

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The April 9th Free Museum Day, sponsored by the Society, was a great success according to the 11 Museums that participated. My information is that they are ready to do it again next year and, in fact, are looking forward to it. Residents and visitors were amazed that there were so many museums in Woodland.

We hope that many of you will join us as we travel to Lodi and Stockton this month. If you are like me, you have gone right down I-5 and never bothered to stop except maybe for gas. I know I was pleasantly surprised in Stockton when I viewed their many historic homes. Lodi has a wonderful vibrant downtown. Join us on May 24th. You won't be disappointed. There will be a form with an RSVP deadline for you to fill out and return. Don't miss out as the bus will fill up quickly!

Our program on Sunday, a talk by David Hickman, would have amazed our local hunters when he showed pictures taken in the early days with hundreds of ducks and other birds being readied for shipment to restaurants in San Francisco.

I have recently joined the Woodland Historic Preservation Committee. So far it has been very interesting and informative. I will have the pleasure of determining Woodland homes that will be recognized as 'Heritage Homes' and receive plaques to be displayed on the front of their home.

Finally, the idea of the Woodland Opera House buying and rehabilitating the State Theater in Woodland with potential redevelopment agency funding is being explored and WHO plans to hire a local architect to analyze the feasibility and cost. The Save the State Committee is excited about this possibility.

Also, when you receive a call from Avery Campbell, who will be looking for "BAKERS", please remember to thank him for chairing the

Country Bakery at the May Festival. All proceeds do go to the Museum. This is a commitment that was made many years ago as the Society's support of their ongoing program.

Peace,

BJ Ford, President
Yolo County Historical Society

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 4th – Tour of UCD Wolfskill Experimental Orchards, 4334 Putah Creek Road 10 – 11:30

Lunch at Buckhorn 12 – 1:30 p.m.

Symposium in Historic Winters Opera House, 13 Main Street, Winters, 2 – 4 p.m.

May 15th – May Festival – Gibson House, 512 Gibson Road, Woodland, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

May 22nd – YCHS General Membership Meeting, Blanchard Room, 315 E. 14th Street, Davis 2 – 4 p.m.

May 24th – Spring Field Trip to Stockton and Lodi

June 4th – "Writing Family Stories", Gibson House, 512 Gibson Rd., 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

June 15th – Annual June Picnic, Gibson House Grounds

VISION STATEMENT

The Yolo County Historical Society strives to preserve, protect, and acknowledge the diverse history of Yolo County through education, communication and advocacy.

MAY 2011



[Steinbeck home in Seaside now a museum]

“John Steinbeck and the Sacramento Conspiracy Trial of 1935”

In 1934, a young, unknown writer named John Steinbeck met some labor organizers who were hiding from the law in the coastal resort of Seaside. The organizers were Communists, and they had just won a long, violent strike in the Central Valley to help raise farm workers' wages. The state of California was looking for the organizers to prosecute them under the state's criminal syndicalism law, which made it a crime to belong to a communist organization. Steinbeck immediately recognized the narrative potential of the organizers' story: there were heroes and villains, pragmatists and idealists, compromises and murders. He decided to write a novel about what he heard. The result, *In Dubious Battle*, was his first critical success. *In Dubious Battle* would also lay the foundation for Steinbeck's next novel about migrant farm workers in California, the monumental *Grapes of Wrath*, which would come to define the Great Depression for generations of Americans. Professor Kathy Olmstead's talk will examine all of the actors in this drama: the workers, the organizers, the growers, the vigilantes, the state prosecutors, and Steinbeck himself, and explain the role this story plays in Americans' understanding and memory of the Great Depression.

The **May 22nd** meeting of the Yolo County Historical Society will be held in the Blanchard Room, of the Davis Branch of the Yolo County Public Library, from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. The library is located at 315 E. 14th Street in Davis.

All Yolo County Historical Society General Membership meetings are open to the public.