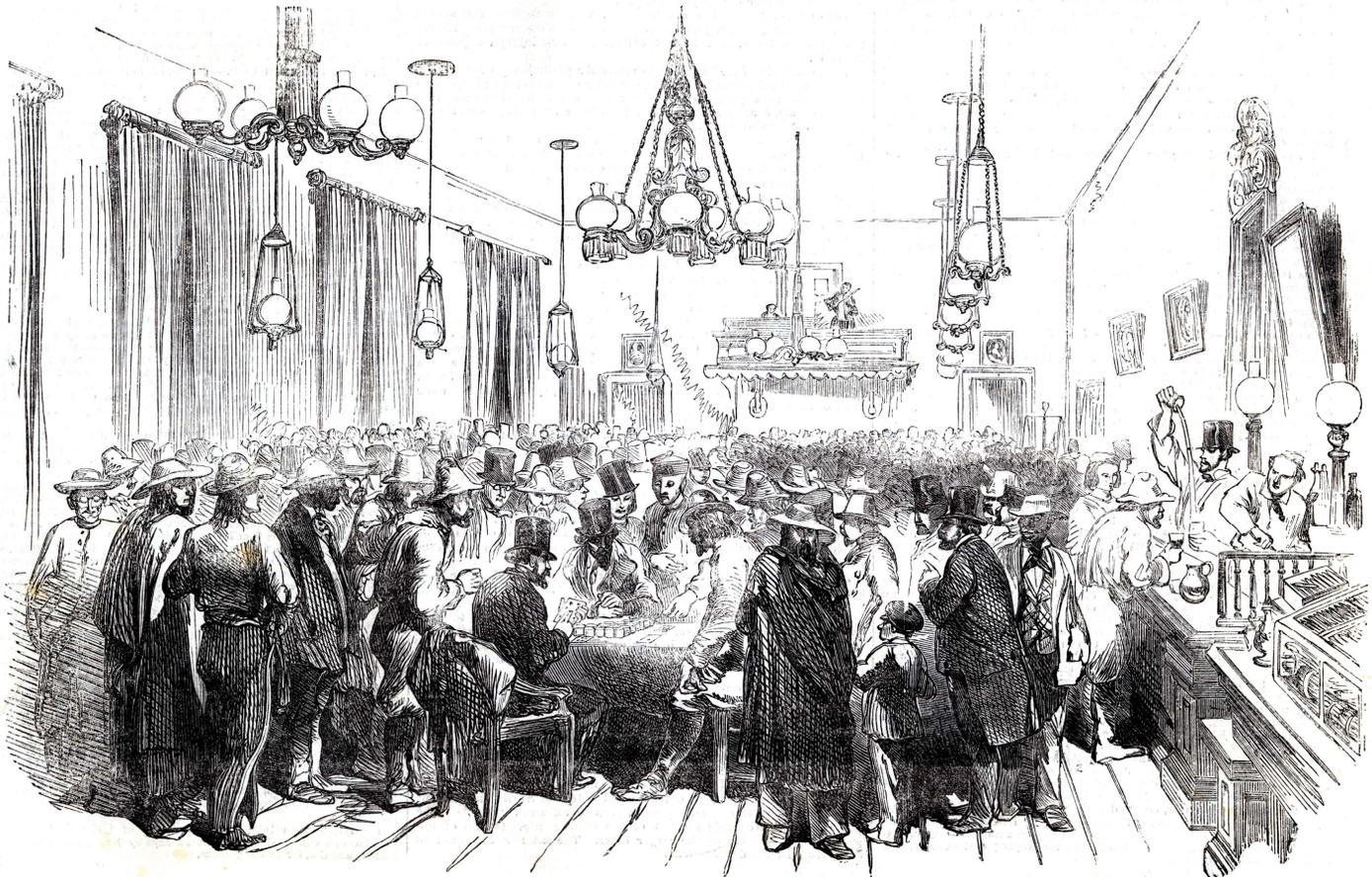


Golden Nuggets

SACRAMENTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2011

Tuesday, Feb. 22, 7:00 PM
Sacramento Saloons: Image, Discussion and Display
James Scott with Steve Abbot
SSVMS Building, 5380 Elvas Avenue, Sacramento



GOLD IN CALIFORNIA.—“EL DORADO,” IN SACRAMENTO.—(SEE NEXT PAGE.)

