

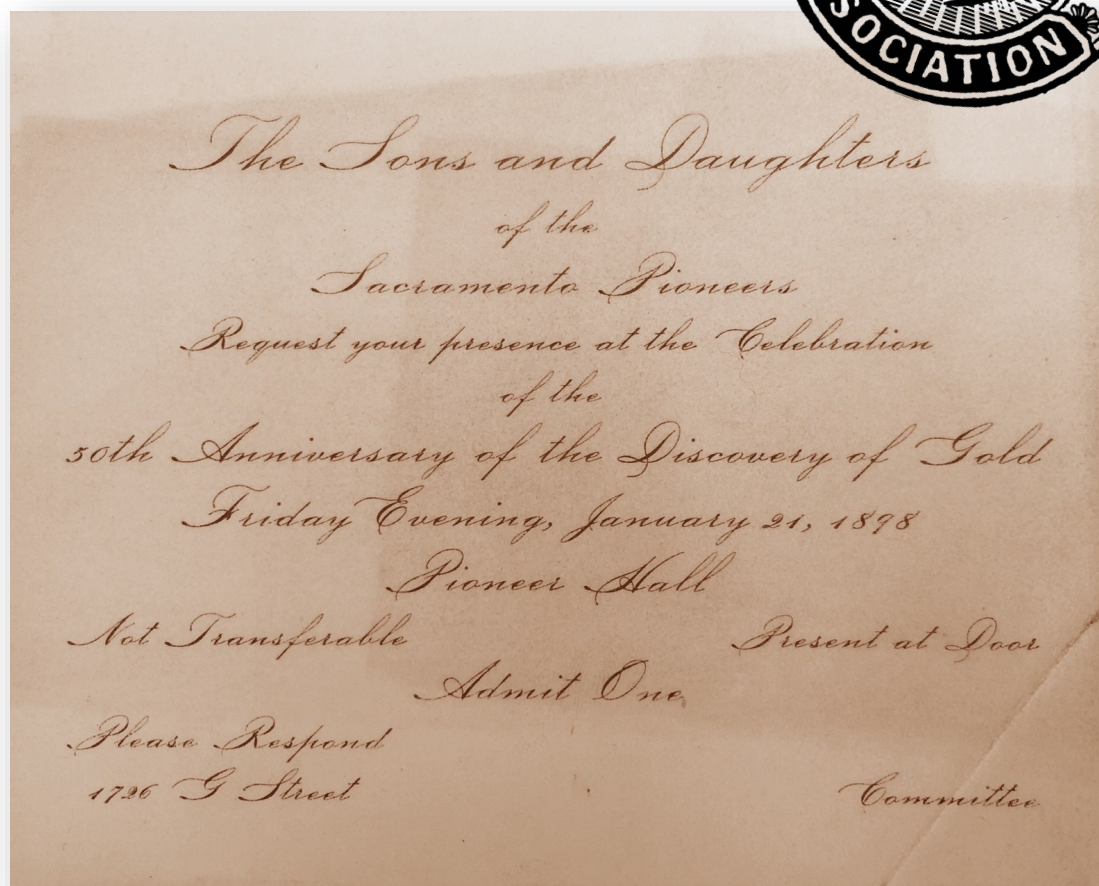
SACRAMENTO PIONEER ASSOCIATION

OUR 172ND YEAR

PIONEER NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025

SPRING EDITION



An Invitation from 1898

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Incoming and Outgoing
Presidents**

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Sacramento Pioneer Association Quarterly Newsletter



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Mary Mastalski
Roderick Read

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Vice President.....Barbara Collopy
Secretary.....Michael Shepard
Treasurer.....Thom Gilbert

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Term ending March 2026
Gary Bazlen Anthony Dick
Peter Noack

Term ending March 2027
Jonathan Hunt
Jennifer Basye Sander

Term ending March 2028
Roger Bilstad
Elizabeth McClatchy
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Shelley Ford

Newsletter Editor

Michael Shepard

Cover image: The Sacramento Pioneer Association recently obtained an aged document. Discolored paper bears the marks of time. Its softly faded ink reads:

The Sons and Daughters of the Sacramento Pioneers Request your presence at the Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Discovery of Gold Friday Evening, January 21, 1898, Pioneer Hall. Not Transferable. Present at Door. Admit One. Please Respond 1726 G Street. Committee.

Sacramento Pioneer Association Pioneer Newsletter TM

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Outgoing President's Message

Greetings Pioneers-

This is my farewell President's Message, but I am going to include some information that was intended to be in the October/November 2024 Newsletter (it did not go to publication).

