James Hutchings arrived in California from England just in time for the gold rush, but soon began writing about his travels on broadsides. One of the first people to describe Yosemite to “the world”, his magazine was published monthly from July 1856 to June 1861, five volumes total, including a number of well known legendary stories of the West; the Pony Express, Grizzly Adams and Snowshoe Thompson. The story of the naming of Yosemite was first published in the magazine in an article by Lafayette Bunnell. His fine drawings captured the unique flavor of gold rush characters.

**Zoom In to the Christmas Carol by Dr. Dot-it-Down**

W.S. Walker, in his reminiscence of mining life entitled, Glimpses of Hungryland, recalled that, “Christmas morning found us frying the string our bacon had been suspended with. This we washed down with a tin cup full of pepper-wood tea. Then we sat down to reflect on the peculiarity of the situation.” But that was soon forgotten as his ravenous camp mate Reed spied a mountain hare and commenced a madcap chase, club in hand. A half-hour passed, then another and yet another. Reed was zigzagging through the woods, shadowing the frantic rabbit. Walker recalled, “Such wild leaps as that animal made, I have never saw equaled; and Reed made some of the most inhuman jumps and plunges that a mortal ever was guilty of, as … he dashed wildly in pursuit.” The terrified hare leapt from a cliff into an icy river to escape. Close behind was the famished Reed, who skidded to the cliff’s edge and made several attempts to summon the courage to follow the rabbit into the river. Walker finally pulled him to safety. The hare escaped.
On Dec. 5, 2017, 54 SYRPA / FNBMD members, docents, volunteers and state park retirees crowded into the Oak Room at Lake Wildwood. Food was aplenty and festivity in the air. Many individuals were commended for their dedication to South Yuba River Park Association, Friends of North Bloomfield and their respective state parks. SYRPA President Robert Coats noted that the wheels were turning to get the work started on the Bridgeport Covered Bridge but cautioned folks not to get too anxious as the work must proceed according to plan. Dave Anderson of FNBMD lauded all the effort that resulted in making the French Connection a success, in commemorating the French involvement in the Gold Rush and Malakoff Diggins. Dave introduced Tina Wener as the newest member of the Executive Committee. Melinda Booth was introduced as the new Executive Director of the South Yuba River Citizens League. She is anxious to get acquainted with all the people and entities working for the good of the river, its watershed and the folks that appreciate it all.

HAPPY 25TH BIRTHDAY SYRPA

From little acorns to mighty oaks, SYRPA has grown from infancy to the sages of the river, enduring fires, floods, protesters, outlaw gold miners, turkey poachers, a generation of park staff, (some being replaced by their offspring), and an embedded procession of state budget analysts dedicated to cutting parks to the bone; thus making your growth and fund raising efforts more critical each year. Throw yourselves a deserving soiree, for your presence is sustenance to South Yuba River and Malakoff Diggins State parks.  

Larry Clark, editor  
State Park Supervising Ranger (Retired)
THE GHOSTS OF BRIDGEPORT

BRIDGEPORT LEGEND HAS IT THAT 150 YEARS AGO A SEMI-NORTORIOUS, ALLEGED, HORSE THIEF AND ALL-AROUND UNSAVORY CHARACTER WAS HANGED FROM A BEAM IN THE COVERED BRIDGE, MUCH TO THE SATISFACTION OF LOCAL MINERS AND SETTLERS. THE LOCAL INDIANS WERE NOT POLLED THUS THEIR VIEWS ON THE MATTER, IF THEY HAD ANY, WERE NOT RECORDED.

MYTH FOLLOWS LEGEND THAT THE CORPSE OF THE LATE RUSTLER WAS NOT GIVEN A PROPER CHRISTIAN BURIAL THUS CONTINUED TO HAUNT THE BRIDGE DOWN THROUGH THE DECADES; THE LORE FADING WITH TIME.

IN THE LATE 20TH CENTURY THE FLEDGLING SOUTH YUBA RIVER PARK ASSOCIATION AND STATE PARK VOLUNTEERS ENDEavored TO CORRECT THE DELICATE OVERSIGHT CONCERNING THE BURIAL OF YANKEE JIM; YES THE SKULKER HAD A NAME. WHENCE THE “YANKEE” ORIGINATED IS ALSO NOT RECORDED. THE IDEA WAS TO RELOCATE HIS BONES TO A PROPER GRAVE.

