2. . . . . . . California Suffrage: A Game-Changer in the National Votes-for-Women Campaign
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Front Cover: Busy suffragists paused for a photo opportunity at the San Francisco headquarters in 1911. Please see our lead article by Dr. Jennifer Robin Terry starting on page 2.

Back Cover: After the California victory, Selina Solomons published this book as a resource for suffragists elsewhere.

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In August of 1920, American women won the right to vote. Winning the vote was a significant milestone, not only for women, but also for the nation because the federal government recognized roughly half of its citizens as autonomous political beings for the first time in the country's history. In so doing, the nation took a giant step toward political maturation. In commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, this article highlights the diversity, innovation, and material culture of California’s 1911 woman-suffrage campaign—a crusade that helped to turn the tide and reshape other states’ strategies on the way to constitutional change.

The suffrage movement got into full swing in the mid-19th century when advocates called on Americans to recognize an expansion of women’s rights. However, proponents faced opposition on several fronts. Socially, the nation subscribed to the notion that men and women were fundamentally different, and as such, must occupy separate spheres of life. Men occupied a socially elevated public world of law, politics, and economics, while women were limited to the private domestic realm of family and home. Culturally, Americans had always accepted politics to be a homo-social affair where men gathered to pontificate, posture, and—on election day—party. Polling places were crowded, rowdy, and sometimes violent as men of all classes gathered to vote. Free-flowing whiskey and public ballots (until 1890) ensured that voter intimidation and undue influence skewed the vote toward the precinct’s favorite candidates.
was, therefore, reasoned that the political scene was simply too coarse an environment for women’s sensibilities.

However, by the late 19th century, a significant number of middle-class women began to engage in home protection campaigns in which they voiced opinions and acted on civic issues that brought them precariously close to the political realm. Women pressured local politicians for things like cleaner city streets, purer food and milk supplies, and the prohibition of alcohol. Urban political machines and the liquor industry chaffed at women’s interference and were especially concerned at the growing association of such issues with pro-woman suffrage support. Hence, urban politicians and industrialists formed a powerful opposing force as they knew that enfranchising such women could spell the end of business as usual.

Anti-woman suffrage interests capitalized on men’s fears that granting women the vote would upend society. Using newspapers to great effect, they cast aspersions on suffragists, claiming that they were neglectful wives and mothers who were intent on subverting gender roles. Some claimed concern for women’s well-being, asserting that the excitement and strain of politics was detrimental to their health.

The suffrage movement got into full swing in the mid-19th century when advocates called on Americans to recognize an expansion of women’s rights.

Dr. Jennifer Robin Terry is a historian of 19th and 20th century social and cultural United States history with particular focus on women, children, and popular culture. She is an award-winning author from the Sacramento region who holds degrees in history from the University of California, Berkeley, and Sacramento State University. For more information, please visit www.jennifer-robin.com.
One article that circulated in various forms around the country from 1909–1911 warned men away from the fictitious “Suffrage Cocktail,” the consumption of which would convert men into household drudges and suffrage missionaries. The *San Francisco Call* cautioned, “two or three of the new drinks make a man go home and relinquish his position as head of the household.”

Despite the general opposition, by the late 19th century, support for woman suffrage grew in the West. This is attributed in part to an unconventional pioneering mindset. But, perhaps a more practical explanation is that political representation at the national level stemmed from the number of each state’s eligible voters. The greater the number of voters, the greater the representation. Hence, the sparsely populated new western states gained representation when they enfranchised women. Seeking a national amendment, California Senator Aaron Sargent first introduced Susan B. Anthony’s woman-suffrage bill in Congress in 1878—42 years before it finally passed.

But California was not the first western state to enfranchise women. In fact, it was the sixth. However, the California suffrage campaign of 1911 was recognized by suffragists elsewhere as thoroughly modern and game changing. This was because California suffragists were the first to engage in a truly cross-class, multiethnic statewide campaign that engaged with and drew on the state’s economic and demographic diversity. In the process, California suffragists deployed modern technology and marketing in publicity campaigns that encouraged outspoken women. The fresh approach to woman suffrage corresponded with California’s Progressive political reform ethos of 1911.

The 1911 campaign was the second concerted attempt to bring women into the California electorate. Having failed to do so with their 1896 campaign, suffrage leaders came to recognize that systemic elitism and an over-reliance on direction from the national suffrage organization had significantly limited activists’ efficacy. To be successful in the new century, California leaders knew that they needed to draw on the interests and talents of California’s diverse groups of women. To that end, branches of the Votes for Women Club were established in every county (both urban and rural). Suffrage rallies and meetings were held at various
times throughout the day so that working-class women could attend (unlike the prior midday-only meetings). The state's suffrage association galvanized support among male working-class voters when it declared itself in favor of their highly contentious eight-hour-workday campaign. Black suffragists spread the message through African American churches, community groups, and Black-owned newspapers. In Los Angeles, Maria de Lopez, president of the College Equal Suffrage League's Southern California branch delivered her speeches in Spanish at rallies in the Los Angeles Plaza. Suffragists published articles and public event notices in ethnic newspapers and informational flyers in Spanish, French, Italian, and German.

Additionally, San Franciscan Selina Solomons attributed the 1896 loss to women's tendencies toward culturally conditioned timidity and an excess of manners. Women suffragists, she believed, were just too polite. This made it easy for ostensibly supportive politicians to placate them with "doses of 'soothing syrup' of their own legislative brand, not guaranteed by the food and drug act!" To win, women had to become unapologetically bold in their assertion of rights.

The timing could not have been better as the young suffragists of the early 20th century had been brought up in the era of the New Womanhood. Funded by the wealthy wives and widows of California entrepreneurs, moguls, and railroad barons, New Woman suffragists embarked on state-long automobile tours. Throughout 1911, representatives of the College Equal Suffrage League traversed the state in the Blue Liner, an open-air roadster that drew the attention of male voters wherever the women stopped to campaign. Whether in rural towns, alongside country roads, or in urban parking lots, young suffragists stood in the back of the car and stumped for suffrage. Aside from the automobile, suffragists also employed other modern technologies such as telephones, electric signs, billboards, and lantern slides projected at vaudeville houses, keeping the message ever present.

