighting (the day before Thanksgiving) and on at least one day each weekend between then and Christmas. Carolers and strollers joined him several times—and one faithful member, Lizzie Bell, even came on the 20th! As ever, this was a great gift to the people of our fair city. Many portraits were taken, Christmas wishes made, and candy canes distributed.

On November 29th, one of those listening to us carol was so impressed that she invited us to be part of the Sacramento Ballet's Sweet Sunday on the 13th. About 10 of the Parlor Singers answered the call and performed in the main lobby for the crowd. One lady requested "The Holly and the Ivy" as it was her favorite carol, which she never hears performed. Her voice was a spirited addition to our rendering of this classic *chanson*.

The Carol Sing-Along on the 19th was sparsely attended, perhaps because of the close proximity of the holiday. The singers, after a half-hour of melodious Christmas Spirit, adjourned to the streets where we brightened more than a few faces. As always, the diners at Fat's, as well as the public at large, were delighted by our winter finery.



At the Sacramento Ballet's Sweet Sunday.

Upcoming Events

*Little January
Tapped at my door today.
And said, "Put on your winter wraps,
And come outdoors to play."*

*Little January
Is always full of fun;
Until the set of sun.*

*Little January
Will stay a month with me
And we will have such jolly times -
Just come along and see.*

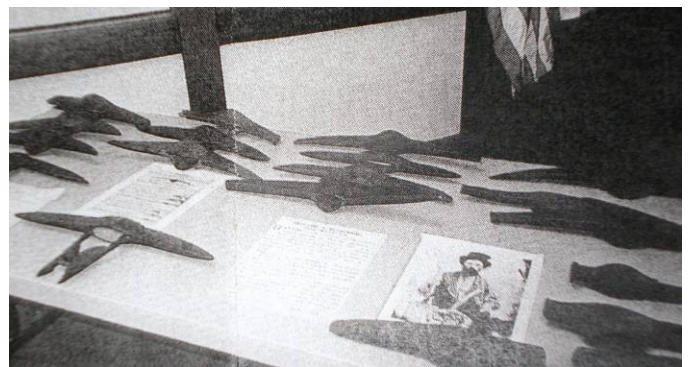
Winifred C. Marshall, *January*



January Enrichment Session Mike McKillop presents Tools of the Gold Miner

Jill Quinn

Mike McKillop is a treasure seeker of the Gold Rush era. He has a passion for 49er picks and mining equipment and is something of an expert as he is writing a book on the topic. He will bring a collection of picks and other items he has found in the Sierras dating from 1848 to 1860. You will find that he has a wealth of information that he will share with us about the various foundries of the era and the old mining camps where the picks were found. I think you will find this a most informative and interesting enrichment session. Please plan to attend.



Upcoming Events



19th Century Dance Lessons

Leilani Howard

Weekly lessons presented by the Sacramento Ballroom Society. Come learn 19th century couples and set dances in a practical, history rich format well suited for the historical re-enactor. Prepare for local period balls and events. No experience or partner necessary as we rotate partners through each lesson.

Time: Fridays 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Venue: Ultimate Dance Sport in Sacramento near Hwy 50 & Watt.

Cost: \$7 each to drop-in, \$5 with a studio card obtained when one buys all four lessons for the month at once.

Directions:

www.sacballroomsociety.org/dancevenue.html

Lesson schedule:

www.sacballroomsociety.org/danceschedule.html

Bonus Offer: To our volunteer historical dancers: a year's worth of FREE dance lessons and dances to the Society's regular in-studio events which are held immediately after historical dance class on the 2nd & 4th Fridays. We wish to give our volunteers every opportunity to strengthen their dance skills. Learning to dance a variety of styles with a range of partners provided by regular social dances and lessons will help achieve that. Learn all the popular ballroom, Latin, club and swing dances from professional instructors for FREE and liven up your Friday nights for FREE while you study the history of ballroom. Make some new friends and get some fun exercise.

Now Recruiting Performers

Leilani Howard

We are seeking historical dancers to perform at ballroom showcases around Sacramento to represent the Sacramento Ballroom Society and Ultimate Dance Sport studio. These volunteers will receive extra floor time and instruction to practice their dancing on Sacramento's largest unobstructed dance floor at the 2008 San Francisco City Lights Ball's acclaimed top studio. This dance group may also make appearances at special events in the greater community. No experience or partner necessary. Gain free admission to see some amazing dancers and special events.

Venue: Ultimate Dance Sport studio on Kiefer Blvd. near Hwy 50 & Watt Ave in Sacramento.

Contact: Feedback page at www.sacballroomsociety.org. Remember to include your email address so we can respond.



Miscellanea

Librarian's Random Pick

Janessa West

California History: the Magazine of the California Historical Society

The California Historical Society recently donated seventeen volumes of their magazine, *California History*, to the Living History Library. While these magazines are not yet recorded, they are available for check out in the OSLH library.