PARK VOLUNTEERS ASSISTED BY RANGERS CHUCK SCIMECA AND MARK MICHALSKI, RESEARCHED THE SUBJECT AND DEVELOPED “ROLES” FOR VOLUNTEERS TO PORTRAY, OF THE HISTORICAL CHARACTERS OF THE TIME.

THE FIRST PERFORMANCE WAS A SMASH HIT, FINALIZING WITH DOCENT JUDY NICHOLS (SHE ALSO HELD THE FIRST PINE NEEDLE BASKET CLASSES HERE), “POPPING UP” OUT OF A GRAVE TO THWART THOSE INTENDING TO “PLANT” YANKEE JIM’S CASKET WITHIN THE HISTORIC KNEEBONE CEMETERY; A MOMENT SHOCKING TO MANY ONLOOKERS. THE AFFECT WAS WORTH YER NICKLE TO SEE.

THIS YEAR’S RESURRECTION OF THE ENACTMENT, UNDER THE WATCHFUL DIRECTION OF STATE PARK INTERPRETER JENNA RANDAR, Featured LAUREN WILSON AS MRS. COLE AND MILAN VODICKA AS THE PREACHER; ALSO SHOOK THE MOTHBALLS OFF OF 3 RETIRED RANGERS, SCIMECA, MICHALSKI AND YOURS TRULY, WHO ORATED AD NAUSEAM. THIS TRIO, ANY OF WHOM COULD FILIBUSTER CONGRESS, WERE HELD TO SCRIPT BY THE DIRECTOR AND THE PRODUCTION WAS DEEMED AN ENJOYABLE AND WORTHY SUCCESS.
The Sad & Uplifting Saga of the Halifax Christmas Tree on Boston Common

For the 100th consecutive year a towering Christmas tree from Canada stands on Boston Common. It was lit Thursday night with great fanfare, fireworks, Santa Claus and song.

On Dec. 6, 1917, the French freighter Mont-Blanc, packed with 6 million pounds of High explosives, was headed out of the harbour, at Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, to the Atlantic Ocean and WWI in France.

It was struck by an in-bound ship, speeding and out of it’s assigned channel, causing a fire to aviation gas stored on deck. The crew abandoned ship and began rowing for their lives. As the burning ship drifted toward the town, Patrick Vincent Coleman, a 45 yr. old train dispatcher, tapped in Morse Code, “Hold up the train. Ammunition ship afire in harbour making for Pier 6 and will explode. Guess this will be my last message. Good-bye boys.”

Seconds later the ship, pier, Coleman, the town of Richmond and part of Halifax were obliterated. 2000 people were killed instantly and 9,000 injured. Over 500 were blinded by shrapnel. It was the largest man-made explosion prior to the atomic bomb and was rated at 3.5 megatons.

Within one hour of getting the news about this explosion, without being asked, Massachusetts Governor Sam McCall gathered over 100 city leaders and put together the Massachusetts-Halifax Relief Committee. They sent 2 trains, 2 ships, 100 doctors, 300 nurses, $1 million worth of supplies, cars with gas and chauffeurs; enough to run several temporary hospitals. They sent carpenters and materials to quickly put up small houses to shelter survivors from the winter. The quick action saved countless lives. The gesture cemented an alliance between the two countries who had not been real friendly since the Revolutionary war in 1776. Halifax to this day still sends Boston a Christmas tree, the best one they can find in the province. That’s their way of thanking them for all the good deeds done 100 years ago by their great-grandparents.

Source, John U. Bacon - The Great Halifax Explosion
To: Ranger Dan, Ranger Ryan, Jenna, FNB&MD and Malakoff Volunteers

I would like to say a heartfelt “Thank You” to each and every one of you for your support, your guidance, and for stepping in to help during this difficult year. I won’t lie—it was a lot harder than I thought it would be. The new job responsibilities were a lot to learn, but I loved the challenge of that.

The emotional part of this year was the tough part. Just about every day I would open a file or drawer and find a note with Debbie’s handwriting on it. Every time I changed something, even though it was for the better, I felt a wave of guilt. Debbie put her heart and soul into Malakoff. You all made it possible for me to push forward and do the job and I am more grateful than words can say.

As we move forward into the 2018 season, we will continue to expand Malakoff park operations and events and improve in every way possible. I’d like to think Debbie would approve.

Thank you and have a wonderful Holiday season.  