In addition to print media (posters, flyers, and newspaper columns), California suffragists also recognized the power that consumerism held for disseminating the suffrage message. Activists sold suffrage paraphernalia at rallies, picnics, flower
CALEIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY FOUNDATION

shows, mass meetings, and suffrage bazaars. Supporters could purchase Votes-for-Women themed playing cards, shopping bags, postcards, pin-backed buttons, pennants, and dish sets. Suffragette dolls and toys reinforced the idea that even children could support the cause (and influence their daddies). “Equality Tea” offered a refined approach and small unisex pins with California poppies were discrete enough for those who “did not care to be conspicuous” in their support.

By mid-August of 1911, several of the state’s newspapers openly took up the cause when they followed the San Francisco Call’s lead in dedicating an entire page to declaring “aggressive support to the political emancipation of California women.” Excitement and optimism were high when 8,000 suffragists and their male supporters gathered at a “monster rally” at San Francisco’s Dreamland Pavilion on the October elec-

On March 28, 1912, Elizabeth Gerberding, Mary Sperry, and Nellie Eyester voted in the first election following California’s adoption of the 1911 suffrage amendment.

Rural communities were the greatest supporters of California women’s suffrage. In August 1920, the Monterey Daily Cypress was one of the few California papers to dedicate its front page to news of the 19th amendment’s ratification.

Twenty-two-year-old schoolteacher, Myra Lee, was the first Chinese American woman to register to vote in Los Angeles County. “First Chinese Woman on L.A. Voting List,” Los Angeles Herald, 28 March 1912, p 2.

After the California victory, Selina Solomons published this book as a resource for suffragists elsewhere.
Shortly after the win, Solomons published the explanatory *How We Won the Vote in California: A True Story of the Campaign of 1911*. Suffragists elsewhere followed California’s lead and soon turned the national campaign’s tide.

The 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified on August 18, 1920 and certified eight days later.

Theoretically, this made voting legal for all female American citizens. However, some states employed oppressive Jim Crow laws to bar people of color from voting for many years to come. Additionally, Arkansas, South Carolina, Mississippi, and Georgia rigidly barred all women (regardless of color or ethnicity) from voting in that first election because they had not registered six months prior. With all this in mind, one might view the passage of the 19th Amendment not as a culmination but as a significant milestone on the way to American women’s full political inclusion. History shows us that attaining equity has never been easy. It has happened in fits and starts—and always through persistence.

**SUGGESTED READING**

Cherny, Robert W., Mary Ann Irwin, and Ann Marie Wilson, *California Women and Politics: From the Gold Rush to the Great Depression*. University of Nebraska, 2011.


The Allen Press was founded in 1939 by Lewis and Dorothy Allen. They began as The Press of Lewis & Dorothy Allen, then The L-D Allen Press, and finally The Allen Press. Initial books were printed in San Francisco and other locations in the San Francisco Bay Area, one book was printed in France, and the last books were printed in Greenbrae (Kentfield), California. The majority of their fine press books were hand-set, all were printed on handmade all-rag paper, and bound in boards, usually by Dorothy Allen. Lewis Allen was an early member of the Book Club of California. In 1945, the Club commissioned *Heraldry of New Helvetia*, the first of eight books that would be produced by the Allens. They would print several pieces of ephemera for the Club and Lewis Allen took on the editorship of the Book Club of California’s *Quarterly Newsletter*. This relationship ensured that The Allen Press would stand alongside the Grabhorn Press, Adrian Wilson, Lawton Kennedy, and the Greenwood Press among other great printers of the Bay Area. The work with the Club established a long and close association with Mallette Dean, artist and printer.

Lewis Allen stated in the introduction to *Printing with the Handpress*, “One of the supreme pleasures available to man is knowledge, discipline, intelligence guiding the hand to create beautiful and intellectually desirable objects.” Each book created by Dorothy and Lewis Allen live up to this statement. Likewise, their philosophy in selecting the texts for their books was...
unique. In writing the introduction to their bibliography published in 1981, Allen stated:

Regarding the subject of texts, as novice book printers it was desirable to establish a standard for their selection. We favored those noted for their readability, depth of thought, imaginative qualities – virtues set forth in ‘The Printers to the Reader’ a preface to Essays of Montaigne, our first title of this caliber. Choice of text was restricted by several factors: they should not be too long, or published in a de luxe edition for many years; they should be unpublished or out of copyright; they should be by a well-known author, and should be prose rather than verse.

This is what attracted me to their books. I have enjoyed the work of Lewis and Dorothy Allen since first discovering their books in the mid-1990s. I realized that I might be able to build a comprehensive collection of their work. That would lead me to study their techniques and explore those with whom they would collaborate: Mallette Dean, John DePol, Valenti Angelo, and particularly Blair Hughes-Stanton. I was finally able to find the last item in 2007.

In creating this bibliography, I felt that the work of recording their work was incomplete. It is my pleasure to see it published in this issue of the California State Library Foundation Bulletin.

Bibliographies of their work were included in two issues of the Quarterly News-Letter of the Book Club of California. The first by noted collector William P. Barlow, Jr. was published in the Spring 1960 issue entitled, “The Allen Press—A Bibliography.” The introduction to the listing read:

Established in 1939 by Lewis & Dorothy Allen, the first imprint was The Press of Lewis & Dorothy Allen, then The L-D Allen Press, and finally The Allen Press. Titles 1 to 5 were printed in San Francisco; 6 to 9 in Hillsborough; 10 in Belvedere; 11 in Cagnes-Sur-Mer, France; 12 to 21 in Kentfield. Numbers 10, 11, 13, 15, 18, 22, 23 (and all future books) were printed on a handpress. Number 21 was designed at The Allen Press, but the printing, binding and publishing were done by Mallette Dean while the Allens were living in France. The books were hand-set except number 6, 7, and 20; all were bound in boards, usually by Dorothy Allen; and all titles were published by the Allens except where specified. (All titles are out of print.)