From your Editor

Catherine Hanson

All OSLHP members are invited to submit items for inclusion in the *Argonaut Gazette*. Articles, letters to the editor, calendar items, and personal news announcements are welcome. The submission deadline is the 25th of the month before publication. Submissions may be modified for length and readability at the discretion of the editor.

E-mail articles to me at:

chanson@library.ca.gov

For those without e-mail access, submissions can be mailed to: 1179 Theo Way, Sacramento CA 95822.

Photo Credits

Thank you to Cassandra Perryman for her photos of the History and Holiday Cheer event. And thank you to Michael Aye for his photos of the Sweet Sunday event. And of course, thank you to our "regular" photographer, Sophie Flaherty!



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Editor: Catherine Hanson
Photographer: Sophie Flaherty

Old Sacramento Living History Center

Located in the Eagle Theatre
Front Street, Old Sacramento

Mailing address

Sacramento History Museum
Attn: Living History
101 I Street
Sacramento CA 95814

Janessa West, Program Coordinator
jwest@cityofsacramento.org, (916) 808-4980

www.oldsacramentolivinghistory.com

2009-2010 OSLHP Officers

Jill Quinn, President
Penny Adams, Vice President
Greg Tracy, Past President
Jan Bullard, Secretary
Bob Flaherty, Treasurer
Terry Melau, Member-at-Large
Richard Vincent, Member-at-Large

OSLHP is sponsored by
the Historic Old Sacramento Foundation.



EVENTS CALENDAR

Date	Time	Event	Location	Contact
January				
5 – Tuesday	7:00 – 8:30 p.m.	Executive Board meeting	Sacramento History Museum	Janessa West
9 – Saturday	10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon	General Membership meeting	Eagle Theatre	Jill Quinn
February				
6 – Saturday	10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Free Museum Day		Janessa West
9 – Tuesday	7:00 – 8:30 p.m.	Executive Board meeting	Sacramento History Museum	Janessa West
13 – Saturday	10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon	General Membership meeting	Eagle Theatre	Jill Quinn
March				
9 – Tuesday	7:00 – 8:30 p.m.	Executive Board meeting	Sacramento History Museum	Janessa West
13 – Saturday	10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon	General Membership meeting	Eagle Theatre	Jill Quinn
17 – Wednesday	6:00 p.m.	St. Patrick’s Day parade	Old Sacramento	Janessa West
27 – Saturday		Women’s History Day		



With the Pony Express!

THE BACK PAGE

A Disorderly Traveler

Richard Vincent

The rowdiness of 49ers did not always begin in California. Some raised hell on the voyage around the Horn. They ran riot in the South American ports. The quoted passage below comes from *The California Gold Rush and the Coming of the Civil War* by Leonard L. Richards.

“... often, when faced with unruly passengers, the captain simply left them to fend for themselves. The most famous incident of this sort involved not drunken men but a woman, one of the few to travel around the Horn in 1849. The woman was Eliza Farnham, a well-connected New Yorker who had written extensively on female superiority and had been the head of the women's division at Sing Sing prison. In late 1848, Farnham learned that her husband had died in California and had left her a farm. She quickly decided to go to California with her two children and her maid. Then, while mulling over travel plans, she had an inspiration. What California needed, she surmised, were “real” women. The place was becoming a hellhole without them. So she created her own company, the California Association of American Women, and tried to recruit 130 “intelligent, virtuous and efficient” women “not under twenty-five years of age” to accompany her. The cost for each would be \$250, a bargain price. Once in California, they would marry miners and thus civilize the place.

“To carry out this mission, Farnham had the help of some of New York's leading reformers and politicians. Horace Greeley, the editor of the New-York Tribune, backed her. So did William Cullen Bryant, the editor of the New-York Evening Post, as did Henry Ward Beecher, the pastor of Brooklyn's Plymouth Church. In all, thirteen prominent New Yorkers supported her undertaking. They, too, saw it as an opportunity to ‘accomplish some greater good.’ Yet the only women she could get to go were three of her friends, and two of them were married.

“Despite this failing, Farnham and her friends left New York in July 1849 on the ship *Angelique*. Once at sea, Farnham locked horns with the ship's captain. Deeming him a brute, she refused to accept his authority and battled him constantly. When was he going to do something about the ‘dreadful quality’ of the ship's drinking water? Why did he allow his steward, ‘a lazy, lying, worthless creature’ and ‘a mulatto’ to boot, to take up with her maid? Who was to look out for her children? The battle continued around the Horn. Finally, when the ship docked in Valparaiso, the captain let her go ashore to find a replacement for her lovesick maid. Then off he sailed, taking with him her two children and leaving her ‘destitute, in a city of strangers.’

“Farnham's friends predicted that the captain would pay for this treachery. They were wrong. Instead, her sad tale provided fodder for scores of barroom jokes—and a reminder that it was dangerous to run afoul of a sea captain.”

She did get to California, though, and made quite a splash. See

<http://www.sierranevadavirtualmuseum.com/docs/special/biographies/farhame.htm>

