

## Book



## notes

## Berkeley 1900: Daily Life at the Turn of the Century

By Richard Schwartz

RSB Books, Berkeley, CA, 2009, 330 pages, 320 images  
\$24.95, softcover, \$24.95, ISBN: 978-0967820446

In recent years, a complete interpretation of our past has come to be defined less in terms of famous people and momentous happenings and more through an examination of the lives of ordinary people and everyday events.

In his 10th anniversary edition of *Berkeley 1900*, Richard Schwartz displays once again a pure gift for taking this interpretation to new heights. From a stack of moldy and discarded *Berkeley Daily Gazette* newspapers, he has discovered unmined snippets of history to tell his story. He has rediscovered people and events long lost in the cracks of time.

Each page of *Berkeley 1900* is filled with charming, amusing, factual, poignant and always revealing articles showing how life was, how it has changed and how it remains the same. An example of how life was: When is the last time you drank a glass of Baldwin's Celery Soda, guaranteed to cure sick and nervous headaches, seasickness and mental fatigue.

A choice example of how some things never change: An article under the catchy headline "Dandy Dresser Decamps" tells about one James Graham who disappeared from Berkeley last week, leaving a 17-year-old wife and a long list of creditors.

My all-time favorite article that Schwartz has rescued from obscurity is the following:

### Dog Arrested for Stealing Doughnuts

Policeman Barff today arrested a foxhound on a charge of petit larceny. The dog was a hound pup which was caught stealing doughnuts from the Capital lunch counter on University Avenue near Shattuck and was taken by the officer to the police station. Later it was learned that the dog belonged to Gladstone Morris, residing at 2229 Vine Street, and when notified of the trouble into which the dog had gotten himself, Morris agreed to pay for the doughnuts if the dog were turned loose. The dog was permitted to go home.

In this expanded 10th anniversary edition of *Berkeley 1900*, Richard Schwartz has succeeded once again in producing both accurate history and a good read.

Buy the book. It's a winner.

**Reviewed by Mary-Ellen Jones  
The Bancroft Library, Retired**

## Historical Atlas of the American West With Original Maps

By Derek Hayes

University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2009  
288 pages, 606 maps, cloth, \$39.95  
ISBN 978-0-520-25652-1

Maps are those once-indispensable utilitarian street guides, tattered and torn at the folds and stowed in your glove compartment, true, but they can be so much more — "graphic representations that facilitate a spatial understanding of things, concepts, conditions, processes, or events in the human world."

Derek Hayes' newest book, *Historical Atlas of the American West*, displays the whole range of what maps can be. Following his earlier *Historical Atlas of the United States*, *Historical Atlas of California*, and *Historical Atlas of the Pacific Northwest*, Hayes presents an exhaustive study of the depiction of the West from earliest times to the present.

Six hundred full color illustrations of original maps culled from museums, libraries and private collections throughout the world offer a unique view of how the West was understood. This understanding of course was not always accurate or complete, and sometimes it was nothing if not fanciful — all of which gives us a different spatial perspective on history. From field sketches to elaborate birds-eye-view town lithographs to embellished cartographic wonders to come-hither advertisements produced by the railroads, maps illuminate the unique place that the western United States has held in our collective psyche.

Each map tells a story. Hayes augments his excellent narration with additional illustrations and photographs to root each map in its time and place, and there is a comprehensive index and bibliography as well. Though I personally would have liked to see more regarding Native Americans' perceptions of their homeland, this is the first atlas to collect most historically significant maps of the West together in one volume, chronicling centuries. Turning the pages, one moves through time and imagination. As a devout admirer of maps in general, I am continually startled by the magnificence and beauty on each page and by the ingenuity of cartographers, both amateur and scientifically trained, in portraying a landscape and its features.

A historical atlas is usually a trusty and well-thumbed reference tool in libraries, easily and succinctly providing answers to questions such as "What were the counties in California in 1880?" or "What were the tribal ranges of the Utes?" Hayes' book is not this kind of sourcebook but rather a lavishly illustrated narrative of the history, depiction and

interpretation of the American West. Beginning with the very first maps of a vast imagined territory — “a west before the West” — including California as an island, Hayes leads the reader through the periods and eras of exploration, westward migration, the explosion of population during the rushes for ore and wealth, water and planning issues, political evolution, “the selling of the West,” and the region as a compelling recreational destination. Each period had its style and its particular information to impart, but what unites them all is their stunning graphic beauty. Much more than either simply a reference tool or a coffee-table picture book, this atlas contains immensely readable extended captions and narrative text, making it truly a splendidly guided tour through legend, perception, time and place.