Corey, special collections curator at the University of San Francisco, continued the bibliography in the Spring 1976 issue of the News-Letter. His bibliography provided descriptions of book 24 (The Splendid Idle Forties, by Gertrude Atherton) through book 42 (All For Love, the Romance of Antony and Cleopatra, by John Dryden). Corey stated:

Lewis and Dorothy Allen produce a new edition about every nine months. They now publish only for themselves. ... All of the items were printed at their home in Kentfield, California.

No attempt has been made to list ephemera, either by Mr. Barlow or myself.


The Allens would publish seven books from 1986 to 1992. I have provided a listing of the seven herewith. I am not in the league of William Barlow nor Steven Corey, but with apologies, felt the listing of their books should be completed.
52. THE ALLEN PRESS | mcmlxxxvi [ornament of a tree in green, gold, and red] BARLAAM & JOSAPHAT. [Half Title: BARLAAM AND JOSAPHAT] a Christian legend of the Buddha [ornament]

This book is one of an edition of 140 copies. The text typeface is Menhart Unciala, set by hand; the prolegomenon type-face is GARAMOND BOLD. The all-rag paper was handmade and watermarked especially for The Allen Press at the Richard de Bas Mill, France – established 1326. This paper was printed damped on an 1882 model Albion handpress. The Caxton initials were colored by hand by Dorothy Allen. The binding cloth is from Holland. Translated into English and first printed by William Caxton, 1484. | Prolegomenon by Lewis Allen | Designed, printed, and bound by Lewis and Dorothy Allen | Greenbrae, California. [11 by 7 inches. Running heads in red type. Traditional colors of India – vermilion, purple, and mustard. There are two or more colors on every page plus many initials. The press mark of William Caxton and eight illustrations printed in black.]

53. ALEXANDER PUSHKIN | FOUR STORIES | The Squire’s Daughter The Queen of Spades The Blizzard The Shot | Wood engravings by John DePol [ornament] Produced by Hand at | THE ALLEN PRESS | Greenbrae, California – 1987. [Half Title: Alexander Pushkin | FOUR STORIES]

This book is one of an edition limited to 145 copies, of which 8 are hors de commerce. The typeface is Monotype Van Dijck, set by MacKenzie-Harris, and re-set by hand; the display typeface for page headings is Garamond Bold. | The all-rag paper was made by hand especially for this edition, at the Richard de Bas Mill, France, and printed damp on an 1882 Albion handpress. | the binding cloth is an eighteenth-century design, printed by silk-screen process in Switzerland. | Designed, printed and bound by Lewis & Dorothy Allen. [There are 112 pages, 11 by 7 inches. The page headings (part Russian language characters and part story title) have a different color for each tale: green for the pastoral The Squire’s Daughter, purple for the flamboyant The Queen of Spades, blue for The Blizzard, and red for dueling in The Shot. Each of the four stories is illustrated with striking wood engravings by the eminent artist John DePol, who has embellished many deluxe editions; also for this book, he engraved a portrait of Pushkin, and a vignette (based on the binding cloth motif) for the title page, hand-colored by Dorothy Allen.]
54. [Set in a heart shape] ROMEO [set in red] | A TRAGEDY BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE | JULIET [set in red] | Pen and Ink Drawings by Michele Forgeois | Calligraphy by Mark Livingston | THE ALLEN PRESS | Printed by Hand | mcmlxxxviii. [Half Title: ROMEO | [Line] | JULIET.]

This book is one of an edition limited to 115 copies. The typeface is Monotype Bembo, based on the type originally cut for Aldus Manutius of Venice in the century preceding Shakespeare’s Romeo & Juliet. For the present edition, the Bembo was set by MacKenzie-Harris and re-set by hand. The display typeface is Centaur, designed by Bruce Rogers.

55. [Egyptian drawing hand-colored by Dorothy Allen] | Egypt [set in red] | HERODOTUS | THE ALLEN PRESS | Greenbrae, California | mxim. [Half Title: EGYPT | HERODOTUS.]

This book is one of an edition limited to one hundred and twenty-one copies. The typefaces are Menhart Unciala for the text and Solemnis for display; both types were set by hand. The all-rag paper was made by hand especially for The Allen Press, and so watermark at the Richard de Bas Mill, France, established in 1326. This paper was printed damp on an Albion handpress made in 1882 in Scotland. The one hundred percent cotton cloth for binding is nymph, designed by Joan Kessler for Concord Fabrics; bound by Cardoza-James Binding Co. Designed and hand-produced by Lewis and Dorothy Allen. [There are 144 pages, 11 x 7 inches. Each of the five Acts opens with a full-page provocative and imaginative drawing by Michele Forgeois of Paris, eminent official artist of the French government. To introduce color to every text page, margins are enlivened by a series of calligraphic initials by Mark Livingston.]
56. NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE | RAPPACCINI’S DAUGHTER [set in red] | REFLECTIONS ON HAWTHORNE BY | EDGAR ALLAN POE – ANTHONY TROLLOPE – HENRY JAMES | WOOD-ENGRAVINGS BY JOHN DePOL [ornament] MADE BY HAND AT THE ALLEN PRESS | Greenbrae, California. [Half Title: RAPPACCINI’S DAUGHTER | 1991]

This book is one of an edition limited to 115 copies. The typeface is Romanee, and the display running headlines is Cancelleresca Bastarda: both faces were designed by Jan Van Krimpen in Holland; both faces were set by hand at The Allen Press. The paper is all-rag and acid free; it is mould made Rives from France, and printed damp on an 1882 Albion handpress made in Scotland. It was found in London by Caroline & Victor Hammer while we were living in the south of France. The wood-engravings were cut by talented John DePol.

There are at least two colors on every page. It is bound in a colorful Italian pattern, on cotton tapes, by Cardoza-James Binding Company.

Wood- engraving by the talented John DePol for Rappaccini’s Daughter, [1991].