Brooke Betz, Sr. Park Aide

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First Day Hike

Awaken the New Year with exhilarating fresh air on a First Day hike over the Rim Trail at Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park. Meet at the Park Museum/Visitor Center at 1 p.m., January 1. The Rim Trail overlooks the “diggins” or basin, (carved by 19th century hydraulic mining), is 3.29 miles of “moderate” hiking. Wear hiking boots and carry water. Hat, snacks, sunglasses, camera, binoculars recommended. Dress in layers as we plan to hike in sun, rain or snow. Minimum age for hikers, 8 years old.

Please check for updates at: http://malakoffdigginsstatepark.org

Take Hwy. 49 North from Nevada City, 11 mi. to Tyler-Foote Rd. Turn right, follow the yellow lines, 15 miles to the state park. $5 per car. No dogs please.

Sponsored by Friends of North Bloomfield & Malakoff Diggins
The Yuba River area became famous during the Gold Rush as being exceptionally rich in gold. The nearby Grass Valley gold district was the richest and most famous gold district in California. Gold was found within quartz veins that cut across various metamorphic and granitic rocks such as are revealed in the park. The gold deposits that were eroded by the river became a second type of deposit, placer deposits in the river channel—like those found near Coloma in Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park. The ancestral course of the Yuba River was quite different than today. It also contained placer deposits. Starting about 34 million years ago, huge volcanic flows of ash, mud, and rock from the east filled the canyons, buried those placers, and caused the river to change course. Gradually, a new canyon formed through the volcanic cap rock, into the ancient gravels, and deeper into the bedrock. The gold-bearing gravels of the ancestral river were discovered up the canyon walls and along ridges, making them a third type of deposit. Those deposits were mined in two basic ways. First, miners excavated the gold bearing gravels directly out of the Feature/Process: Exotic terrains along an ancient plate boundary in the Sierra slopes, and when necessary, they cut tunnels (drifts) into the hillside following the ancient river course. Next, they dug pits, big pits. With the development of hydraulic mining, enormous pits were excavated. Nearby Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park is an excellent example. Of course, such large-scale mining (in the days before environmental damage was considered) had enormous consequences that spawned some of California’s first environmental rules. With three types of gold deposits, it is no wonder the Yuba River area and the Grass Valley district were such a treasure trove.
Known earlier as Arnold’s Ranch, Lake City was laid out in 1858 and became a French enclave which included several of the original Eureka Lake group, including Fauchery, Poquillon, & Lay. Poquillon, a true entrepreneur, opened the Lake City Hotel and even sold memberships to the Lake City Yacht Club.

The Hydraulic Press gushed, “Several houses are already built on San Juan Street, and occupied as dwelling, shops, and hotels. One of the hotels is the well-known house of Henry Arnold. Another was built by Mr. Poquillon, and the roof of it commands an entrancing view of the adjacent mountainous, pine-clad country, with far vistas of Sacramento Valley, the Three Buttes, and the purple Coast Range”. On 25 May 1860, Poquillion sold his hotel, lot, and furnishings, together known as the Julius House or Lake City House, to Marius and Henrietta Bremond for $2,200.

“There is a French restaurant at this point at which the countrymen of The Third Napoleon congregate during their idle hours, in large numbers, to exchange notes and converse in vernacular tongue… There is a large community of these people scattered through the adjoining mines and those who have paid attention to the French character know that it is always original, fresh, sprightly and entertaining.”

Meanwhile, Humbug City / N. Bloomfield, was becoming a boomtown, and continued to attract more French settlers from the surrounding countryside. Two of them, Antone Mayoux and Marie Petitjean, built a store in Humbug City in 1856, near Madame Agustue’s canvas-roofed Hotel de Frances. These two entrepreneurs involved themselves in, and supplied, many of the ventures in the Virgin Valley Mining District. Petitjean attempted to preempt the entire community of Humbug City in September 1856, and Mayoux purchased a downtown lot with two houses on the southwest corner of Main St. and Mill St., presumably using one as the partnership’s retail store and the other for his residence. The MDSHP now interprets the store as the McIllican and Mobley store, after the subsequent owners, but it was originally the Empire Store of Petitjean, Mayoux & Co. The Hotel de France was nearby, evidently across the street. Petitjean later acquired the business. In 1860 Petitjean was listed in the census as a 37 yr. old saloon keeper, while Mayoux was recorded as a 36 yr. old merchant running the store a couple of doors away. Jean Baptiste LeDu arrived in Humbug City in 1856. His mining company of 7 Frenchmen claimed 700 ft. along Humbug Ck., 100 ft. ea. Petitjean joined Ledu & Co. in claiming water rights in Relief Canyon, east of town and building a ditch to bring water to LeDu Diggins. Leopold Wattier, Anton Mayoux, and William Cook, formed the Malakoff Flume Co. consolidating a number of Humbug area claims and the water supply to work them. The French have a word for it: Eau
South Yuba River Citizens League

