

WEST SACRAMENTO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Fall Newsletter, September 2011

TIME TO CELEBRATE WSHS 18TH ANNIVERSARY

Fall Membership Meeting

Saturday, Sept. 10, 2011

11 am to 1 pm

It is time to celebrate 18 years of historical preservation work by the West Sacramento Historical Society. Old members, new members, and any interested community members are invited to attend the WSHS meeting to be held in the Bridge & River rooms at the WS Community Center Building across from City Hall. After an update by Pres. Jim Brewer, those in attendance will be asked to participate in a Table Topic activity.

Come/Contribute Your Ideas

Enjoy the Refreshments

& Win a Prize!

Future activities such as field trips, events, exhibits, possible fund raisings, etc. will be discussed. Each group will be lead by one of the WSHS officers, see the listing and their contact information on the back page.

Following these discussions, prizes will be awarded and refreshments including an anniversary cake will be served. All community members are welcomed, any questions, call the WSHS office at 374-1849

Did You Know?

- ◇ First WSHS meeting was held on Dec. 7, 1993 at WS Land Co. office. Temporary officers were Louisa Vessell, Kathleen VanBaaren, Bryan Turner & Virginia Seamans.
- ◇ March 22, 1994 meeting was Installation of Officers with L.Vessell, K. VanBaaren, B. Turner and Alan Cadero being duly elected and installed. Treasurer reported a grand total of \$767 in the bank.
- ◇ Sept. 27, 1994 was 1st Anniversary Meeting, WSHS had approved State & Federal, nonprofit status & was applying for grants and taking lots of field trips.
- ◇ Oct. 18, 1994 sign-in sheet had 11 attendees.

West Sacramento Veterans of WWII Exhibit Opening in November!

A very special tribute to the many young men and women from Bryte, Broderick and West Sacramento who served in the armed services during World War II is being prepared by Thom Lewis, History Gallery Curator. With the assistance of the two Veterans of Foreign Wars organizations currently active in West Sacramento, Thom and Mickey Fausett have collected many names, photographs and even some authentic artifacts from community members. More photos and articles could be used so local families are encouraged to contact WSHS about loaning items for this special exhibit. The opening date is planned for early November, watch for an announcement! Meanwhile, if you think you know the identities of the three young men in the photo to the right, fill out the entry form enclosed and drop off at the WSHS office. A drawing from all of the correct entries will be held at the opening of this exhibit and a grand prize will be awarded.



What's The Value In What We Do?

By Jim Brewer, President - West Sacramento Historical Society

While traveling throughout West Sacramento and other communities, I recently asked myself "What's the value in what we do". I've been trying to work out an answer ever since. I am also, at the same time, constantly impressed by the different ways people relate to history. For some, it is very personal, not extending much beyond a photo collection of family members. This is their main tie to history. Others will travel to archives to extract information from old documents and books to share with their friends and associates. Still others are most happy if they are digging in the dirt in hopes of finding an artifact left from the distant past.

These are all very good and certainly valid ways for us to relate to history. Collecting this important historical material is a pleasure for us and at the same time presents a dilemma. We can all relate to the photo collections- the books and papers that are published every day - and the trips to the museum. These invoke wonderful memories of times and people past. There is, however, another not insignificant problem. These collections require space for storage and money for maintenance if they are to be sustained for future generations. More than once I've had conversations that end with "but my children won't do anything with these".

West Sacramento Historical Society is facing the same type of dilemma, as you might suspect. We are trying to address our problems in a variety of ways. We have renewed our efforts in restoring the fire trucks and are actively are seeking new environmentally controlled facilities for our collections.

Following our creation of the new history gallery in the Community Center, many of our future efforts will focus on collections of digital media. This means we will be collecting photos and audio and video recordings of West Sacramento and Yolo County and taking oral histories of our residents. It will require many steps, not the least of which is preparing the recordings for inclusion in a digital library accessible not only to our members but to others as well. The internet will be a very important tool for us to master. Thom Lewis and I recently attended an all day workshop at the Crocker Museum where the topic of discussion was creating and maintaining a digital archive. We will all need to understand these processes as we address the future. I believe the West Sacramento Historical Society has set the correct course for the future with the investment in the History Gallery and preparing it for future visitors.