This book is one of an edition limited to 115 copies. The typeface is Bembo set by M & H TYPE, and then re-set by hand. Pietro Bembo, humanist and Tuscany contemporary of Michelangelo, was also a Medici favorite, as well as a cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church. The display typeface is Solemnis, also set by hand. Dover, the durable paper, was handmade 1980 at the Barcham Green Mill at Maidstone, England. It was created actually for book conservators, and therefore a significant proportion of flax and jute were added for strength. And of course it was printed damp on our 1882 Albion handpress. The books have been bound in a Fortuny fabric, hand-blocked in Italy, and bound by the Cardoza-James Binding Company | Designed and produced by Lewis & Dorothy Allen. [There are two colors on almost every page, usually a medium blue. There are approximately 100 pages, 11 x 7 inches.]

This book is one of an edition limited to one hundred & nine copies. The type-face is Italian Old Style designed by Frederic Goudy, and set for us at M & H Type; then re-set by hand. Our author Giovanni Boccaccio was the most famous Italian fiction writer of the thirteenth century, especially noted for his ‘Decameron’ or 100 tales by men and women waiting for the Black Death epidemic to depart. The display type is Menhart Unciala from Czechoslovakia. | The J. Whatman handmade paper from England was produced many years ago from cotton rags, not the more recent cotton lint; it was hand-dampened by us for laborious printing on our 1882 Albion handpress from Edinburgh, Scotland. | These books have been bound in a Fortuny fabric again, hand-blocked in Italy, and bound by the Cardoza-James Binding Company of San Francisco. | It should be explained that many famous book designers and printers have been seduced by the great ‘The Life of Dante’ – including Bruce Rogers, John Henry Nash, Giovanni Madersteig, and others. | Designed and hand-made by Lewis & Dorothy Allen. [There are two colors on almost every page. Approximately 75 pages, 11 by 7 inches.]

All of the books are in my collection.

ENDNOTES


In the summer of 2019, State Librarian Greg Lucas talked to library staff about his vision to mark California’s 170th birthday on September 9, 2020, by publishing 170 stories of events, places, and people that exemplify California’s unique character. It was daunting to think about compiling such a large number of stories, but I needn’t have worried. The state librarian drew on his years of experience as a reporter and his abundance of colorful stories about the state’s history to write nearly a hundred articles for the new project. The Cal@170 site went live on Admission Day and by year’s end all 170 stories will be published, including articles written by leading voices in California arts, culture, and politics. Several of us on staff also were asked to write, and as Mr. Lucas had covered so many of the iconic California events and personalities, I chose to focus on lesser known stories.

Kimberly Brown is a communications officer at the California State Library, where she promotes the library’s amazing collections and co-produces the author talk series, A Night at the State Library.
“We win by raising the issues”

Greg Lucas is fond of reminding his staff of the words of Harry Truman: “The only new thing in the world is the history you don’t know.”

How true that proved to be in August 2020, when the Democrats nominated Senator Kamala Harris as vice president, and political pundits on social media rushed to proclaim her the first Black woman to run for VP. Not so. Those of us who had been working on Cal@170 knew about Charlotta Spears Bass, who ran for vice president in 1952 on the Progressive Party ticket with San Francisco lawyer Vincent Hallinan. Bass was publisher of the largest African American-owned newspaper on the West Coast, the Los Angeles Eagle, from 1912 to 1951 and used it as a platform to address issues of police brutality and the Ku Klux Klan’s activities in Southern California. An outspoken promoter of civil rights, she was labeled a communist and put under surveillance by the FBI. In 1952, she campaigned for the nation’s second highest office with the slogan “win or lose, we win by raising the issues.” Although the party came in a distant third, with about 140,000 votes, Bass had opened the door for other Black women in politics. In an odd twist, long before she became senator, Kamala Harris won her 2003 race for San Francisco district attorney against Terence Hallinan, Vincent’s son. She was the first person of color to hold the job.

Vaudevillian Lee Tung Foo

How a Chinese actor from Watsonville carved out a career in vaudeville is the story of Lee Tung Foo, or Frank Lee, as he was called. Born in 1875 to a family that owned a laundry and grocery story, Lee’s father hoped his son would become a hotel dishwasher. Instead, he ran away, ending up in Berkeley, where he studied singing with the famed vocal teacher Margaret Blake Alverson, who was impressed by his “indomitable will,” as she wrote in her memoir, Sixty Years of California Song.

A Chinese singer was a vaudeville novelty act, but Lee took it further. At a time when white actors were playing Asian characters in “yellow face,” he dressed in kilt and tam and spoofed a popular Scottish entertainer, Harry Lauder. He also performed dressed in elaborate Chinese costumes, making fun of stereotypes of Chinese immigrants. He toured Europe and the U.S. performing his acts. When the “talkies” arrived, Lee moved to Los Angeles and took bit parts as waiters and servants, the only roles available for Asian actors. Despite the barriers he faced, the boy who seemed destined to be a dishwasher carved out a life as a successful entertainer.
The Walnut Queen
One of the lesser-known Californians who deserves wider recognition is Harriet Russell Strong, who at thirty-nine was a widowed mother of four daughters on a failing farm in the San Gabriel Valley. Not one to give up, Strong tried several crops before hitting on the idea to grow walnuts, a lucrative cash crop. The semiarid climate is not ideal for growing walnuts, which require upwards of fifty inches of water per season, but in 1887 Strong invented and patented several designs for dams and reservoir systems to conserve water. Within five years, she had the largest walnut ranch in the region, and her success garnered her the title of Walnut Queen. She was not a woman of modest ambitions. In 1918, she traveled to Washington to present to Congress a plan to dam the Colorado River to control floods, generate electricity and provide irrigation water to Southern California farms. She later complained she had not been taken seriously, and it wasn’t until a decade later that Congress approved plans for the construction of Hoover Dam.