“Gold in California—“El Dorado” in Sacramento, Democratic State Journal

Center for Sacramento History

In the nineteenth-century American West, the saloon was commonly the first structure to go up at a town's birth and the last to come down with its death. Eulogized through film, literature and imagination, the saloon was so much more than a place for drink and game. It often served as a theater, courthouse, post office, museum, church, hotel, eatery, bathhouse, shooting gallery, political hothouse, and polling place. Sacramento's compliment of saloons were no different. Join us as Sacramento Room librarian James Scott—through image, anecdote and discussion—presents a history of Sacramento saloons prior to the Civil War. He will also reveal the best sources for mining information on this early era in our city's social history.

Joining Scott to provide a companion exhibit composed of selections from his extensive collection of whiskey-related memorabilia will be SCHS member and avid whiskey memorabilia collector, Steve Abbott. It should be a fun-filled evening, perhaps even reminiscent of a night in a Sacramento saloon of old. A more genteel version, of course.

**Steamboat Bill Jr. at the Guild Theater
2828 35th Street, Sacramento
Sunday Feb. 27, 7 PM; Admission \$5**



The Steamship Yosemite, and sister ship, the Chrysopolis, worked the Sacramento to San Francisco route from 1862-1880.
Center for Sacramento History

February 27 is the 161st anniversary of Sacramento's incorporation as a city, and to celebrate the city's birthday, *Movies on a Big Screen* presents *Steamboat Bill Jr.*, arguably the best-known of the little-known 1920s genre of steamboat films. This film, and many other films of the genre, were shot in Sacramento: we were closer to Hollywood than Mississippi, plus we had riverboats and a river.

The film stars Buster Keaton as the gentle son of a somewhat feisty riverboat captain in the city of River Junction. The story centers on the young man trying to follow in his father's footsteps as a Mississippi steamboat captain, and falling in love with the daughter of his father's business rival. In addition to the film, historian William Burg will give a talk about the history of Sacramento's riverboats and the city waterfront.



Notes from the President

By Pat Turse

We're going to test your ability to be flexible again. As briefly mentioned in last month's newsletter, our Awards of Excellence night—normally scheduled on the fourth Tuesday in March—has been pushed back to March 29th, which is the fifth Tuesday. The reason is that we have decided to move the event to the new banquet room available at Evan's Kitchen in the 57th Street Antiques Row Mall, and he was not available on the 22nd. This gives us more space and the option to have beer and wine without the permit process. It also means a lot less wear and tear on event planning team members. It will be a bit more costly but Evan's food is certainly among the best in the city. So do mark your calendars, and watch for reservation forms and the announcement of award recipients in the coming newsletter planned to arrive by March 4.

Our annual membership renewals, which enable us to present all these fun programs and publish this newsletter and our Golden Notes, will be mailed by the time you receive this newsletter. Those who were able to donate \$100 or more to the Holiday Window Display will have their memberships extended at no cost. Our Board election ballots will be enclosed with the renewal forms, so you can mail in a two-fer. We appreciate your choice to support us and work very hard to give you value for your membership.

A quick heads up on two events of interest. First, the Old City Cemetery Association will help celebrate Black History Month by offering a Black History Tour of the cemetery Sat., Feb 26. Details page 4. A first ever OHP Listening Session for ideas for coming revision to the State Historic Preservation Plan will be offered on Thursday, Feb 24 from 6 to 8 PM at the Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society Building, 5380 Elvas Ave.

SACRAMENTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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GOLDEN NUGGETS

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Editorial & Layout: William Burg, Patricia Turse
Email: info@sachistoricalociety.org

Media Frenzy Accompanies Display of Huge Gold Nugget

By Pat Turse



TV stations lined up to cover the SCHS Jan.25 one-night-only view of 6-pound gold nugget. Fred Holabird, right, is the mine geologist/collector who will auction the nugget off.

