

Capitol Clarion

California State Capitol Museum Volunteer Association

JUNE 2013

President's Message By Alex King

We're Listening...

Recently, over 75 of our members responded to a survey of their thoughts and hopes for continuing California State Capitol Museum Volunteer Association (CSCMVA) activities. That's a wonderfully high response rate for any survey, and it shows our members are invested in the success of our organization. It also shows our commitment to growing and expanding our ability to give Capitol visitors a memorable and educational experience.

Very significant in the survey, was members' interest in continuing training opportunities. Your Board is scheduling more of those chances to expand our knowledge of California history and information in the coming months. A visit to the Folsom Powerhouse is being arranged for September. We're looking into an art tour of the Capitol in late July, and we're scheduling some refresher training in the legislative galleries and historic rooms. We're listening.

Several comments in the survey regarded more flexibility in scheduling volunteer tasks. We're getting closer to bringing on line a web site that will allow our members to know where there may be scheduling voids that they can fill. For example, if you find a few hours you can give, you'll be able to see if the Information Desk is fully staffed, or if there are opportunities to serve in one of the historic rooms or – particularly on weekends – if there is a need to open one of the legislative galleries. We're listening.

Not to be overlooked, there is great value in members having time to socialize. Over 82% of survey responses asked for semi-annual gatherings of members. OK, folks. Mark your calendars for **AUGUST 8, at the Northridge Country Club**. This will be an event, in a beautiful setting (with no formal program), where we can just get to know and mingle with other members. We're listening.

CSCMVA is your organization. Share your thoughts, ideas, suggestions, talents and experiences with us. We're listening.

~Alex



The Capitol Clarion is published monthly by the California State Capitol Museum Volunteer Association.

Marti Dennis, Managing Editor

Bill Geach, Editor Eternal

Deadline for announcements and articles is the **1st of the month**. Articles can be e-mailed to the Editor at:

mdennis1@att.net

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PO Box 19956
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Front (L to R): Marilyn Thompson, Bob Dennis, Alex King, David Keck;
Back (L to R): Gary Stonehouse, Chris Tyler, Marita Martin, Leslie Cooper, Connie Clark and Bob Dreyer

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CSCMVA Board Meeting Minutes:

June 4, 2013

By Marilyn Thompson

SPECIAL VISITOR: Alex King introduced State Senator Jean Fuller from Bakersfield who thanked us for the Association's efforts to educate and interpret the Capitol for visitors. *(Additional information and a photo are published in a separate location within this newsletter.)*

TREASURER'S REPORT: Bob Dennis, having just returned from vacation, did not provide a formal report, but he did confirm that the treasury is in good shape with few outstanding bills and good bookstore income.

BOOKSTORE REPORT: Mary Geach reported income of \$2,416 for May, an improvement over May 2012 revenue by \$318. Mary is considering purchase of a book on Sacramento restaurants which are no longer in business. The book captures the recipes for which they became known. She is also hoping to have a popular Sacramento coloring book reprinted since we own the copyrights.

STATE PARKS REPORT: Matt Bellah, Capitol Sector Superintendent, reported that a new volunteer coordinator has been hired and will start next week. She is a recent art history graduate from CSUS named Rachel Martinez. State Parks has also received many applications for two open Guide positions which it will begin to process soon. Alex reported that the Association is working with State Parks to define the relationship will be between CSCMVA and the volunteer coordinator.

MEMBER WEBSITE: Connie Clark reported that a fortuitous discovery was made last month. Apparently, Peter Larson, former Parks volunteer coordinator (prior to his current position at the Railroad Museum), had created a website in 2009 which was never finalized or used before he left. No one knew it existed, but it had already been approved by the "powers that be," and can now be used and adapted for our needs. The Website Working Committee of Randall Williams, Connie Clark, Bob Dreyer, Marita Martin, Chris Tyler, and Jan Geiger are working on the final design and details. They estimate the website might be up and running in another 2-4 months. The proposed design will allow for online scheduling of volunteer signups, a current member roster and possibly an archive of past issues of the *Clarion*. It will be password protected, so it will not be available to the public, but Parks staff (Erin, Terry, Rachel) will have access.