A San Francisco Treat?
One tangled tale I struggled to unravel was the origin of the fortune cookie. I assumed it was a Chinese American invention but soon discovered its roots were in Japan, as a crescent-shaped savory cracker, or senbei, with a paper fortune tucked inside. How it came to be a Chinese restaurant staple is typical of California success stories: one part immigration, with a dash of assimilation and plenty of marketing savvy. Makoto Hagiwara, who established the Japanese Tea Garden in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park in 1894, began serving the traditional Japanese treat in the early 1900s and soon added vanilla and sugar to the recipe to appeal to Westerners’ sweet tooth. However, a competing origin story claims it was a Japanese bakery in Los Angeles, the Umeya Rice Cake Company, that developed the fortune cookie first. Regardless of where it got its start, by the 1920s the crescent-shaped cookie was being served in “chop suey” restaurants in California, many of which were owned by Japanese Americans. At the end of World War II, Chinese restaurants in San Francisco were serving up fortune cookies, and now over three billion are made each year, most in the U.S.
Fearless Librarians

Is there any problem a determined librarian can’t solve? I wondered that as I researched the pioneering librarians of the early 1900s. The county library system was initiated by State Librarian James Gillis in 1911, and four years later there were twenty-three county libraries. California was, of course, much more rural then, and many residents lived on farms, in high country logging camps, and desert mining settlements. Transportation to major towns to visit a library would have been a hardship.

Undaunted, those early librarians saddled up to deliver books by horse or burro, fastened on skis to bring books to snowbound patrons, piloted pick-up trucks, and even used dog sleds to deliver books to isolated residents. The photo that most embodies the can-do inventiveness of library staff is from 1923: a TNT powder box nailed to a tree in the Salmon Mountains of Siskiyou County and filled with books from the Siskiyou County Library for their forest ranger patrons. But fearless librarians aren’t rare. Every public library in California has them today—professionals who are always willing to find a way to get books and information into the hands of anyone with a library card—wildfires or pandemics notwithstanding.
Cal@170  

A Selection of Four Stories

by Greg Lucas, California State Librarian

INTRODUCTION

The topics of the State Library’s Cal@170 collection of stories celebrating 170 years of statehood are as diverse as the state itself, and include arts and culture, civil rights, people and places, innovation, sports and politics. Cal@170 also includes stories about natural disasters, massacres, and riots. As State Librarian Greg Lucas says, “to appreciate the grit, innovation and imagination at the heart of California, you’ve got to see where we’ve been and what we’ve come through. California continues to evolve. We’ve learned and grown stronger together from our past mistakes.” Here are four stories selected by Greg Lucas out of a much larger group that he personally contributed to Cal@170.

Maiden Run of California’s First Railroad

At 11 a.m. on Washington’s Birthday, February 22, 1856, the Sacramento Valley Railroad inaugurates service to Folsom, as the locomotive “Sacramento” with a string of passenger and flat cars in tow leaves “Old” Sacramento’s Front Street and heads up the tracks of R Street. It is soon followed by the “Nevada,” which breaks down before covering the full 22.9 miles to Folsom.

But the politicians and local citizenry from both locomotives eventually arrive at Folsom’s Meredith Hotel where they enjoy a “Railroad Ball” that lasts until the next morning. While the Sacramento Valley Railroad incorporates on August 4, 1852, making it the first railroad west of the Mississippi, the Arcata and Mad River Railroad becomes operational sooner, on December 15, 1854. The business plan calls for the Sacramento Valley Railroad to run through Folsom up to Marysville but construction costs are 50 percent more than anticipated so the line terminates at Folsom.

The railroad’s chief engineer is Theodore Judah, railroad engineer from New York, who later holds the same job with the Central Pacific Railroad and is one of the early advocates of running track up and through the Sierra Nevada to create a transcontinental railroad. Judah doesn’t live to see it happen, dying of yellow fever in November 1863, which he contracts in Panama returning to New York from California.

This albumen photograph from the late 1860s shows a Central Pacific Railroad locomotive pulling flatcars with men standing on and next to train. (It is possible that James Strowbridge is on the right). [State Library Image Stereo-5998]
Judah is hired by Charles Lincoln Wilson, who founds the Sacramento Valley Railroad using profits from a toll road he's built and a schooner that take passengers and freight up the Sacramento River to the Sierra foothills and the mines. Wilson successfully lobbies state lawmakers to amend the Railroad Act of 1853 to ease his difficulties in securing financing for his venture. A strong money manager is also needed and William Tecumseh Sherman, head of the San Francisco office of banking firm Lucas & Turner, becomes the railroad's vice president. Having the future Union Army general on board still isn't enough to lure sufficient investment to take the line north to Marysville.

Judah leaves and forms the Central Pacific Railroad. Folsom becomes the hub for freight heading into the goldfields, sharply reducing Sacramento's civic revenue. In response, Sacramento levies a tax on all passengers and freight that cross the levee, including by train. To avoid the tax, the Sacramento Valley Railroad creates a new route to a place called Newport, just south of Sacramento, renaming it Freeport. In retaliation, Sacramento tears up the railroad's original tracks on Front Street.

The Big Four and the Central Pacific take control on August 1, 1865, when Sacramento Valley Railroad President George Bragg, after buying out three other directors, sells his holdings to the rival railroad. Charges of corruption are made by the press. Central Pacific President Leland Stanford and his fellow Sacramento business partners, promptly order all passenger traffic to and from Freeport suspended.

An Anti-Slavery US Senator Is Selected

On February 10, 1863, state lawmakers choose Assemblyman John Conness, a strong opponent of slavery, as California's U.S. Senator, succeeding his slain political mentor and ally, David Broderick of San Francisco. Support of Chinese immigration in the face of strong public opposition to it ends Conness's political career in 1869 but not before he convinces Abraham Lincoln to sign legislation protecting Yosemite from development.

Born in Abbey, Ireland in 1821, Conness comes to America at age 15. The siren song of California gold lures him into leaving New York City in 1849 and coming west to seek his fortune. He settles in Georgetown in El Dorado County, making more money running a mercantile store than he does prospecting. Slavery is what gives him the political bug, says Conness in 1904:

"It was never my purpose to seek public office or public life until later when there were such efforts to ally California with proslavery, I never dreamed of, nor had ambition to fill public place."

He wins an Assembly seat in 1853, tying his political fortunes to Broderick, another son of Irish immigrants as well as the head of a powerful San Francisco political machine. Conness's political career waxes and then wanes along with Broderick's. But after Broderick is killed in an 1859 slavery-related duel with David Terry, former chief justice of the state supreme court, Conness becomes the head of Broderick's anti-slavery "Union Democrats." Cutting a deal with the anti-slavery Republicans secures Conness his Senate seat. He serves only one six-year term then moves to Boston where he dies almost 40 years later at the age of 87.

