



CALIFORNIA ORIGINALS

A Quarterly Newsletter of the California State Archives
A Division of the Secretary of State's Office
www.sos.ca.gov/archives

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October is Archives Month

Archives Month recognizes archivists and archival repositories while raising public awareness of the value of archival materials. This year the California State Archives is hosting three Archives Month events at the California Secretary of State's building in Sacramento.

The State Archives open house on October 11 will be part of the fourth annual Sacramento Archives Crawl. This free all-day event with the theme "Having Fun in the Sacramento Region" will showcase historical treasures from movie theaters, amusement parks, festivals, fairs, outdoor recreation and more. A free shuttle service will run between the four host sites: the State Archives, State Library, Sacramento Public Library, and Center for Sacramento History. Participants can gather passport stamps and win prizes while viewing treasures from dozens of archives and special collections libraries, visiting with archivists, seeing a preservation fair, and going on behind-the-scenes tours. For more information, visit www.sacarchivescrawl.blogspot.com.



Digital Archives Day for the Family Historian will be October 15 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. The event is free but seating is limited. Visit www.sos.ca.gov/archives/events/2014-digital-archives-day.htm for details.

The Preservation Workshop on October 21 is for people who work in an archives-related field. State Archives staff will teach basic preservation techniques for repairing paper-based materials. Workshop information is at www.sos.ca.gov/archives/preservation.

The 2014 California Archives Month poster celebrating 150 years of California's State and National Parks is a beauty. Go to www.calarchivesmonth.org to download the poster.

Please note that Family History Day 2014 has been cancelled. For information about the status of Family History Day, please contact the Genealogical and Historical Council of Sacramento Valley at www.ghcsv.org/index.shtml.

*By Stephanie Hamashin and Sebastian Nelson,
Archivists and Archives Month Committee Members*



The 2014 Archives Crawl bookmark depicts a show at the 1951 California State Fair (F3722:710)

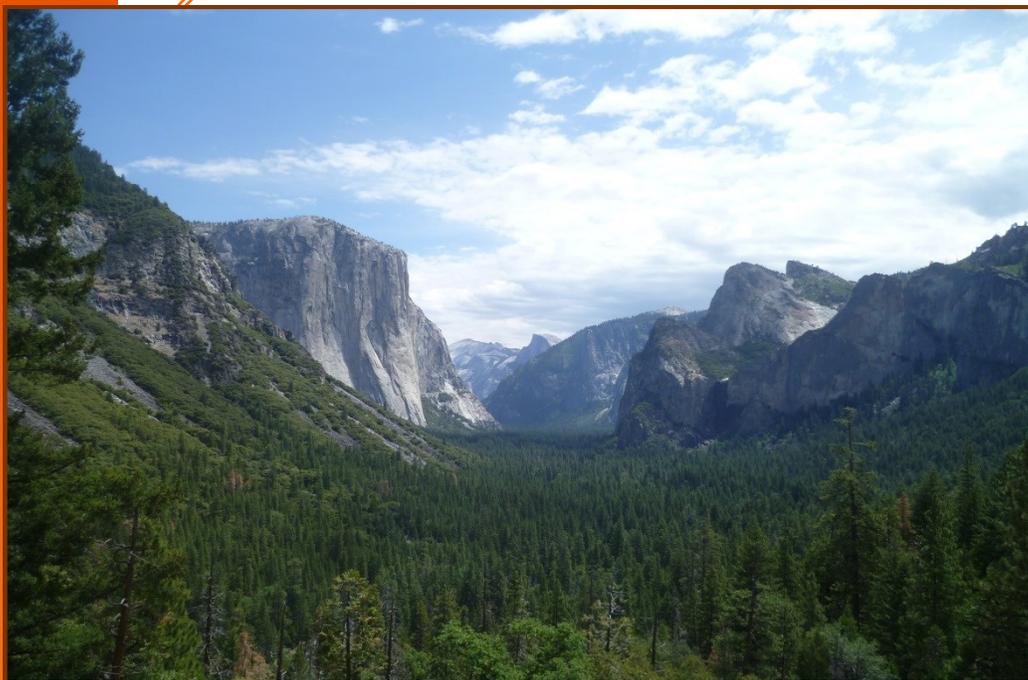
"Preserving and Promoting the History of California"

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From the State Archivist



Yosemite Valley from Tunnel View overlook. Photo courtesy of Nancy Zimmelman Lenoil.