AUGUST SOCIAL EVENT: Alex King and Leslie Cooper reported that the summer mixer will be in the late afternoon, August 8th, at the Northridge Country Club. It will include ample hors d'oeuvres and a no-host bar. Marti Dennis and Patty Wood will work on the event and are seeking a new volunteer to be part of the committee. Leslie Cooper will be our liaison with Northridge, helping

to select a tasty but cost-conscious menu. While no specific details are available at this point in the planning process, the goal is to have members pay a nominal fee while guests will be asked to cover their full cost, or approximately \$20.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES: **David Keck and Alex King** reported on their visit and personalized tour last week of the Folsom Powerhouse. There is a new visitor center there with a kitchen which we could use. David and Alex discussed some type of exchange between their visitors and ours. It was subsequently decided to hold the September Board meeting there and precede that business with a volunteer tour in the morning and an on-site (Brown Bag) lunch.

The July Board meeting will be held, as scheduled on July 3, but there will be no training event because of the holiday weekend.

The August Board meeting will be held August 7th, the day before the social. Alex will inquire if Clem will give his "Governors Who Made a Difference" tour in the morning. It was also suggested that we look into videotaping Clem's tours to be available as a training tool and perhaps for sale in the bookstore.

Capitol Art Tour: Alex will see if Koren Benoit can give a tour on July 24th, since the legislature will be in recess, and we will have access to many more rooms.

SUFFRAGE DAY: will be Sunday October 13th. **Leslie Cooper** and **Lynn Cook** are jointly chairing this event and are assisted by **Jan Geiger**.

All members are encouraged to attend the monthly CSCMVA Board meetings held on the first Wednesday of the month. The next meeting is on July 3rd at 1:00 PM in Room 127.

Sunshine Corner:

Since the last issue of the *Clarion*, wishes for continued recovery were sent to:

Christianne Culhane

Nancy Murphy

Karen Rea



Please contact Scotty Hodges if you know of someone who is ill or in need of encouragement. Scotty can be contacted at hashhogg901@yahoo.com or by phone at 707-425-1909.

Save the Date: Summer Social Thursday August 8!



This **Thursday, August 8 early evening** event promises to be a fun social mixer. No CSCMVA business to conduct, just a relaxing time enjoying fellow members in a beautiful environment. Please join us at the **Northridge Golf Club** for some heavy hors d'oeuvres and a no-host bar. It is a great opportunity to meet new members and connect with more "seasoned" volunteers. Guests are welcome! Event chair Marti Dennis and Patty Wood are seeking a couple of new volunteers to help. If interested, contact Marti at mdennis1@att.net.

CSCMVA Member Survey Results:

By Marilyn Thompson

What an awesome group! Seventy-seven members took the recent survey, and 36 of those people also wrote comments. That is **an overall return of approximately 75%!**

A few highlights:

- half the respondents have been volunteers less than 5 years,
- *Sunday* was the preference for living history events,
- 60% of respondents volunteer weekly or twice monthly,
- only about 28% of members have served on the board or chaired an event,
- 62% would enjoy semi-annual social events,
- and an overwhelming percentage would use an online scheduling tool

I think the most valuable result from this exercise will be the many, many good suggestions and comments which members shared, such as: issues with the **WI desk** and other **scheduling problems, retention of new volunteers**, trying new things and **exploring other training opportunities**, etc. The Board will be studying these results in the next month and will subsequently report back on their progress as soon as possible.

This survey was an experiment to gauge member response and the usefulness of results. I think the effort proved to be a valuable planning tool. Since “SurveyMonkey” is a free and very easy-to-use website, we will keep it in mind for a variety of future uses. Thank you to all who participated. Great job!

Volunteer Website Is Actively Under Construction

By Connie Clark on Behalf of the Committee



The website for Capitol Volunteers is well along in the development process!