Those six years in the US Senate span the ending of the Civil War and the first turbulent years of Reconstruction. In Congress, Conness remains a vocal critic of slavery and a backer of President Abraham Lincoln's war efforts as a means to end it. On November 13, 1863, Conness meets with Lincoln and offers the Republican president a cane that Broderick had given to him. Lincoln gratefully accepts it. Conness doesn't introduce much legislation while a senator but he does carry a bill granting the Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Big Tree Grove to California. In his May 17, 1864 speech to his colleagues, Conness says:

"This bill proposes to make a grant of certain premises located in the Sierra Nevada mountains, in the State of California, that are for all public purposes worthless but which constitute, perhaps, some of the greatest wonders of the world.... The object and purpose is to make a grant to the state, on the stipulation contained in the bill that the property shall be inalienable forever, and preserved and improved as a place of public resort. The necessity of taking early possession and care of these great wonders can easily be seen and understood."

It's the first such land-use measure in US history. Lincoln signs the bill on June 30, 1864. Conness serves as a pallbearer at the assassinated president's funeral in April 1865.

During Reconstruction, California's anti-Chinese sentiment sharply increases. The belief is that Chinese workers compete with white workers for jobs and the willingness of the Chinese to work for less pay drives down wages for all other workers. Conness opposes Chinese workers being brought to California as forced labor through "coolie contracts" but still supports Chinese immigration. Chinese immigrants are a necessary part of the state's economy, Conness says:

"They are a docile, industrious people, and they are now passing into other branches of industry and labor. They are found employed as servants in a great many families and in the kitchens of hotels. They are found as farm hands in the fields; and latterly they are employed by thousands (to build the Central Pacific Railroad)."

His unpopular views about the Chinese, the unraveling of his alliance with the Republicans and the collapse of the Union Democrats as a political party all conspire to end Conness's political life in 1869.
Los Angeles Receives Quite the Christmas Gift

On December 16, 1896, Griffith J. Griffith and his wife Christina give Los Angeles 3,015 acres to use as a public park. Since then, another 1,200 acres have been added, making Griffith Park four times larger than San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park and five times the size of New York’s Central Park.

Griffith Park, which has 10 million visitors annually, is the mountainous three-fourths of a 4,071-acre portion of Rancho Los Feliz, which Griffith, a wealthy mining consultant, is subdividing. He purchases the land in 1882 for a price estimated between $8,000 and $50,000.

Griffith, described in various accounts as “pushy” and “egotistical” opens a 680-acre ostrich farm on the property in 1885. The “Ostrich Farm Railway” makes it easy for curious Angelenos to travel from downtown to observe the birds firsthand – if they pay a 50-cent admission charge.

Griffith, a Welsh immigrant, presents the land to the city with one caveat: “It must be made a place of rest and relaxation for the masses, a resort for the rank and file, for the plain people. I consider it my obligation to make Los Angeles a happy, cleaner and finer city. I wish to pay my debt of duty in this way to the community in which I have prospered.”

Media reports describe Griffith’s donation as a “Christmas gift.”

Griffith wants to give the city another “Christmas gift” – money to build an observatory and an outdoor amphitheater – but is rebuffed after he attempts to kill his wife in 1903 while they vacation in Santa Monica.

Christina “Tina” Mesmer Griffith is an heiress who Griffith courts and then dumps when he learns she splits the fortune with her sister. Griffith agrees to save Tina’s family the shame of calling off their marriage if

1966 Is an Election of Firsts

On November 8, 1966, future President Ronald Reagan, a Republican, wins his first bid for elected office, defeating incumbent Governor Pat Brown. Reagan is the first professional actor to hold the job. He is succeeded in 1975 by Democrat Jerry Brown, Pat’s son.

In the same election, voters in Oakland send March K. Fong to the Assembly, where she leads the fight to ban pay toilets, arguing they discriminate against women since urinals are free. Fong is the first Chinese American woman elected to the Legislature. In 1974, March Fong Eu is elected secretary of state, a job she holds until 1994.

Four hundred miles away, Los Angeles voters make Yvonne Watson Brathwaite an assembly member. She’s the first African American woman in the Legislature. Elected to Congress in 1972, she is the first member of the House to give birth while in office and the first to be granted maternity leave. She is elected a Los Angeles County supervisor in 1992 and retires from politics in 2008.

Her daughter, Autumn Burke, is elected to the Assembly in 2014.

Los Angeles voters also elevate Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally to the state Senate, which most historians say makes Dymally the first African American in the upper house. Born in Trinidad, Dymally actually is West Indian, making him the first Trinidadian to serve in the Senate and later as California’s lieutenant governor. A congressman from 1980 through 1992, Dymally returns to the Assembly in 2002. He is defeated in a bid to return to the state Senate in 2008 and dies four years later at age 86.

The 1966 general election is also the first that is subject to changes created by several US Supreme Court decisions that make equal population the determiner of legislative district drawing.

Of 40 redrawn state Senate seats on the ballot, only 18 see incumbents returned.

Californians also elect the state’s first woman treasurer. Ivy Baker Priest, the former United States Treasurer, is a Republican and Utah native. She serves until her death in June 1975.

Her daughter, Autumn Burke, is elected to the Assembly in 2014.

Los Angeles voters also elevate Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally to the state Senate, which most historians say makes Dymally the first African American in the upper house.

Ivy Baker Priest. Californians also elected Ivy Baker Priest as the state’s first woman treasurer.
Griffith opened a 680-acre ostrich farm that was open to the public. Curious and adventurous visitors, as demonstrated by this photograph, were actually allowed to ride these large birds.

She inherits the full fortune. They marry in 1887 in a posh, society wedding.

After 16 troubled years of marriage, the couple are vacationing at the Hotel Arcadia in Santa Monica. A drunken Griffith believes his wife, among others, is trying to poison him and demands she answer some questions.

Fearful, Tina asks if she can pray. She kneels and Griffith shoots her in the head. Jerking to one side at the last moment saves Tina Griffith’s life.