This summer, I had the opportunity to visit Yosemite National Park for the first time. There is no other word to describe the park than “awesome.” My favorite spot was the Tunnel View scenic overlook with its breathtaking view of Yosemite Valley, El Capitan, Bridalveil Fall, and Half Dome. I felt privileged to be in the park just after the 150th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln’s signing of federal legislation that granted Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Tree Grove to the State of California, creating the first state park in the nation. Yosemite became a national park in 1906, but the 1864 Yosemite Grant Act marked the beginning of the state parks system. History can be seen everywhere at Yosemite in

the structures, many of which were built in the 1920s and 1930s. The National Park Service highlights the history of Yosemite in exhibits, films, tours, and even a children’s theater performance called *Ranger Ned’s Big Adventure*. The California State Archives is celebrating the 150th anniversary of Yosemite and State Parks with an exhibit open through September 2015... See page 4 for more details.

Nancy Zimmelman Lenoil

Meet the Staff

Rebecca Wendt, Deputy State Archivist



Rebecca Wendt began working as an archivist for the California State Archives in 2001. She became Managing Archivist for Public Programs in 2013 and was recently appointed as Deputy State Archivist. Prior to her arrival at the State Archives, she worked as Manuscripts and Photographs Curator at the University of California, Davis, Special Collections Department. She also worked for the Yolo County Archives and Records Center and the Yolo County Library System. Rebecca has been program lead for oral history, legislative records, and electronic records at the State Archives. She finds preserving historical sources and making them accessible to the public to be very rewarding and somewhat cleaner than her original career path in archaeology. Rebecca has a Bachelor of Arts degree in anthropology from the University of California, Davis, and a Master of Library and Information Science degree from San Jose State University. In her diminishing spare time, she is an amateur melittologist – an entomologist who studies bees. This obsession has to vie for attention with photography, writing, reading, and striding through the countryside, among other interests.



Program Notes

Exhibits Program

The Exhibits Program creates exhibits featuring materials in the State Archives collections to highlight events in California history and promote public awareness and use of the Archives. Each year staff mount a new exhibit in the 4th floor gallery of the State Archives in Sacramento.

The Exhibits Program Coordinator and archivists work together for several months to create an exhibit. The process begins with selection of an exhibit topic with consideration given to the strengths of the collections, the interests of the public, and upcoming anniversaries or current events related to matters of historical significance. Next, archivists comb the Archives' collections for artifacts, ephemera, records, and photographs related to the exhibit topic. They develop an exhibit storyline and decide how best to convey it through materials, captions and labels. Then program staff create publicity material such as posters, articles, window displays, and website content. Document preservation technicians assist curatorial archivists in planning, mounting, and installing the exhibit.

In addition to developing the annual gallery exhibit, the Exhibits Program staff often work with other archivists to provide mini exhibits for special events and even the occasional exhibit for off-site venues such as the California State Fair.

Melissa Tyler, Archivist and Exhibits Program Coordinator

Records in the Spotlight

State Park Commission

A celebration of the 150th anniversary of the California State Park system must acknowledge the role of Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., who started surveying lands for possible acquisition in 1928. The California State Park Commission accepted the recommendations outlined in Olmsted's statewide survey and began buying land with money from a \$6 million park bond act.



Photo of curve near the head of Damnation Creek from Olmsted Brothers' "Report on Del Norte Park Roads & Scenery," 1931 (State Park Commission Records, R191.003, 4/4)

The records of the State Park Commission, which include Olmsted's surveys and reports, are in the larger Department of Parks and Recreation Record Group (ID number R191). The subject files (ID number R191.002) include state park project documentation with information such as acreage, estimated cost, and state allocation; classifications of state park projects; and a summary report by Newton B. Drury, chief of the Division of Beaches and Parks. The reports files (ID number R191.003) include a copy of the original 1928 State Park Survey of California and survey reports for the 1946 state park bond. The State Park Survey includes the criteria for selecting parks and a list of recommended park sites. The survey also served as a guideline for the establishment of future state parks. Additional reports by other forest engineers and landscape architectural firms working with the Olmsted Brothers include correspondence, maps, and photographs.



Photo from near Yerba Buena Canyon from Olmsted Brothers' "Report on Proposed Sequit State Park," 1933 (State Park Commission Records, R191.003, 4/8)