Volunteers have requested a way to sign up from home for the West Information Desk and Historic Rooms or, alternatively, to remove their name and alert others of an opening. To that end a committee was formed to create a website.

The Committee is planning several “tabs” to include the following:

- **Home page** that could include “alerts” for events such as parking renewal time;
- **Member Roster** that can be updated when needed;
- **West Information Desk** with the volunteer schedule and a link to those willing to fill in when needed;
- **Historic Rooms** with a volunteer schedule like the WI tab;
- **Events** with information on current events and possibly photos from previous events; and a
- **Miscellaneous** “page” which might include historic room information, Bill White’s list of anomalies, Clem’s famous tour, or other items of interest.

The CSCMVA website will be linked to the Parks site, but not accessible to the public. The site will be secure. Each member will potentially log in with his or her own email address and password.

Randall Williams is creating the site using free Google software. With Parks hosting, there is *no cost* to the Association.

Randall has volunteered to serve as the administrator for a time; however, we need a volunteer or two to serve as back-up and to ensure continuity after the site becomes active. **Contact Randall at 1stunderstand0413@gmail.com** if interested in this volunteer opportunity.

Members of the website committee are Connie Clark, Bob Dreyer, Jan Geiger, Marita Martin, Chris Tyler and Randall Williams.

Special Guest: Senator Jean Fuller, Bakersfield

The CSCMVA Board was honored to have a visit by, and introduction to, **Senator Jean Fuller** at the June 4 Board meeting. President Alex King met Senator Fuller as a result of providing several "VIP" tours for her constituents. Senator Fuller was gracious in describing her appreciation of CSCMVA services in the Capitol benefiting the general public, as well as members of the legislature. As a former educator, she told the Board how much she values volunteer interpretive services.

Senator Fuller is a member of five of the standing committees of the Senate, including Senate Rules. She was in the Assembly prior to being elected to the Senate in 2010. She is from Bakersfield and represents one of the geographically largest districts in the state which ranges from Visalia to Barstow.



Senator Jean Fuller speaking at the June 4 CSCMVA Board Meeting

Sewing Days for the October Suffrage Event



While dates have not yet been finalized, the Costume Committee is planning to host a **Sewing Workshop this summer** for costuming for the Women's Suffrage Living History event in October. This is a great opportunity to receive guidance on appropriate period costuming, help with pattern fitting, solve sewing questions, and to socialize with other members of CSCMVA. If interested, contact **Connie Clark** (cclark610@surewest.net) or **Patty Wood** (pjwood09@att.net). More information will be forthcoming.

Volunteer Spotlight

By Asleain Scotty Hodges

When she saw the 2012 State Capitol Museum Volunteer Association's Recruitment Ad for Docents; she did not hesitate to respond because it **"was an opportunity to learn and be a part of an awesome" experience.** **Kathryn Beckham** enjoys meeting and talking with people, learning about California history, being in the hub of California politics, enjoying the beautiful Capitol building, keeping her mind active, and contributing in a positive way. It was going to be a privilege to serve as a Capitol docent.

Kathryn has a fascinating personal history. She was born in Tokyo, Japan. Her father was employed by the United States government at Tachikawa Air Force Base for 13 years. When she was 10 years old, her African American father, Japanese mother, and younger sister moved to Sacramento. Japan was, of course, her mother's homeland. While living in Japan, her father took them on many educational vacations to well-known areas. When the family learned of her father's transfer to McClellan Air Force Base; they were heart-broken. Kathryn confesses that as a child, she **never** dreamed of leaving her homeland and precious Japanese family of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, to move to a foreign place like the United States.



Kathryn Beckham

In 1960 Kathryn and her family made the trip from Japan to the United States. It took 36 hours due to multiple layovers in **Taiwan, Wake Island and Hawaii** before finally arriving at Travis AFB. After the family settled in Sacramento, Kathryn quickly adapted to the change from Japanese to Western culture. She made friends and recalls that for the most part, people were friendly -- just mostly curious about the bi-racial make-up of her family.

