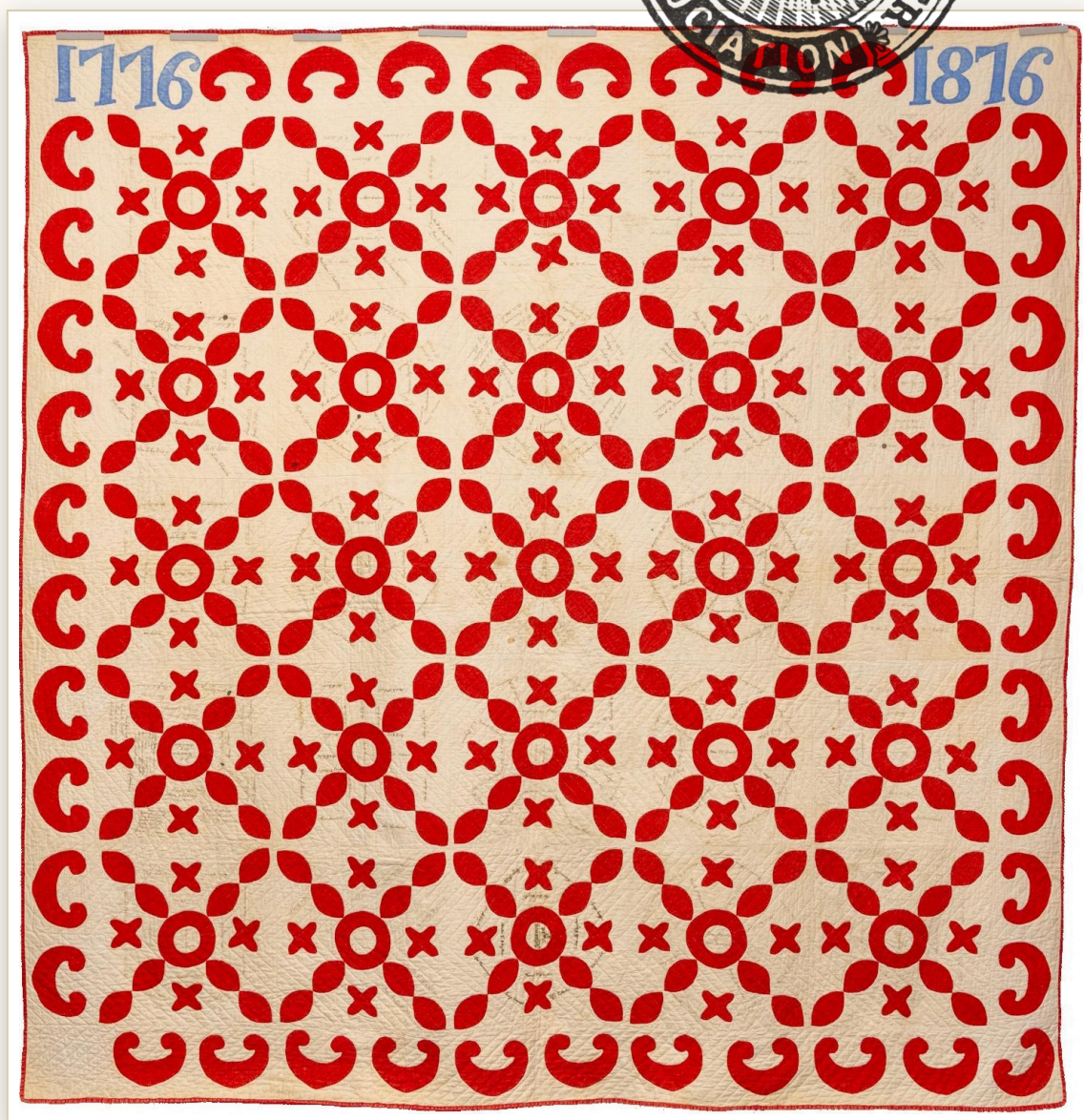


SACRAMENTO PIONEER ASSOCIATION

Our 173rd Year

Pioneer Newsletter

OCTOBER 2026 ♦ AUTUMN EDITION



SACRAMENTO'S CENTENNIAL QUILT

ON VIEW AT THE SACRAMENTO HISTORY MUSEUM THROUGH APRIL 2027 · READ THE STORY ON PAGE 4



SACRAMENTO PIONEER ASSOCIATION

Quarterly Newsletter

October 2026 · Our 173rd Year

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ABOUT THE COVER

The Centennial Quilt, now on display at the Sacramento History Museum, was discovered during a recent cleaning at the First United Methodist Church on 21st and J Streets, where the 150-year-old artifact had been stored in a small white box for more than forty years. Created in 1876 to commemorate the nation's centennial, the quilt contains over 500 names written across its squares. The museum has highlighted several of these individuals and their contributions to Sacramento in 1876 and provides enlarged images of the signatures along with QR codes linking to each block. Visitors are encouraged to explore the names further and pursue their own genealogical research.

Photo courtesy of Sacramento History Museum

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A LETTER TO OUR MEMBERS

President's Message

Dear Pioneers,

I hope everyone enjoyed a wonderful summer and had a chance to slow down, relax, and enjoy time with family and friends. As we head into fall, there is a lot happening with our Association, and plenty to share!

Let me start by thanking our wonderful Board of Directors and our administrator, Shelley. They generously give their time, energy, and enthusiasm to keep our Association moving forward. I am so grateful for this group. Without them, we simply wouldn't be the active and growing organization we are today.

And speaking of growing...our membership continues to grow at a steady clip! Our newest members come to us for all sorts of reasons. Some are descendants of Sacramento's early pioneer families, while others simply have a curiosity about our local history and want to help keep those stories alive. Whatever brings you through our doors, we are happy to have you!