By Linda Johnson, Archivist



New Exhibit

California State Parks: Preserving Our Natural and Cultural Treasures

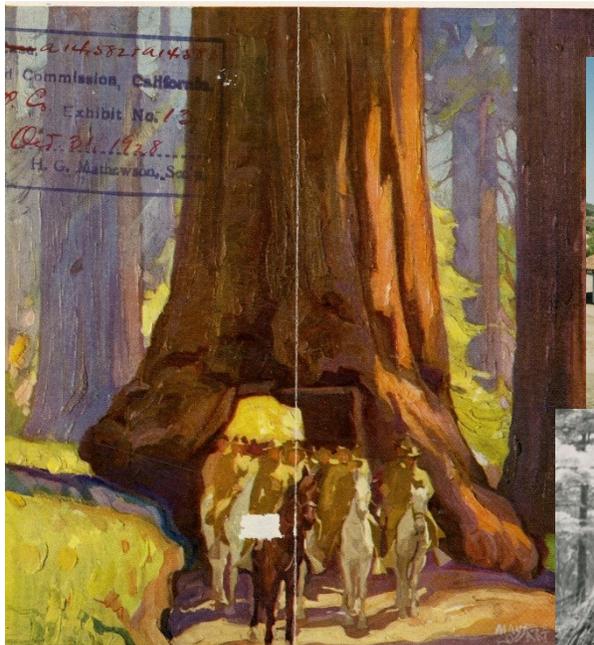
On June 30, 1864, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Yosemite Grant Act. This law marked the beginning of California's efforts to conserve and protect natural resources for public enjoyment, as well as similar national efforts. By preserving the state's diverse natural and cultural resources, California State Parks continues to provide opportunities for health, inspiration, education, and outdoor recreation.

The California State Archives has a new exhibit called "California State Parks: Preserving Our Natural and Cultural Treasures." The exhibit storyline spans the evolution of state parks in California from the first land grant to today's 280 state parks, historic sites, and recreation areas. The exhibit covers Yosemite's history as a state park; efforts of early conservationists; the creation of the state park system; historic preservation projects; the post-war boom and need for more recreational opportunities; and increased efforts to represent California's diverse heritage, cultures, and natural environments through parks.

The exhibit showcases the Archives' collections including records, architectural drawings, maps, postcards, and park ranger badges. Highlights include an 1864 proclamation signed by Governor Frederick Low; an 1892 signed letter from the first guardian of Yosemite with a hand-drawn map of the valley; color lithographs; and photographs of parks, historic preservation projects, and Civilian Conservation Corps camps.

*By Melissa Tyler and Lisa Prince,
Archivists and Exhibit Curators*

*Below: Postcard of La Purisima Mission, undated
(Larson Collection, 97-01-17(550))*



*Above: Pamphlet, "Big Trees of California -
Oldest Living Things on Earth," circa 1928
(General Ephemera Collection, 96-02-18)*



*Right: Surveying Big Trees, 1952
(Fred Meyer Photograph Collection, C136.2(539))*



History Writing Contest

Have the people and events that shaped California’s history come alive for you when visiting a historic place, museum, local history archive or the State Archives? The California Secretary of State invites you to share what you discovered in one of these places, beyond classrooms and books, and what made it especially meaningful to you. Entries must be postmarked or emailed by October 31, 2014. The rules and entry form are at www.sos.ca.gov/archives.

Speaker Series

The Friends of the California Archives will present the second program in a speaker series on November 20. Michael Wurtz, head of Holt-Atherton Special Collections and curator of the John Muir Collections at the University of the Pacific, will present “John Muir and the Big Trees.” The event will begin at 4:30 p.m. with a viewing of the exhibit, “California State Parks: Preserving Our Natural and Cultural Treasures.”

John Muir visited California’s Calaveras Grove of giant sequoias several times. At first Muir reveled among the trees; then he studied them scientifically; finally he fought to preserve what he called “the noblest of the noble race.” Muir used those visits to promote his idea of creating a state park to preserve these ancient treasures.

For more information about the State Archives Speaker Series, visit www.sos.ca.gov/archives/events

Upcoming Events

September 28, October 31	Monthly Public Tours of the California State Archives	www.sos.ca.gov/archives/tour
October 11	Sacramento Archives Crawl	www.sacarchivescrawl.blogspot.com
October 15	Digital Archives Day for the Family Historian	www.sos.ca.gov/archives/events
October 21	Preservation Workshop	www.sos.ca.gov/archives/preservation
November 15	History Day How-to 3.0	www.sos.ca.gov/archives/events
November 20	Speaker Series: “John Muir and the Big Trees” with Michael Wurtz	www.sos.ca.gov/archives/events

California State Archives
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Visit us on the web at www.sos.ca.gov/archives

For general assistance, call (916) 653-7715

For reference assistance, call (916) 653-2246
or email ArchivesWeb@sos.ca.gov

For event information, call (916) 653-7715
or email ArchivesEvents@sos.ca.gov

For the California Museum visit
www.californiamuseum.org



Search our online catalog at
www.sos.ca.gov/archives/minerva



Search state agency records retention schedules at
www.sos.ca.gov/archives/athena



Visit the Secretary of State’s other divisions for election information, campaign finance filings, business records, and more.