Part of the problem left to solve is sustainability. We have reached out to our lifetime members to renew their financial support in significant ways. The Board of Directors and I are reaching out to you, our members, for your support. Attending and participating in our meetings will not be enough to sustain these efforts. You need to support this important work through your financial contributions as well.

The answer to the question "What's the value in what we do" I found lies in the act of preserving memories, not only for us, but for our families, our friends, our community and future generations to enjoy.

Courthouse Plaque Rededication by Mickey Fausett

Plans are being made by the local chapter of E Clampus Vitus to unveil a newly restored plaque documenting the existence of a Courthouse in what was the town of Washington on the west side of the Sacramento River. This township was renamed Broderick and now is part of the City of West Sacramento.

The plaque was previously located on the cement pillar at the bottom of the I St. Bridge where Second Street made a sharp turn. The original plaque disappeared several years ago. However, a member of the "Clampers" found it down by the Sacramento River, it was in pretty bad shape. After being restored to mint condition, it was mounted in a permanent foundation at Roger Sornson's Senator Garage on C St. Here is a bit of the history of the original courthouse.

With the 1850 California State Constitution, Judicial Districts were created in Yolo County. Buildings were purchased by the county to be the courthouses but most of them were not much more than small shacks. They were not courts of record. Decisions were documented and kept local unless appealed. Broderick (Washington) was created in 1851. It had the honor of being the county seat in 1851 to 1857 and again in 1861 to 1863 before the county seat was moved to Woodland where it remained.

If a civil matter was heard by a district justice of the peace (Judicial District) decisions could be appealed to the next step up in the County Courts that handled civil matters. Judges would oversee matters in this court, not like Justices of the Peace in the lower court. At the top was the Court of Sessions (Supreme Court); this consisted of a county judge and two justices of the peace. One of Yolo County's first popular judges was Judge Hapgood who lived in Broderick. In later years there were Judge Parisi, Jerome Barry and the local favorite Ralph Bonetti who was the last of the Justices of the Peace in Broderick (Washington).

The plaque that was on a pillar supporting the curved structure of the I St Bridge reads: "Around here someplace was almost Yolo County's first courthouse, It was here twice- from 1851 to 1857 and from 1861 to 1863- when it was stolen permanently by The "High Bionders" in Woodland. "So Be It"

For more information about the date, time and location of the restored Plaque Ceremony, watch for an announcement in the local newspaper; contact the West Sacramento Historical Society at 374-1849 or visit their website at www.westsachistoricalsociety.org



ca. 1934



ca. 1950

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**This newsletter is on the
Website in living color— see
www.westsachistoricalociety.org**

**DATED MAIL—OPEN AT
ONCE SO YOU DO NOT
MISS THE UPCOMING
EVENTS!**



**WSHS and BBCAN
participated in the National
Night Out on August 2, 2011 at
San Pedro Park in Bryte.**



WSHS Upcoming Events!

October 1st—Officers and volunteers from the WSHS will be participating in the October 1st Multi-cultural Neighbors Faire. Plans are to have a booth on the Plaza area with the many historical books, t-shirts, CDs, etc. on display and for sale. Inside the Community Center, space for a special display about upcoming events such as a Photo Swap, special evening events, etc. will be open to visitors. That Saturday will be the last time to view the exhibit entitled “Our Journey” about Charles Sano from Puerto Rico who will be at the event with his new CD available to either download or purchase. Visit the WSHS booth for details when attending the Multi-Cultural Neighbors Faire on Oct. 1, 2011.

November 17th—WSHS will be the host for the Sac Area Consortium quarterly meeting. Representatives from a variety of historical organizations from throughout Sacramento and Yolo Counties come together to share their projects, provide answers to questions and advertise events. Anyone interested in attending should contact Pres. Jim Brewer or Kathy Perrigo (see contact info at top of page) or call the WSHS office at 374-1849.

December—A Holiday Party for WSHS members is being planned, watch for a flyer with day, time and location!