The family's primary language in the home was Japanese. Her father spoke fluent Japanese while her mother spoke broken English. She now realizes how much effort and emphasis her father placed on providing his family with a broad view of the world. He took them on many road trips and vacations to see the United States and, in 1962, they met the American side of the family in Dayton, Ohio. Kathryn says: **"It was a wonderful feeling to be welcomed by family in the United States since our only other family was miles away in Japan."**

As a girl, Kathryn attended schools in Sacramento including Saturday sessions of Japanese Language School. She also attended Sacramento City College and the University of California Davis Extension. She definitely includes her "life's journey" as part of her education. She relates: **"My experiences growing up in Japan and transitioning to Western culture made me a stronger person with the ability to interact with a broad base of diverse individuals of all of social-economic levels."** And she adds: **"I've met many interesting people right here in Sacramento. This city is one of the most diverse cities in the nation."**

She and her husband of 40 years have two sons and six grandchildren, and she feels very blessed to have them live in Sacramento. She loves spending quality family time with her sons and their families. One of her favorite things to do is Recreational "Vehicling." She and her husband have been devotees of that community for almost 30 years. They are members of a 12 couple Motor Home Club, serving as the club's **"Wagon Masters" and newsletters editor.**

Kathryn is retired from the **University of California-Davis Health System** where she worked in **Human Resources Management** for twenty-six years. In her position, she provided a broad range

of educational opportunities including Leadership Management courses as well as rolling out mandatory trainings to some 10,000 employees.

Kathryn has attended Alex King's special training on the Senate and Assembly Galleries, and assisted with Camellia Day activities. Visitors from her native Japan will benefit from one who understands their culture and speaks their language – a unique kind of CSCMVA outreach.

Brain Teaser

By Bill White

Many of you were able to guess the correct answer to the first Brain Teaser – the mechanical check writer. If you were unsuccessful with that piece of equipment, we are providing another Brain Teaser opportunity. Below is a picture of a device that is in the vault of the 1906 Treasurer's Office. Can you guess which of the following it is? (The answer appears at the end of the **Clarion**.)



1. Coin sorter?
2. Coin Counter?
3. Something volunteers are never to touch?
4. A fake coin detector?

Special Feature: How California Got its Name

By Clem Dougherty

DID YOU KNOW....that the name "California" came from a 16th century Spanish novel? You may recall that in our last **Clarion** article we left Queen Isabella sending Columbus on his first journey westward from Europe which resulted in his 1492 discovery of the New World. Columbus eventually made four journeys to the New World focused mainly on discovery of the islands in the Caribbean and of the South American and Central American mainland bordering the Caribbean.

So began the age of the conquistadors, and no person fit the role of conquistador better than Hernan Cortes. Hernan Cortes was born in 1485 in the Spanish region of Extremadura – a region of western Spain – *terra extrema and dura*, that is, a land both extreme and hard. Extremadura was the birthplace of other conquistadors, all of whom accomplished their exploits in the New World during the reign (1516-1556) of Carlos 1, or as history better knows him, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella. All of these conquistadors epitomized in their person that Spanish spirit of national crusade begun during the reigns of Ferdinand and Isabella. Between the years 1519 and 1521 Cortes, with 600 Spanish soldiers and many thousand Indian allies, invaded what is now Mexico and defeated the Aztec nation. The Indian allies of Cortez had been so victimized by the Aztecs who had used captured Indian tribes for human sacrifice that the neighboring tribes were more than willing to join Cortez in the defeat of the Aztecs. Thus, by 1521 Mexico became part of the Spanish Empire.