Executive Director Melinda Booth

After six years working for SYRCL as the Director for the Wild & Scenic Film Festival, Melinda was promoted to Executive Director. Melinda brings more than 16 years of experience in environmental conservation and advocacy to her new position. Before joining SYRCL, she focused her career on saving iconic species like bears, wolves, and salmon in the American West. At Defenders of Wildlife, she led campaigns to keep bears alive and wild in the Tahoe basin and helped on the reintroduction of the California Condor back into the wild. As Development Manager at the California Wolf Center, Melinda led education, conservation and research on the North American gray wolf, and specifically the reintroduction of Mexican gray wolves to the Southwest. Her passion for wildlife drew her next to the Sequoia Park Zoo Foundation where she served as Development Director, securing millions of dollars for their red panda habitat and an award winning Native Predator exhibit featuring river otter, bald eagle, and salmon.

Melinda holds a M.S. in Environmental Studies from the University of Montana, where she studied human-bear interactions in the wildland urban interface. Her publications span scientific journals, periodicals, and books. On a personal note, the Yuba River is central to Melinda’s everyday life. She and her husband purchased land overlooking the South Yuba making them personally motivated to protect and restore the Yuba River watershed.

ANTE UP FOR THE NEW YEAR

2017 was a great year for Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park, and we hope you had a chance to come out and create your own special memories here as we did. • The Kids Fishing Derby at Blair Lake • Celebrated the history of No. Bloomfield with the 51st Humbug Day • Honored the contributions of the early French residents with our first French Connection event • Supported the Environmental Living Program, bringing 4th graders to the park to experience history first-hand...and more. You can help us expand the Environmental Living Program - Hail the Solar Power installation for the park - and Grow

Make a donation at: malakoffdigginsstatepark.org/donation/
or join FNBMD at: malakoffdigginsstatepark.org/membership-application/
Secessionists from Grass Valley were rumored to be planning a raid on Nevada City.

The Civil War was in full swing, being financed in large part with the gold from California's mines. Grass Valley was a hotbed of sentiment for the South and for the continuation of slavery. In the federal election of 1864 Allison Ranch precinct voted 328 against Abraham Lincoln. Curious since only 100 people were on the tax rolls at the time.

The fledgling *Grass Valley Union* newspaper was a lone voice in support of the North, and Lincoln. Nevada City residents were more inclined to be in support of the North and Lincoln, and opposed to slavery.

The sheriff received word from an informant in the Allison Ranch area that plans were afoot to sack Nevada City, rob the banks, and claim the arms from the *Nevada Light Guard*, stored there. Families were moved out of harm's way to *Sugar Loaf*, the low mountain above Nevada City. The sheriff mustered what forces he could to defend the town then set about fortifying himself with a goodly quantity of whiskey.

*The Nevada Light Guard* assembled at their armory and the sheriff took charge of the armed men. They expected to hear a bugle blast at any minute, announcing the beginning of hostilities. Guards were set, sentinels paced, night fell. The stars were bright, the night clear. Men waited armed with revolvers, hatchets, and knives. The night wore slowly away toward dawn but no enemy appeared. Scouts were sent out to reconnoiter the ground between Grass Valley and Nevada City for signs of the approaching enemy.

Meanwhile the guards, chilly and apprehensive, continued to walk their rounds. A thoughtful soul sent for a bottle to sustain them. Soon one of the guards, fearing the worst, saw an approaching figure. "Who goes there?" He called out. "Friend with a bottle of cocktails," came the reply. "Advance, friend with cocktails," the guard responded promptly, "and damn the countersign!"

The night was warmed by the bottle's contents and the men waited for dawn. It came, but the secessionist hordes from Grass Valley failed to materialize. And so it was, that what might have been one of the historic battles of the Civil War, became a training exercise.
Difficulties of Travel in the Early 1850s

Submitted by retired Ranger Chuck Scimeca

In the summer of 1851 Mrs. B.D. Bates traveled to Bridgeport with her ship captain husband on a holiday excursion to visit the gold camps. She and her husband sailed from San Francisco to Marysville, and then drove a horse and carriage to French Corral.