A Picnic with a Little History. On September 19, Director Elizabeth Lake organized our Annual Picnic down the road at Sloughhouse. It turned out to be a wonderful day of history, good food, and great company. Before lunch, we were treated to a private tour of the Sloughhouse Cemetery, led by docents from the Daughters of Utah Pioneers. It was especially meaningful for Elizabeth, as many generations of her family are buried there, including Jared Sheldon, who built the original slough house in 1850.

Nearly 90 Pioneers joined us for a delicious lunch on the porch at Slough House Kitchen. It was such a lovely afternoon that I have to give Slough House Kitchen another plug: if you haven't been, go! Their dinner and brunch are both delicious.

Around Pioneer Hall. If you're in the mood for a good cup of coffee, don't forget about Crème Coffee down at Pioneer Hall. Our building looks fantastic, and Crème is a fun place to sit, relax, and enjoy a cup of coffee while taking in a little Pioneer history.

This summer, the Sacramento History Museum opened its *Centennial Quilt* exhibit, and our Association was pleased to make a financial contribution to the display. If you haven't seen it yet, I highly recommend stopping by. It is a wonderful addition to Sacramento's history story.

Coming Up This Fall. Looking ahead, Director Emily Wheeler has organized a special Pop-Up event on **October 23 from 4:00–6:00 p.m. at the Center for Sacramento History**. Invitations have been emailed.

We'll have the opportunity to hear from our new City Historian, Ty Smith, followed by a tour of the archives. Even better, several of our own Pioneer treasures will be on display, including the President's chair and gavel and letters written by John A. Sutter to our Association. These are pieces of our history that you don't get to see every day, so I hope many of you will join us.

A Pioneer Connection in Calistoga. Pioneer member Eric Hanson spearheaded an exciting public art project at the Depot in Calistoga. Local artist Garr Ugalde designed and sculpted a life-size bronze statue featuring Robert Louis Stevenson, Fanny Osbourne Stevenson, and their beloved dog, Chuchu. The unveiling will take place on **Saturday, November 7 at noon**. Congratulations, Eric, on bringing this wonderful piece of history to life!

And finally, **save the date for our Annual Holiday Party on December 3**. More details and an invitation will be coming soon.