**Reviewed by Susan Snyder  
The Bancroft Library**

## **Wheels of Change: From Zero to 600 M.P.H. The Amazing Story of California and the Automobile**

**By Kevin Nelson**

Heyday Books and California Historical Society  
400 pages, 50 photographs, softcover, \$24.95  
ISBN 1-978-1-59714-113-0

Kevin Nelson spent three years researching this book and drove countless miles crisscrossing California, visiting race tracks, drag strips, car collections and lots of automotive museums. He attended car shows of all types and interviewed many remaining pioneer hotrodders and other characters who were part of the development of California car culture.

I was asked to write a review of this book because I am a “car guy” and this book could be my story during the 1950s. I found this book to be riveting as it touched on my life experiences and spoke of several high-profile “car guys” I either know or I know a lot about.

The book illustrates the close ties between California and the automobile and how this state has had such a huge effect on the nation’s involvement with the automobile. It addresses the subject of the car from the first spindly-wheeled powered buggies to the days of midget, short track and sport car racing before and after World War II and beyond to the modern cars of today. It traces how the innovative ideas of the California hotrod speed merchants and custom car designers affected the look and safety features of the modern automobile.

Nelson also writes about the development of California’s massive freeway system, as well as the air pollution and smog problem in Southern California. The book documents how this state led the fight and still leads the United States in air pollution standards. Today the economy of California is so

dependent on the automobile that if the cars disappeared tomorrow the state would fold up like a house of cards.

This is a well written and carefully documented book. I wish it had more photographs which would bring it up to being an A-one best seller for a “car guy” like me.

**Reviewed by Al Blachman  
Vintage automobile expert  
Owner of a 1940 Ford Opera Coupe**

## **True Gold**

**By Greg Velm**

Cabin in the Sky, Carmichael, CA  
183 pages, 70 color photos, softcover, \$18.49  
ISBN 9780977481903

The extended title of this little book reads — *History and Adventure in Sacramento and the Gold Country: From Indians to Arnold*. Of the numerous books that have been written about the California gold rush, which became the largest mass migration in the history of the world, this is one of the most readable.

The book is profusely illustrated with photos, many never before published and of which the author, through current technology, had some 70 reproduced in color. This makes it particularly attractive to the casual reader and is a rare departure from the solid black and white of most histories.

Dr. Velm has written an accurate history as portrayed in most academic treatises, but the numerous color photos make it much more palatable to the casual reader who is looking for fast facts presented in an entertaining manner.

The first European settler in Sacramento, John Sutter, built a fort on the American River where it joins the Sacramento River, to raise crops, hunt and fish and be able to take a boat down the river to San Francisco. The rivers carried gold and when this was discovered it drastically changed his hopes.

Nature also played its card with periodic flooding. Quoting “Nature is like a tiger in a show, contained for now but really never tame.” The settlers refused to be defeated and raised the streets of Sacramento 8 to 10 feet about flood level.

Native Americans who originally inhabited the area likely came from Siberia across the Bering Straits down through Alaska. They learned to live “with nature.” And in their fashion, gold rush settlers and current residents have also accomplished that through dams, diversion canals and roads on stilts.

In *True Gold*, Dr. Velm has covered the history of the Sacramento region from the prehistoric era to the time of the second “movie star” governor who won a recall election in the early 2000s.

Brief summaries are given of some 25 communities surrounding Sacramento and including Folsom Prison. Two simplified and colorful fold-out maps will make the reader want to start on an exploring adventure.

Certainly students from middle school on will find the book a “modern” teaching tool of our history that tells the story in a “non-boring” way. School librarians should have it on their shelves.

This also applies to tourists. Museums should feature *True Gold* to give visitors fast and colorful facts that will make their time in the region a most enjoyable experience.

A few fast facts...

It's 1849. You've just come to Sacramento for your first gold digging venture but found you forgot to bring a shovel.