We had a wonderful annual picnic at Sutter's Fort on September 14, 2024. The weather cooperated and it was ideal for touring the Fort and sitting in the shade for our dinner. Many guests remarked that the locale was unique in that we were enclosed by the walls of Sutter's Fort and the urban area surrounding the Fort was unobtrusive for the duration of the picnic. We all enjoyed the music which added to the delightful ambiance of the evening. Thanks to Katie Brown and Jennifer Bayse for another outstanding event.

The Board celebrated the 170th anniversary of our Association at the September 16, 2024, Board meeting. It is a testament to the Board Members and the Association Members over the many decades that our Association has sustained itself for so long. Long live the Pioneers!

Now turning to the end of my two-year term as President. I have to say initially that I sincerely enjoyed serving as President and serving as a Board member for six years. It was also my pleasure working with the various members of the Board and Committee Chairs over that tenure. I am very pleased that we were able to lease the ground floor of Pioneer Hall in the last 2 years and I enjoyed working with Steve Huffman on that project. I also believe that we have a strong board as I leave it, one of my goals. And Katie Brown will be a terrific President!

Perhaps the most satisfying aspect of serving on the Board has been expanding and revitalizing the Scholarship program. When I first took over as Chair of the Scholarship Committee, there was one \$2,500 scholarship awarded. I was intent on increasing the number of scholarships awarded and the size of them. For several years there have been four \$5,000 scholarships awarded, with a fifth one awarded this year.

I wish all of you the best and look forward to seeing you at Sacramento Pioneer Association events.

Best regards,

Lori

Incoming President's Message

Dear Fellow Pioneers,

It is with great honor and heartfelt enthusiasm that I begin my term as President of the Sacramento Pioneers Association. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve this special group, whose commitment to preserving and celebrating Sacramento's rich history continues to inspire.

First, I would like to extend a sincere thank you to **Lori** for her outstanding leadership as our Board Chair and President. Under her thoughtful guidance, our scholarship program has expanded to support *four* Sacramento college-bound high school seniors—an enduring legacy that reflects our values of education, service, and civic pride.

It is also a pleasure to recognize **Thom Gilbert** as our *Pioneer of the Year*. Tom's longstanding dedication as a board member - and especially his prudent stewardship as treasurer - has helped ensure the stability and long-term growth of our association. His quiet diligence and consistent contributions exemplify the spirit of service that defines our membership.

Our recent Annual Dinner at the **Del Paso Country Club** was another memorable evening, thanks to the efforts of **Jennifer Bassey** and **Molly Weiss**, whose planning and hospitality are always spot-on. And in a recent special collaboration, Jennifer joined **Dr. Bob LaPerriere** in hosting our association for a fascinating afternoon tour of the **Museum of Medical History**. Please keep an eye out as more interesting events like these will be announced in the coming months.

On a personal note, stepping into this role brings special meaning for me. My father, **Tom Hammer**, served as the Pioneers' 49th President in 1972 and dedicated nearly 50 years as our association's secretary. His passion for California and Sacramento history shaped our family, and I'm deeply proud to follow in his footsteps. I hope to honor his legacy by serving with the same dedication and love for our community.

As we look ahead, **my goal as President is to continue growing our membership**. We all know friends, colleagues, or associates who share an interest in Sacramento's unique and layered history. I invite you to extend a personal invitation - encourage them to join us at one of our events. There is no better way to experience what the Sacramento Pioneers are all about than to engage with our people and our purpose firsthand.

Thank you for your trust and support. I look forward to the coming two years and to all that we will accomplish together in honoring our past - and shaping the future of the Sacramento Pioneer Association.

Warmest regards,

Katie

A Vintage Invitation and a Pioneer's Story Rediscovered

By Michael A. Shepard

Administrator Shelley Ford of the Sacramento Pioneer Association recently received a phone call from a woman in San Diego who manages estate sales. She discovered, tucked between the pages of an old book, an historic piece of ephemera that hinted at a yet untold story of Sacramento's Pioneer Society. She had found a card - an invitation to be precise - printed by the Sons and Daughters of the Sacramento Society of California Pioneers well over a century ago for a celebration to commemorate the golden jubilee of James Marshall's discovery of gold.

This correspondent in San Diego offered to mail the incidental bookmark to the Association - an offer that Shelley gladly accepted. When the envelope arrived safely in Sacramento, Shelley promptly shared the historic invitation with board members who marveled at the one-hundred-and-twenty-seven-year-old artifact and its elegantly printed inscription:

The Sons and Daughters of the Sacramento Pioneers Request your presence at the Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Discovery of Gold Friday Evening, January 21, 1898, Pioneer Hall. Not Transferable. Present at Door. Admit One. Please Respond 1726 G Street. Committee

Curious, the directors of the Sacramento Pioneer Association examined the document during the April board meeting. Many wondered: Who lived at 1726 G Street?