Opening the closed window of their hotel suite, she pushes herself out and escapes. She loses her right eye and is disfigured enough that she wears a thick veil when testifying at her husband’s trial for attempted murder.

The trial is the focus of intense media attention. Griffith’s lawyers plead alcoholic insanity. The team of special prosecutors is led by former Governor Henry Gage. Griffith is sentenced to two years in San Quentin. He declines parole and any special treatment, becoming a lecturer on the need for prison reform after his release.

Tina files for divorce, which a judge grants in less than five minutes, setting a record for brevity. Griffith dies of liver disease in 1919, leaving the bulk of his $1.5 million estate to the city for construction of what’s now the Greek Theater and the Griffith Observatory.

For more about Griffith J. Griffith, Griffith Park and Los Angeles History in general visit LA as Subject (https://laassubject.org).
Aloha, Amigos!
A Fabulous Book Written in Tribute to Sutro Librarian Richard H. Dillon (1924-2016), by His Son Brian Dillon

By Gary F. Kurutz

The Bulletin rarely features a new book published by another organization but, I thought our readers should be aware of Aloha, Amigos! The Richard H. Dillon Memorial Volume created and edited by his son Dr. Brian Dervin Dillon. From 1950 to 1979, Dillon, hereafter “RHD,” managed the California State Library’s only branch, the Sutro Library in San Francisco. During his long tenure as Sutro Librarian, he did Herculean work in promoting and organizing this long-neglected library, relocating it from the basement of the San Francisco Public Library to a superb facility on the campus of the University of San Francisco (USF). When he started his Sutro Library job in the public library’s Civic Center facility, he quickly discovered that he was one of only two staff members! Here existed in a major public building a collection of tens of thousands of manuscripts dating from the Middle Ages, rare books from the first century of printing, and a massive genealogy and U.S. local history collection. RHD gave countless spell-binding presentations on the legacy of Adolph Sutro and his namesake library as an important research center filled with thousands of treasures ranging from a First Folio Shakespeare (1623) to the papers of Sir Joseph Banks that included, among other gems, Lieutenant William Bligh’s hand-drawn diagram of the H.M.S. Bounty (ca. 1787). As a gifted wordsmith, RHD wrote noteworthy descriptions of the Sutro Library’s holdings including the information-packed Anatomy of a Library (1957). In addition to managing this public research library, this bookman taught classes at UCLA, University of Hawaii, UC Berkeley Extension, Fromm Institute, USF, and the library science program at UC Berkeley.

As fully documented in this impressive memorial tome, RHD was a human dynamo with an uncanny feel for California and Western history. In my forty-year career in rare books and special collections, I had never met an individual who accomplished so much as a librarian, historian, professor, and public speaker. A fourth generation Californian, RHD was born in Sausalito in sylvan Marin County in 1924. He lived his entire life in the San Francisco Bay Area with the exception of serving as a combat veteran in World War II. When he returned home from the war, RHD married, completed his library degree from UC Berkeley, and lived the rest of his years in bucolic Mill Valley, another Marin County paradise. However, he did have to endure a daily commute across the Golden Gate Bridge to the Sutro Library and frequent treks to State Library management meetings in Sacramento. One can only stand in awe of his scholarly production. His son, Brian a fifth generation Californian, is a scholar of great academic status in his own right, and his 588-page volume stands as a true memorial to this unsurpassed man of letters.

The first part of this handsome volume
is a very personal and lively biography of his father, but the concluding eighty-seven pages is a bibliography of Dilloniana laboriously compiled by Brian. All told, RHD wrote dozens of prize-winning books, hundreds of articles for scholarly and professional journals, and over 1,000 book reviews including 275 for the San Francisco Chronicle. You would never know it in talking to him that he ever experienced fatigue as he always exhibited boundless energy, eloquence, and roaring good humor. In reading his son’s book, one concludes that his father never rested. His typewriter must have smoked; its keys worn to a nub, and he must have filled barrels with worn-out typewriter ribbons. In addition, RHD always carried notepaper, discarded catalog cards, and other scraps to make notes and record ideas on the fly. One of his trademarks was the postcard. Every week RHD banged out scores of cards asking a research question, or simply staying in touch. Personally, I loved receiving Dillon postcards with their Mill Valley date stamps. These were to be treasured and preserved. As explained by Brian Dillon: “Because Richard H. Dillon ended so many of his most heartfelt writings to so many of his closest friends with Aloha, Amigos! No better, nor more natural, title could be attached to a volume in his honor.” One can only imagine how RHD would have fared in this digital age with a laptop computer or a tablet at his beck and call and with Internet access to so much primary source and reference material. RHD would have flooded the networks with his emails and more than likely posted a variety of riveting essays on social media sites.

A word like awesome or breathtaking seems so inadequate in describing his literary output. The endpapers of this thick biography are illustrated with rows of photographs of the books he wrote. His first book, Billy Waterman & the Voyage of the Clipper Challenger, New York to San Francisco, 1851, was published in 1956. To name just a few of his other works: Embarcadero, True Sea Adventures from the Port of San Francisco; Fool’s Gold: A Biography of John Sutter; The Legend of Grizzly Adams; High Steel: Building the Bridges across San Francisco Bay; Humbugs and Heroes: A Gallery of California Pioneers; Meriwether Lewis: A Biography; Burnt-Out-Fires: California’s Modoc Indian War; The Hatchet Men: The Story of the Tong Wars in San Francisco’s Chinatown; The Gila Trail: The Texas Argonauts and the California Gold Rush; North Beach: The Italian Heart of San Francisco, and Napa Valley Heyday. Many of these books rightly received awards from a variety of historical and scholarly organizations. For example, his Embarcadero received a James D. Phelan Award in Literature and his Meriwether Lewis, the Gold Medal of the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco. Showing how praiseworthy and popular these titles were, his publishers created reprints, new editions, and even paperbacks. Many remained in print long after the first edition rolled off the presses. Now some are available as e-books. Not surprisingly, since RHD had gained so much respect, authors and publishers flocked to him to write forewords, prefaces, and introductions to their books and scores more included a Dillon-created blurb that appeared on the dust jacket of hard bound editions and back covers of paperbacks.