One Last Bit of Housekeeping. Please watch for your annual dues notice coming out this month. Your dues are what keep the day-to-day operations of our Association going and allow us to continue all of the things you've read about here. If you are able, please consider adding a little extra to your dues this year. Your additional support helps us maintain both Pioneer Grove and Pioneer Hall and allows us to continue our outreach, including the annual scholarships we provide to deserving students.

As you can see, there is a lot happening behind the scenes, and quite a bit happening out in the community, too! We are working hard to make our Association vibrant, welcoming, and interactive, while continuing to honor the history that brought us all together in the first place.

I hope to see many of you at one of our upcoming events. Until then, enjoy the beautiful fall season, and thank you for being part of our Pioneer family!

Warmly,
Katie

KATIE BROWN, PRESIDENT

PIONEER CONNECTIONS

Sacramento's Centennial Quilt

by Michael Shepard

On July 31, 2026, the Sacramento History Museum in Old Sacramento unveiled *Stitched in Time: Sacramento's Community Quilt, Celebrating 250 Years of Nationhood Through Shared History*, an exhibit centered on a remarkable textile created in 1876 for the nation's centennial celebration. The quilt's twenty-five squares present a modest red-on-white geometric pattern of stylized X and O appliqués framed by chains of laurel-like leaves. Within this uncomplicated design are over five hundred hand-inscribed names of Sacramento residents, families, and businesses. The 150-year-old quilt, recently discovered in storage at the First United Methodist Church at 21st and J Streets, had remained unseen for almost 40 years.

Congregation member Ellen Holmgren discovered the quilt "tucked away on an abandoned shelf inside an unmarked box at the First United Methodist Church," a story she told at the July 31 unveiling. Delta Pick Mello, Executive Director of the Sacramento History Museum, learned of the discovery and immediately recognized the significance of Sacramento's 1876 Centennial Quilt on the cusp of the Quarter Millennial national celebration in 2026. The Sacramento Pioneer Association agreed to sponsor this intriguing piece of local history. Exhibition Developer Heather Reynolds organized a compelling display, showcasing the fully unfolded 7' x 7' quilt along with informative placards that included biographical sketches about some of the inscribed names.

Closer study reveals a deliberate mathematical structure woven into the quilt's design. Each of the twenty-five squares contains a central O-shaped appliqué surrounded by four Xs and four crescent-shaped leaf motifs radiating diagonally from the center. When counted across the full quilt, the total number of Xs equals one hundred and the total number of leaves also equals one hundred, a numerical representation of the nation's centennial in 1876. The Xs and Os almost certainly have symbolic meaning. Fanny D. Bergen wrote in an article titled *Tapestry of the New World*, published in an 1894 edition of Scribner's Magazine, "To be sure, in these patchwork designs we have, instead of portraits and pictures, but the rudest symbolism."

Encircling the grid of Xs, Os, and leaves are thirty-nine appliqués resembling the letter C, a form that likely carries symbolic meaning as well. The C may stand for "Centennial," or perhaps "California." The fact that the Cs do not form a perfectly symmetrical border suggests that their number was intentional rather than merely decorative. The meaning of the thirty-nine Cs, however, remains speculative. California became the 37th State, so perhaps it is instead a reference to Johann A. Sutter's landing on the banks of the American River in '39.

At the time of the 1876 centennial, forty-four states comprised the nation at the start of the year and forty-five after Colorado's admission on August 1st. The nation was still emerging from the aftermath of the Civil War and the final years of the Indian Wars. Communities across the country were engaged in the slow work of healing and rebuilding. Quilting, which experienced a resurgence during this period, played a role in binding women and neighborhoods together, during a time of renewed patriotism and national pride inspired by the nation's one-hundredth birthday.

Quilt historian Barbara Brackman in her 1989 publication *Clues in the Calico: A Guide to Identifying and Dating Antique Quilts*, notes that "we find many records of women making quilts to raise money for favored causes, especially those having to do with the support for churches... by organizing signature quilts in which community members donated a dime or a quarter to have their names embroidered or inked into the quilt's design."