A few years after Cortez conquered Mexico in 1521, he sent to the western shore of Mexico an exploring expedition which then crossed what is now the Gulf of California to what is now Baja

California. The Spanish at first thought that Baja was an island. Around the year 1500, just before the conquest of Mexico, a popular Spanish novel written by Garci Ordonez de Montalvo circulated in Spain. The novel was called Las Sergas de Esplandian (“the Adventures of Esplandian”) something like “the Adventures of Superman.” The novel described a mythical island called “California” inhabited by women warriors described in the novel as “Amazons” and ruled by a queen called “Califia.” The novel described the island as a lush, green, verdant paradise full of gold and precious gems. In the novel the women on the island captured mythical creatures called “griffins.” (A griffin is a creature having the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion.) According to the novel, the women trained the griffins to seize men from the ground and drop them from great heights. Those men not so dropped were fed to the griffins. In the novel Califia married a relative of Esplandian, converted to Roman Catholicism, and then settled with her husband on the island called “California.” Some historians think that Montalvo did not invent the name but borrowed it from the Song of Roland written four centuries earlier in which the name “Califerne” appears in French and which Montalvo then hispanicized to “California.” Regardless of the ultimate origin of the name, however, historians today pretty much agree that the Spanish got the name “California” from the island so named in Las Sergas de Esplandian and, because the Spanish thought Baja to be an island, they first applied the name to Baja.

Some historians think that the Spanish may have given the name “California” to Baja as a joke, because the novel’s description of the island as a lush, green, verdant paradise is just the opposite of the desert that Baja actually is. Other historians think that since Spanish soldiers were upset that in the novel women were the soldiers and men were the victims, the soldiers believed that such a desolate place as Baja deserved the name “California” which in their mind meant a “good-for-nothing place.”

However, it did not take the Spanish long to discover that Baja was not an island but a peninsula. Finding out the truth that Baja was not an island did not prevent early Spanish and other European map-makers from continuing to draw the entire region together – both present day Baja and present day California -- as an island and naming the whole covered region “California” (see Derek Hayes: Historical Atlas of California, pp.28-35) . Thus, the name “California” stuck for the entire region. In today’s parlance “Baja California” means “Lower California.” We are “Alta California” or “Upper California.”

Garci Ordonez de Montalvo, the author of Las Sergas de Esplandian, had no idea that the name he gave to the mythical island in his novel would some 513 years later describe a region of the world occupied by 38 million people – the State of California.

(Sources: Rawls and Bean: California, An Interpretive History, 9th ed; pp 22-23; Derek Hayes: Historical Atlas of California, pp.28-35) . Elliott, J.H., Imperial Spain, 1469-1716, pp.61-65; White, Jon Winship, Cortes And The Downfall Of The Aztec Empire, pp. 19, 29, 31, 118, 132-133, 186-193; Sale, Kirkpatrick, The Conquest of Paradise-Christopher Columbus and the Columbian Legacy, pp. 92-95;108-110;128-129;146-147;170-177;192-193.)

*(Editor’s Note: The Special Features column is dedicated to interesting articles about California, our CA State Capitol or visits to other state capitols. CSCMVA members are encouraged to share experiences and/or researched information in this column. For inclusion in the **Clarion**, please send articles to Marti Dennis at mdennis1@att.net)*

Brain Teaser Answer: If you picked either number three or four, you are correct. The device is a Fairbank’s Infallible Counterfeit Coin Detector, circa 1890. The device could detect coins that had either been shaved of some of their gold or were made of another metal and simply gold plated.

Upcoming Events:

CSCMVA Board Meeting:	Wednesday July 3, 1:00 PM in Room 127
Sewing Workshop:	TBD July and August
Summer Social: (More information to follow)	Thursday August 8 Northridge Country Club
California Admission Day:	Monday, September 9
Women's Suffrage Living History:	Sunday, October 13
Capitol Holiday Music:	Daily, December 1 through 23
Annual Meeting & Luncheon:	TBD, January 2014

Volunteer Program website:

<http://capitolmuseum.tem.parks.ca.gov/volunteerprogram>

Capitol Museum website: <http://www.capitolmuseum.ca.gov/>

Volunteer Coordinator: 324-2405

Tour Guide Office: 324-0333

Scheduler's Desk: 324-2088

Capitol Tours daily 9 am – 4 pm, closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day