An investigation ensued. Preliminary research led to a *Sacramento Daily Union* article dated November 2, 1907, titled *W. H. Luther's Funeral*. The brief article read:

The funeral of the late William H. Luther took place from his late home, 1726 G Street, yesterday and was attended by a large concourse of sorrowing friends. The service was conducted by the Rev. W. C. Sherman, and the funeral was private. The pallbearers were George Lorenze, George Putnam, Edward Hook and Otto Noack.

The name of the deceased proved to be a confirming piece of evidence. Mr. Luther's name

appears in the historic rosters of the Sacramento Pioneer Association. In fact, the 1910 Constitution and Bylaws reveals his extensive contributions to the Association. William H. Luther joined the Association in 1863 and served multiple roles over the course of forty-four years: director (1879-1883, 1884-1890, 1900-1906), recording secretary (1891-1897, 1906-1907), and Marshall (1898).

Two of the pallbearers, George Lorenze and George Putnam, held membership in the Sons and Daughters of the Sacramento Society of California Pioneers. Both of their fathers, deceased well before 1907, had been Pioneers. A third pallbearer, Otto Noack shared the same surname with current board member Peter Noack. Director Noack confirmed that, "Yes, Otto Noack is my great uncle. His brother Alex is my Great Grandfather. Otto lived just down the street from William Luther in Boulevard Park at 21st and G, and Alex lived next door at 2119 G St. There was another brother, Charles, and all of them ran the Noack Jewelry store which then was located at 1022 K Street. Very interesting stuff. Thanks."

Further research offered additional insight. The day following the Sons and Daughters' jubilee celebration held at Pioneer Hall on January 21, 1898, the *Sacramento Daily Union* reported the details. A literary and musical program entertained attendees, featuring an address by notable historian Winfield J. Davis, vocal and instrumental performances, and a recitation. Miss Flora Luther, daughter of William H. Luther, served as Chairman of the Decorations Committee. Under her guidance, the hall was adorned with golden-themed decorations, smilax streamers, and a beautifully arranged bower for the band. The event concluded with dancing and a banquet.

The mention of historian Winfield J. Davis in the *Sacramento Daily Union* article prompted reference to his 1890 publication, *An Illustrated History of Sacramento County, California*. Biographies of Sacramento's most prominent men comprise the folio, which includes the story of William H. Luther.

To summarize Davis's account, William H. Luther, born on April 4, 1827, in Salina (now part of Syracuse), New York, possessed an industrious nature. After graduating from Monroe Institute in 1839, he pursued various occupations, including clerking, carpentry, and managing a mercantile house grain department before working for a wholesale grocer.

In February 1849, he left New York with his brother aboard the ship *Elizabeth Ellen*, arriving in San Francisco by way of Cape Horn on September 18. Luther's early ventures in California involved securing passengers for riverboats bound for

Sacramento and the mining districts. Despite initial struggles in Placerville, he discovered a gold-laden vein at Cedar Ravine, yielding significant success before later selling the claim. His fortunes fluctuated as he mined in El Dorado Canyon, and Spanish Bar on the Middle Fork of the American River. He formed a joint venture, the Empire Company, and ultimately amassed a considerable fortune.

In 1852, Luther returned briefly to New York before rejoining his brother in California on a ranch in Amador County. He again returned to New York to marry Sarah J. Alvord in 1857. The couple settled in Ione Valley, where Luther cultivated vegetables and fruit. Luther joined the Sacramento Pioneer Association in 1863 and moved to Sacramento by 1879. His family consisted of his wife Sarah and their three daughters.

The editors of the Sacramento Pioneer Association's 2001 publication *Gone to Rest* reproduced verbatim the Davis biography of William H. Luther who remains interred within Pioneer Grove in the Sacramento Historic City Cemetery.

A final obituary for William H. Luther appeared in the December 1907 issue of *The Grizzly Bear*, a journal of the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West. The touching tribute appears here in its entirety:

**The Late William H. Luther, Secretary,
Sacramento Society of California Pioneers.**

Again, has Death visited the ranks of the Sacramento branch of the Society of California Pioneers, and removed from this vale of tears one of its most familiar figures – William H. Luther, who for many years has been secretary of this grand society.

Mr. Luther was a pioneer of pioneers, having come to California from his native State of New York in 1849, making the long and perilous trip around Cape Horn. Soon after landing at San Francisco, he came to Sacramento, and went from there to Placerville, where for many years he engaged in mining. In 1857 he returned to New York and married Miss Sarah J. Alvord, but soon returned to Sacramento, where he has ever since resided.

Mr. Luther was 80 years of age, and leaves, beside a wife to mourn his demise, three children – Mrs. J. C. Fitzgerald, Mrs. William H. Dixon and Miss Annie C. Luther.

In 1863 Mr. Luther became a member of the Sacramento Society of California Pioneers and was one of the most familiar figures seen around the Pioneer Hall in that city, being found there almost daily up to the day of his death – Thursday, October 31st. For many years he had been secretary of the society, and he took much pleasure from recounting tales of early California life.