A *Sacramento Daily Union* article dated February 14, 1876, offers a glimpse into the civic networks that may have supported such community efforts. It reported: "The Ladies' Meeting – Pursuant to call, ladies from the different churches met in the lecture-room of the Congregational Church on Saturday afternoon, to take measures for an entertainment and union social for the benefit of the 'Young Men's Christian Association,' to take place next week." Mrs. Dwinell, a signer and organizer of the quilt project, presided and committees were formed with representatives from multiple congregations. Among the three dozen names listed in the article, at least ten appear on the Centennial Quilt.

There is no evidence that this February 14, 1876, meeting directly inspired the quilt, but it does demonstrate the degree of cooperation among Sacramento's church communities in 1876, cooperation that is clearly reflected in the quilt's long list of contributors.

Among the select names highlighted on placards at the museum is one Sylvester Tryon who "came across the plains to California from Ohio in 1850, one of the city's earliest residents. He mined in the El Dorado County hills, returning to Sacramento in 1852 when he opened a livery stable and grew hay near the Cosumnes River. Tryon was president of Capital Woolen Mills..." Sylvester Tryon was also the brother of Pioneer Association Secretary Michael Shepard's great-great-grandfather.

Ms. Reynolds found, as she prepared the exhibit, that she, too, had an ancestor, Augustus Stephen Hopkins, whose name appears on the quilt. His ancestry traces back to his namesake Stephen Hopkins, a passenger aboard the *Mayflower* and signatory of the Mayflower Compact.

Further investigation revealed several original members of the Sacramento Pioneer Association, family members of original Pioneers, and ancestors of current members. The 1876 members of the Pioneer Association include the following:

HOWELL CLARK. This forty-niner who came to California overland is probably best remembered for the extensive land holdings he assembled south of downtown, an area long known as the Howell Clark Tract, bounded roughly by W, X, Tenth, and Riverside. From 1909 to 1913, part of this tract gained local fame as the site of the Sacramento Ostrich Farm, a popular attraction where visitors could view the birds and purchase ostrich feathers prized by millinery shops for ladies' hats.

LEVI C. CHANDLER. A New York-born printer who came to California during the Gold Rush, the first leg of the journey, from New York to Vera Cruz, aboard the bark *Mara* and the rest of the way overland across Mexico. Chandler became one of Sacramento's early newspaper proprietors

of the *Daily Morning Bee* prior to James McClatchy's ownership.

WILLIAM TURTON. Knox & Turton, one of Sacramento's most active building firms was owned by partners and Sacramento Pioneer Association members William Turton and W. F. Knox. They raised and graded streets throughout downtown Sacramento and raised buildings to match the grade. In 1871, they raised Governor Stanford's mansion at 8th and N Streets "ten to twelve feet, or enough to make a good basement below." The firm constructed the first brick sewer in the city and even contracted to grade and lay track for several railroads in the state.

WALTON CHEEVER FELCH. In 1853, Felch served as Foreman of Tehama Hose Co. No. 1. That same year, he presided as Noble Grand of Eureka Lodge No. 4, a subordinate lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. He served as city assessor as well as director, corresponding secretary and president of the Sacramento Pioneer Association.

AARON HUBBARD POWERS. A past president of the Sacramento Pioneer Association, Mr. Powers' story was re-discovered when Gale George of New York contacted the Pioneers regarding a silver-plate serving platter in her possession inscribed to Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Powers by the Sacramento Pioneers. The Association presented Powers with the platter in 1887. Powers died in Vienna in 1907; his remains were returned to Sacramento for burial in Pioneer Grove.