The town's most enterprising merchant, Sam Brannan, would help you. For \$300 in modern money — take it or leave it — there was no other place to shop.

Gold sold for \$16 to \$20 an ounce in 1849. On January 15, 2010 it was listed on the New York commodities market for \$1,150.

Don't pass up a chance to read *True Gold*. It serves up history in a most palatable manner.

Reviewed by Mary Otis  
*California Historian*

## Members' doings & idea exchange

We extend our heartfelt sympathies to RVP **Arlene Bernholtz**. Her beloved husband, **Barry**, died late Christmas day (for more info: arlenebernholtz@yahoo.com).

### CONGRATULATIONS!

To **Hal Goodyear** — longtime member and past president (1973-74) of CCHS — who celebrated his 97th birthday on November 22, 2009.

To **Garden Grove Historical Society**, whose “Fall Barn & Book Sale” grossed over \$11,000.

To **Carmel Valley Historical Society**, whose annual Gigantic Rummage Sale raised close to \$7000.

To **Catherine Mulholland**, author and lecturer at many of our Los Angeles County societies, who was presented with the **Justice Arabian Service Award** in September 2009. Catherine has served on the President's Advisory committee at California State University, Northridge, on the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Water & Power Association, and on many committees. She has been dedicated to keeping the history of her grandfather, William Mulholland, who brought water from the Owens Valley to Los Angeles.

To **Washington Township Historical Society**, Fremont, which held its 60th Anniversary Dinner in October 2009.

To **Portuguese Historical and Cultural Society**, which celebrated its 30th anniversary in September 2009.

To **Fort Bragg-Mendocino County Historical Society**, which celebrated its 10th anniversary with events throughout the month of August.

### NEWS

**Searles Valley Historical Society** is one of several groups that turns aluminum cans into needed funds for society projects.

**California Pioneers of Santa Clara County** are putting together a bus trip to the CCHS meeting in Trona and Ridgecrest in March 2010. If you live in or near Santa Clara and are interested in joining the tour group, phone Mike Console at 408-246-1080 for full information. The trip will

include registration for the symposium, all scheduled events, meals and tours, and three nights at the Carriage Inn in Ridgecrest. What a wonderful idea!

**Doctoral Fellowships** are currently available through a new eight-campus initiative for individuals who are interested in pursuing careers as educators and scholars in the field of **Archival Studies** and who would be entering a doctoral program in Fall 2010. The **Archival Education & Research Fellowships** are aimed at strengthening doctoral-level education in Archival Studies, building the cohort of archival educators and increasing diversity, and promoting a broad base of rigorous archival scholarship. These fellowships are open to all citizens or permanent residents of the United States who exhibit interest in the field of Archival Studies. Applications are particularly encouraged from individuals of American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander heritage. For more information, visit <http://aeri.gseis.ucla.edu>. Our thanks to the **Chinese Historical Society of Southern California** for this information.

**San Diego Congress of History** tells us that **Camp Lockett** in Campo will soon receive a designation as a California historical landmark. The camp was a former World War II Army base and was the last home of 3,500 Buffalo Soldiers, the famed African American cavalry troops. It also served as a WWII POW camp for Italian and German soldiers, and was then a convalescent hospital until it closed in 1946.

CCHS appreciates those member-societies such as **Canoga-Owensmouth Historical Society** and **Alhambra Historical Society** that give ample coverage in their newsletters to coming CCHS meetings. Thanks very much for the publicity!

### SOCIETIES: BACK UP YOUR HISTORY!

We all know we should back up our digital files, but here is another type of backup, described in a letter submitted to the California State Genealogical Alliance newsletter by Liz Stookesberry Myers:

“Our **Questing Heirs Genealogical Society** of Long Beach has run into a situation that I would like to share with other societies. Our historian had a stroke, and now does not remember where all of our historical records are stored from the last 40 years. They could be in a number of places. We tried contacting her son without success. When we tried to call again, the number was disconnected. She lives a distance away, so it is hard to just stop by. We were advised by the NGS [National Genealogical Society] that this is a common problem. They recommended that we have two different people store copies of everything, in case this should happen again.”