From an organization of goodly numbers of our sturdy forefathers, the Sacramento Pioneer Society has been fast dwindling away in recent years, until today but eight members remain. They hold their annual reunion each Admission Day, and on recurring occasions the vacant chairs are more noticeable, and soon naught but memory will remain of that noble band who built for us this empire of God's greatest blessings.

May we never forget them and their deeds! Let us always remember those pioneer fathers who left their Eastern homes and faced the dangers of an unknown future in order that the great Republic might hold the key to the Western as it did to the Eastern gate. May we also ever remember their helpmates – those pioneer mothers who, around the firesides, taught their sons and daughters to revere their foster-mother – the State of California – and to protect her as they would the one that gave them life and love.

As the original pioneers became fewer and fewer at the dawn of the twentieth century, the merging of the Sons and Daughters of the Sacramento Society of California Pioneers with the Sacramento Society of California Pioneers ensured continuity among junior members, including Flora E. Dixon, Luther's daughter. Today, the Sacramento Pioneer Association welcomes members from all backgrounds, united by a shared commitment to collecting, preserving, and sharing the history of California's early settlers and their descendants. The rediscovery of the 1898 invitation, paired with the remarkable story of William H. Luther and his family, serves as a gratifying reminder that the Association remains true in its mission.



Le Macaron at Pioneer Hall

Le Macaron celebrates its one-year anniversary in the heart of downtown Sacramento. Owners Emily and Jeff have transformed Pioneer Hall into a charming French pâtisserie specializing in delectable macarons.

What defines a great macaron? It's the perfect balance of a crisp exterior, a soft interior, and the rich flavor derived from all-natural ingredients. Le Macaron offers this delightful combination, along with a selection of creamy French gelato, gourmet chocolates, European-style coffees, and classic French pastries.

Whether you're a macaron aficionado or simply appreciate exquisite pastries, Le Macaron awaits you at Pioneer Hall. Come savor the delicate flavors that bring a taste of France to Sacramento.

Le Macaron at Pioneer Hall
1011 7th Street
Sacramento



Cemetery Plot for Sale

A Pioneer Grove plot in the Sacramento Historic City Cemetery, 10th & Broadway, is available for sale by owner to a member of the Sacramento Pioneer Association. All plots are currently owned, so this is a rare opportunity exclusively for a Pioneer Family. The plot is four feet by eighteen feet and can inter three coffins stacked if needed. Please contact Alan Yee if interested at yee2@gmail.com

Please note that the Sacramento Pioneer Association Cemetery Trust requires the buyer to be a member in good standing of the Sacramento Pioneer Association.

PIONEER APPAREL

A large assortment of shirts, hats, aprons, bags, etc., all expertly embroidered with the Sacramento Pioneer Association emblem, may be procured by visiting:

www.companycasuals.com/sacramentopioneer/start.jsp





Holiday Revelers at the Sutter Club



Dana & Bill Lidster



Pres. Elect Katie &
Past Pres. Toran Brown



Specialty of the House
at Le Macaron

Photos by
Gabriel Diaz



Commemorating the 1869
dedication of Pioneer Hall



Pioneers gather at the Star Lounge to
celebrate the discovery of gold anniversary



Developer Roger Hume reveals his
plans for the bank next to Pioneer Hall



Sacramento Pioneer Association
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Annual Dinner Meeting

The Sacramento Pioneer Association convened its annual membership meeting as scheduled on Thursday, March 6, 2025, at Del Paso Country Club in Sacramento.

Call to Order: President Lori Gualco called the annual meeting to order at 7:52 p.m.

Reading of the Minutes: On motion duly made and seconded, the membership unanimously voted to dispense with the reading of the February 18, 2025, board meeting minutes. Approval of these minutes will be considered at the next regularly scheduled board meeting on Monday, April 21, 2025.

Outgoing Directors: President Lori Gualco recognized outgoing directors Pat Mahon and Jeanie MacAulay, expressing gratitude for their service to the Association.

Election of Officers and Directors: In accordance with the Association's bylaws, President Lori Gualco appointed the 2025 Nominating Committee consisting of Jonathan Hunt, Jennifer Basye, and Bill Gould. Nominating Committee Chair Jonathan Hunt conducted the elections, and the membership unanimously approved the following slate of nominees:

Officers (Terms Ending March 2026):

- President Katie Brown
- Vice President Barb Collopy
- Secretary Michael A. Shepard
- Treasurer Thom Gilbert

Directors (Term Ending March 2028):

- Roger Bilstad
- Elizabeth McClatchy
- Emily Browne Wheeler

Meeting Adjourned: Newly elected President Katie Brown delivered a brief acceptance speech, and adjourned the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

Michael Shepard, Secretary