It was my last week at home before a planned two-week odyssey to South America. I was just about to send off the January newsletter to be printed and was looking forward to finishing my packing when the phone rang. SCHS Board member Greg Voelm was on the line. "They said yes," he blurted. "We're getting the nugget." Wow! We had scheduled Ric and Jody Hornor, who have created a unique first person accounts series of Gold Rush themed books, to speak at our January member meeting. Then the Sacramento Bee ran a story on the upcoming auction of what experts say is the largest remaining gold nugget in the West. Greg thought it would be fun to combine an exhibit of the nugget with the talk on the Golden History books. Board member Clare Ellis knew Fred Holabird from the purchase of a historical document the Sacramento Library had made from him. So Greg made the phone call "just to see what happens."

The gold was found last year by a Nevada City man who selected Holabird-Kagin Americana to handle the auction. By weight the nugget's current value would be about \$135,000. But because a nugget of its size is so rare these days, it may sell at auction for as much as \$400,000. And SCHS was about to be responsible for exhibiting it. Yikes! After quickly modifying the January newsletter to reflect the big news bulletin, I called Lena Kagin at Holabird-Kagin Americana to discuss their expectations for security. She suggested a security company they often use for exhibits of rare coins and other costly items. Scarey visions of desperate historian-thugs wearing spectacles over ski masks as they politely demanded the nugget danced in my head. I made the call.

Following some discussion with the company about what we needed (one armed guard was deemed sufficient) and where the guard and the nugget should be, the arrangements were made. Clare started to send out publicity, and we prepared for the deluge. Board member Bob LaPerrière, also curator of the Museum of Medical History located in the building where SCHS meets, offered to open the room early so visitors could just come peek at the nugget and leave without attending the meeting. He and Greg agreed to take charge of visitor logistics. Fred Holabird agreed to be present during the early showing to answer questions and then to do a brief talk before the formal meeting began. I'm told he also stayed later to answer more questions. Estimates are that about 70 people were at the meeting, and probably about 100 total at least saw the nugget. Phone calls and inquiries from people wanting to know if they can still see the nugget (it's gone) continue to trickle in.

As for me, I finished packing, went off on my holiday, and missed the big event. But my thoughts were here on the evening of the 25th. I thought others who couldn't be here that night would enjoy hearing how it came to pass and what the evening was like. Between the historical holiday window display and the exhibit of the fabulous gold nugget, history and the Sacramento County Historical Society are hot news these days. Let's try to keep it going as long as we can!



SCHS Board members Greg Voelm, left, and Clare Ellis, who were key players in setting up the nugget exhibit, enjoyed their own golden fantasies before the meeting began. Event Photos: G. Voelm



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Please deliver by Tuesday Feb 15

See this newsletter in color at the Newsletters link on our web pages above.

SHORT & SWEET

DATE	TIME	EVENT	PLACE & CONTACT
Tuesday Feb. 22	7 PM	Sacramento Saloons Talk & Display Sacramento Room librarian James Scott, presents A History of Sacramento Saloons. SCHS member Steve Abbott displays whiskey collectibles.	Sierra Sac Valley Medical Society Bldg 5380 Elvas Ave, Sacramento Directions: ssvms.org/directions.asp SCHS Message Phone: 916-443- 6265
Saturday Feb. 26	10 AM	Black History Month Cemetery Tour Learn about diverse African Americans laid to rest within. Free—donations accepted. Park free in lot across street.	Old City Cemetery Broadway & 10th St., Sacramento 916-448-0811 for more info
Sunday Feb. 27	7 PM	SCHS & Movies on a Big Screen present: Steamboat Bill Jr. & talk by Bill Burg Filmed in Sacramento in the 1920s.	Guild Theater 2828 35th Street, Oak Park moviesonabigscreen.com
Saturday March 12	8 AM to 5 PM	Sacramento County History Day Volunteer judges needed. Please see sachistoryday.org for more information.	Rosemont High School (event site) Myron Piper, CSHD Coordinator 916-868-1049 or infoschd@gmail.com
Tuesday March 29 5th Tuesday	6 PM to 9 PM Doors open at 5:30	SCHS Awards of Excellence Our annual dinner event recognizing the best in History Education, Preservation, and Publications moves to a great restaurant. Tom Myers will show slides of his historic Sacramento postcards.	Evan's Kitchen Banquet Hall Antiques Row Mall 885 57th St., off H St. Right rear of the mall, beyond and diagonally opposite Evan's Kitchen restaurant