*CSGA editor's note: This situation could also happen with other records such as minutes or financial documents. Does your society have a backup plan?*

Which reminds us: as local historical societies, we keep detailed histories of our counties and communities. But do you keep the history of your own organization? Do you know who your past officers were and when they served? Do records show when each member joined the society? Who were the founding members? When a policy issue comes before the board, can you find if the matter has ever come up before; if so, what was decided and why? Moral: keep your own history!

#### LETTERS FROM LONGTIME FRIENDS OF CCHS

We received letters at Christmastime from many of our longtime friends of CCHS.

**Janet Haskell** tells us that she celebrated her 95th birthday in August, and family members came to Las Vegas from near and far. Her three daughters with husbands and families were all present for the occasion. The grandkids and great-grandkids expanded the group to 21! Even with her lack of sight, Jan is active in her retirement home; she attends exercise classes and lunch outings and appreciates the many programs offered.

**Martha Slade** celebrated her 90th birthday on February 15. A dear friend gave her a lovely party in a historic building. Her daughter Polly lives with her, and they divide the chores — Martha cooks and Polly does the dishes! She sends love and says, “I miss the Conference.” We miss you, too, Martha!

**Norma McCumber** wished all a “Happy Holiday” and wants friends to know that after her hospital stay (she had a bad fall at the end of May 2009) she has moved to a group home where she has the assistance she needs. Friends wishing to get in touch by mail or phone may write the Events & Exhibits editor c/o CCHS for the necessary information.

**Maxine Tichenor** is the quintessential docent. She served for years at the Los Angeles Zoo and at the Autry museum from its inception. The Tulsa Historical Society is fortunate indeed to have her as a member. Although **Chuck** is no longer with us, Maxine keeps up the Tichenor family tradition of active service to her community.

#### RECIPE

We couldn't resist reprinting this recipe from the **Trinity County Historical Society** newsletter:

##### *Pat Hicks' Apricot Jam Bars*

8-10 oz. apricot jam (or other jam, such as blackberry)  
 1/2 cup butter or margarine      1/2 tsp. soda; 1/2 tsp. salt  
 1/4 cup shortening                      1/2 tsp. cinnamon, or car-  
 1 cup brown sugar, packed              damom, or coriander  
 1 3/4 cups flour                              1 1/2 cups quick-cooking oats

Grease 13"x9" baking pan. Heat oven to 400 degrees. Cream butter, shortening and sugar. Add all ingredients except jam and mix well. Press half this mixture evenly in bottom of pan. Spread liberally with jam. Top with remaining mixture, pressing lightly. Bake 25-30 minutes, or until light brown. Cut into bars while warm. This freezes well and travels well.

#### “AN EVENING IN SCOTLAND” IN GALT!

Believe it. Have you ever heard bagpipes in Galt? Have you tasted Haggis? Or maybe you like Topsy Laird! Whatever members and guests of the Galt Area Historical Society may not know about Scottish culture, they'll get the chance to learn when the group honors Galt's founding Scotsmen, Dr. Obed Harvey and John McFarland.

Members came up with the idea of putting on ethnic dinners as a combined fund-raiser and teaching moment in history. They held the first of what they see as a series of annual dinners highlighting the various countries whose cultures make up their community with “An Evening in Italy” last August.

Date for this year's historic evening is May 22 at the Society Hall on C Street in Galt. Highlanders in kilts will pipe in the Haggis, wine tasting and a wonderful Scottish dinner. Diners will learn why the Scots came to America and the significance of the kilts.

Tickets are limited to 80 and cost \$25. Send reservations to Peggy Berreth, 12572 Cherokee Road, Galt, CA 95632.

#### TO QUALIFY FOR OFFICE OR CHAIRPERSON

If you are a member of a CCHS member-society, you (personally) are a member of CCHS — meaning, you can hold a chairmanship or run for office in CCHS.

This does NOT apply to *societies*. If a society is a member of an area or county association of societies, that society is not considered automatically a member of CCHS. Members, for example, of the Associated Historical Societies of Los Angeles County, or of the San Diego Congress of History, are not thereby members of CCHS in their own right. Nor are the individual members of such societies members of CCHS. Thus they cannot receive publicity in our *Members' doings*.

Also, we are having a lot of trouble with getting the societies to send their news to the new address.

Please send your newsletter to: Christie Bourdet, Las Cruzitas Ranch, 1100 Alisos, Santa Ynez, CA 93460.