Governor Jerry Brown Vetoes Smoking Ban at California Beaches and State Parks

Cigarette butts are the most common type of litter on California’s beaches, but on Friday Governor Jerry Brown vetoed two bills that would have banned smoking at all state beaches and state parks in California. “If people can’t even smoke on a deserted beach, where can they?” Brown wrote in a veto message. “There must be some limit to the coercive power of government.”

One of the bills, SB 386, would have required the state parks department to post no smoking signs and could have resulted in fines of up to $100 for violators, a number that Brown said could grow to $485 after other state fees were tacked on. The bill was endorsed by the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, California Fire Chiefs Association, Save the Bay, Surfrider Foundation, March of Dimes and San Francisco Baykeeper.

Supporters said they were disappointed that there will be more litter for state parks maintenance workers to pick up. The bill also would have banned smoking cigars, pipes or vaping devices, and the smoking of “any plant product,” not just tobacco.

Smoking already is banned by many cities and counties on beaches, including San Francisco, San Mateo County and Los Angeles.

In 2009, Maine banned smoking in state parks and historical sites. Last year, Republican Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey signed a similar law that bans smoking on any state beach or state park or forest.

Environmental groups oppose smoking due to the impact on trash and wildlife. From 1989 to 2014, the most common item collected in the annual California Coastal Cleanup was cigarettes and cigarette butts, with more than 6.9 million, making up 37 percent of all the items collected. Second was food wrappers and containers, at 10 percent, and third was caps and lids, at 8 percent of all items, according to the California Coastal Commission.

By Paul Rogers, San Jose Mercury News 10-17-17
“Hearing that a strike had been made at Meadow Lake, above Cisco Grove, miners stampeded to the area. The stampeding encouraged more stampede and in no time a vibrant town was being built.”

“Summit City, Excelsior, [Meadow Lake] had ten stores, five lumber yards, ten hotels, five blacksmith shops, four hurdy-gurdies, and numerous bars – 100, according to one reckoning…. “The price of lots soared to $800.”

All this with Little Gold. A town built on rabid Speculation!
A flabbergasting read. 160 pages. L.Clark, Editor H/H
California State Parks
Outer Spacial app

California State Parks is launching a new iOS mobile pilot app in eight parks around the state. The Outer Spatial pilot app is available to download on all Apple iOS devices and includes detailed information about the activities you love to do in the eight parks, as well as historic locations, trail maps, events, and amenities, all in one place. The pilot project runs through 2017 and may expand to include additional parks within the state park system in the future. We’ll be monitoring feedback through the end of November, so download Outer Spatial and get outside and help us make a tool that is tailored to your adventures!

To download the OuterSpatial app directly from the Apple store, visit http://bit.ly/CAStateParksOuterSpatial.

Google Street View Treks!

Thanks to a partnership between California State Parks and Google Maps, you can now visit many of our beautiful parks right from your computer, tablet or smart phone. A total of 110 state park destinations have been filmed using Google Trekker, a backpack-mounted camera that provides 360 degree footage.
Join Friends of North Bloomfield & Malakoff Diggins
or Renew Your Membership - See Last Page
Secure Sign Up: www.malakoffdigginsstatepark.org

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FRIENDS OF NORTH BLOOMFIELD & MALAKOFF DIGGINS
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The Friends of North Bloomfield & Malakoff Diggins (FNB&MD) is a non-profit organization assisting the California Department of Parks and Recreation in the operation of Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park. Your tax-deductible membership in FNB &MD will

- help preserve, protect and enhance the man made and natural resources of Malakoff Diggins SHP
- support interpretation of the park’s rich biological diversity, geologic features, historic and cultural resources
- provide you with a quarterly newsletter and other notices of Park activities
- include a 10% discount on purchases from the Malakoff Park Store.

Membership Levels

☐ Annual Senior/Student ($15)
☐ Annual Individual membership ($20)
☐ Annual family membership ($35)
☐ Lifetime individual membership ($150)
☐ Lifetime family membership ($200)

Name____________________________________________________

Street Address____________________________________________

City____________________________________________State__________Zip__________

Phone (home)________________________(cell)________________________

Email

I am interested in:
☐ helping the park organization financially
☐ becoming a trained docent
☐ becoming a park volunteer
☐ other

Mission:

We enhance the interpretive experience for visitors, promote park-based education for learners of all ages, and support and preserve the natural and cultural resources of Malakoff Diggins SHP. We also assist other cooperative associations and the State Park System mission for the benefit of the public.

for more information call 530.265.2740 or check out our website:
www.malakoffdigginsstatepark.org