Naturally, too, such a well-respected librar-
ian-scholar-author attracted much attention from historical, library, and bibliophilic organizations like the Western History Association, California Historical Society, American Library Association, California Library Association, Los Angeles and San Francisco Corrals of the Westerners, Book Club of California, and Roxburghe Club of San Francisco. Dillon, with his dynamism and razor-sharp sense of direction frequently served as president or as a board member or as a chair of a committee focused on publications and special events. Fittingly, RHD won dozens of awards from these organizations. In 1970, the City of San Francisco, for example, named him “Man of the Year” and handed him the “Keys to the City” and the Book Club of California bestowed its prestigious Oscar Lewis Award on RHD. As that other legendary figure of California history, Kevin Starr, wrote in his foreword to Brian Dillon’s volume: “Heroic and dedicated, Dick had the uncanny ability to reach across the generations, and with his writing, connect present-day readers with the strugglers and strivers of the past.”

Brian Dillon, showing his father’s limitless energy, further enhanced this memorial volume by inviting friends and associates to contribute essays on subjects that were of keen interest to RHD. Others contributed their own recollections of working or interacting with the great man. Altogether, fourteen authors wrote paean telling of how RHD solved a research problem for them or, how he plowed new ground in reinterpretation of the lives of such well-known figures as Meriwether Lewis and Captain Sutter. The following are a few examples of these tributes: Abraham Hoffman contributed an essay titled “Richard H. Dillon: Book Reviewer”; David Dary, “Postcards from Dick Dillon”; Will Bagley, “Historian’s Historian”; and Valerie Mathes, “The Women’s National Indian Association in Northern California.”

“Aloha, Amigos! I can say is the finest tribute I have ever read of a California historian-librarian. Having it conceived, organized, and written in large part by a scholar’s schol-
Mt. Tamalpais from Bulkley Avenue,
Sausalito, by Tom Killion, 2008.
Over the decades I learned more about this amazing librarian-historian, shared many meals with him, and attended numerous meetings and conferences with him. However, when I read the manuscript of Brian’s book, and in particular, Brian’s eloquent biography, I was staggered. I kept saying to myself, “I had no idea he did so much.”

As such a strong force in the study of Western history, it seemed appropriate that the Los Angeles Corral of the Westerners publish this remarkable memorial. RHD was active in several corrals, and in 2003 Westerners International named him Living Legend No. 46. Brian is a past sheriff of the Los Angeles Corral, and Brian’s son John Dillon, in keeping with his family heritage, is the publications editor of this dynamic corral. The Westerners is an international organization committed “to fun and scholarship in and about the American West.” It boasts over 4,000 members with sixty corrals (chapters) in the U.S. and twenty corrals abroad. Naturally, the organization takes delight in using Western vernacular names such as sheriff instead of president and keeper of the chips instead of treasurer. The LA Corral has published several significant books, and Aloha, Amigos! is Brand Book 24. The organization also publishes an outstanding quarterly with the catchy title of Buckskin Bulletin, and the Los Angeles Corral also publishes its own Quarterly, the Branding Iron, edited by Dick Dillon’s grandson John. Its next issue will be its 300th.

Copies of Aloha, Amigos! may be purchased from the Los Angeles Corral. The front dust jacket is a stunningly beautiful image created by noted Marin County artist Tom Killion. It is titled “Mt. Tamalpais from Bulkley Avenue, Sausalito.”

The following is the order information. Price for Westerners International members is $25.00, plus $5.00 for shipping within the U.S. Price for all others is $35.00, plus a $5.00 shipping charge for U.S. orders. Please make check out to Westerners, Los Angeles Corral, and send your order with return address, to P.O. Box 1891, San Gabriel, CA, 91778. Need Additional information? Contact BB 24 Editor Brian D. Dillon. (brandervindillon@gmail.com).

ENDNOTES


Brian Dervin Dillon is a fifth-generation Californian with Gold Rush ancestors. A Phi Beta Kappa and Fulbright Fellow, at age 25 Brian was the youngest-ever U.C. Berkeley Ph.D. in Archaeology. Dillon has done archaeology in California since 1972, in Guatemala and three other Central American countries since 1974. Widely published in Maya and California archaeology and in California history, Brian has taught and lectured at UC Berkeley, UCLA, UCLA Extension, CSU Long Beach, The Southwest Museum and for the California State Department of Forestry. He is the recipient of more than two-dozen grants, fellowships and awards, and was just honored with his 9th consecutive Coke Wood Award for historical writing by Westerners International.

2. The papers of RHD are preserved and made accessible in the Department of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).
New Board Member Joins CSLF

The California State Library Foundation is delighted to welcome Mona Bahrani to its Board of Directors. Mona is the creator and owner of the Prickly Pear Nursery located in Sacramento, which has been featured on many local news channels as a go-to oasis for your Sunday mornings. Her brainchild business came after a tragic accident left her looking for a new career path, so she turned her passion for succulents and cacti into a buzzing new business. She has used her talents in communication and connectivity to create a sense of community and a place with a special purpose. Mona dedicates her time and space at the Prickly Pear to work with adults with disabilities to teach them how to garden. The students maintain a small garden within the nursery, and when there is enough to harvest, Mona helps them sell the fruits of their labor.

Mona’s sense of community, along with her enthusiasm, and fresh perspectives on engagement will be very helpful tools as we find ourselves disconnected during these times. Much like myself, Mona fell in love with the California State Library on a behind-the-scenes tour. Like many others, she had no idea of the treasures kept behind its doors. Mona looks forward to being able to promote the California State Library, its beautiful architectural exterior, as well as the astounding collections and staff within.

Brittneydawn Cook is the Executive Director of the Foundation. She holds Bachelors degrees in both Photography and Journalism from Sacramento State, and a Master’s in Library Science from Syracuse University. Previous to taking on the role of Executive Director, Mrs. Cook was the administrator of the Foundation as well as a digitization specialist for various institutions in and around the Sacramento area. For more information about her please read her extended biography in Bulletin #125.
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