Names of family members of original Sacramento Pioneers, including Dr. A. B. Nixon and N. D. Goodell, appear written on the Centennial Quilt. The names of ancestors of current members Pete Noack and Wendel Flint appear as well. The Sacramento History Museum invites visitors to participate in the unfolding history: "As you explore, we encourage you to share your insights, ask questions and help us uncover the missing pieces of this Sacramento story." Certainly, there will be other current members of the Sacramento Pioneer Association who find connections with this historic piece of Sacramento history, which remains on display through April of 2027. ❖

THE QUILT AT A GLANCE

25

SQUARES

500+

HAND-INSCRIBED
NAMES

100

XS AND 100 LEAVES

39

APPLIQUÉD CS

7' × 7'

FULLY UNFOLDED

1876

YEAR CREATED

*On view in *Stitched in Time* at the Sacramento History Museum, Old Sacramento, through April 2027.*

LOCAL HISTORY

Pioneers of Sloughhouse

Sheldon, Daylor, Rhoads, and Grimshaw

The Sacramento Pioneer Association's annual picnic on September 19 at the Slough House Kitchen offered members a chance to gather on land tied to the region's earliest immigrant settlers. The surrounding area was once part of Rancho Omochochumne, a Mexican land grant awarded in 1844 to Jared Sheldon by Governor Manuel Micheltorena. Sheldon, a Vermont native and naturalized Mexican citizen, established a mill, cultivated wheat, and developed the rancho. His partnership with fellow pioneer William Daylor, an Englishman employed by John Sutter, shaped the early development of the rancho. Sheldon's 1847 marriage to Catharine Rhoads and Daylor's marriage to Elizabeth Rhoads the same year, both daughters of Thomas Rhoads, linked them to another of the region's prominent pioneer families.

Sheldon's life ended violently in 1851 during a dispute with miners over water rights, an event recorded in detail by Winfield J. Davis, historian of both the California Legislature and the Sacramento Pioneer Association. William Daylor died the previous year at Daylor's Ranch on October 30, 1850. The circumstances of his death are not entirely settled in the historical record: Davis reported that Daylor succumbed during the cholera epidemic then sweeping through the region, while at least one contemporary newspaper attributed his death to injuries from a fall from a horse. With both accounts documented, the precise cause of Daylor's death remains uncertain.

After Sheldon's death, his widow Catharine married William Robinson Grimshaw, another early pioneer and original member of the Sacramento Pioneer Association. Grimshaw operated a trading post with Daylor and later worked as a clerk in the law office of Joseph Webb Winans, the Association's first president.

Thomas Rhoads' son, John Pierce, resided on the Sheldon-Daylor property near to his sisters. It has been suggested that he occupied the original slough house. The Rhoads family arrived in California in 1846 as part of the overland Rhoads emigrant party and John participated in the first relief attempt of the Donner Party trapped in the Sierra Nevada Mountains east of the summit. He went on to work as a miner, rancher, school trustee, and California State Assemblyman. Because his life story is unusually well documented, readers interested in a fuller account are encouraged to consult the September 2025 Pioneer Newsletter, available on the Association's website.

Today, the Sloughhouse Cemetery preserves the resting place of these foundational figures: Sheldon, Daylor, Rhoads, Grimshaw, and their families. Their descendants, several of whom remain active in the Sacramento Pioneer Association, continue to honor the legacy of the men and women whose lives helped define the earliest chapter of Sacramento County history.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Annaclare Entrican
Jennifer House
Amy Krause

We are happy to have you!

VISIT US AT PIONEER HALL



CRÈME COFFEE
1011 7TH STREET

SEPTEMBER 19

Sloughhouse Picnic

Photographs by Gabriel Diaz



Pioneers enjoy the patio at Slough House Kitchen.



Jonathan Hunt, Dana & Bill Lidster.



Pictured: Tony Dick, Shareen Fat, Janet Dick, Elizabeth Lake, Katie Brown, Gabriel Diaz, and Dana Lidster.



Bill Pattison and Michael Shepard tour the Sloughhouse Cemetery.



Sacramento Pioneer Association
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Dates to Remember

OCT
23

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23 • 4:00–6:00 P.M.

Pop-up at the Center for Sacramento History

NOV
7

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7 • NOON

Statue unveiling at the Depot in Calistoga

DEC
3

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3

Annual Holiday Gala at the Sutter Club

OCTOBER 2026