Slickens
BUTTE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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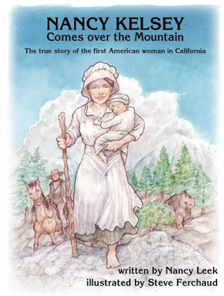
November 2026
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Print Edition

BUTTE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

buttecountyhistory.com visit us on Facebook buttehistory@sbcglobal.net

Nancy Kelsey

The True Story of the First American Woman in California



Nancy Kelsey was just seventeen years old when she set out with her husband to travel to faraway California. The Kelseys joined the first wagon train of Americans to seek a new life in the West. Thirty-two men crossed the desert and the mountains, and she was the only woman in the company. Tornadoes, swollen rivers, herds of buffalo, burning deserts and snow-capped mountains; she faced every obstacle and every peril that the men did, and she did it carrying her little daughter in her arms. In Sonoma she witnessed the Bear Flag Revolt, baked bread for John C. Fremont and his men, and helped to create the California Bear Flag.



Local author and historian Nancy Leek will be at the BCHS Museum on November 21st discussing the life and times of early California pioneer Nancy Kelsey. Mrs. Kelsey was the only woman member of the Bidwell-Bartleson wagon train that arrived in California in late 1841 (without their wagons!)

Please Join Us!
November 21st at 1:30 pm
1749 Spencer Avenue in Oroville CA
The Butte County Historical Society Museum and Archives
The presentation will follow our annual membership meeting and elections.
We promise to be brief.!

Save the Date!



Join us at the Ehmann Home on Saturday, December 13th from 2 pm–6 pm at 1480 Lincoln Street for our annual Holiday Open House.

The Home will be decorated with a mix of German and American Christmas traditions such as the Ehmann family would have had when they lived there.

The Annual Oroville Parade of lights will begin at 6pm, immediately after the open house and will be passing directly in front of the Ehmann Home! It's a great place to view the parade and we will have cups of hot chocolate available for purchase on the front porch to help keep the December chill away.

Our annual Opportunity Quilt drawing will be held at this event. Get your tickets in!

Watch for the special holiday edition of the Slickens, a digital edition to be delivered by email in late November. There will be more information on upcoming events in December and January and updates on books available in our museum store for holiday gift-giving.
If you do not yet receive your Slickens by email and would like to, send us an email request at: buttehistory@sbcglobal.net

Joining the Butte County Historical Society

BCHS is primarily supported by memberships and donations from the people and the friends of Butte County and receives no direct government funding. Membership in BCHS is open to all.

Members receive:

- Slickens (monthly newsletter)
- The Diggin's (quarterly publication)
- 10% discount on museum store purchases
- Early notice of BCHS programs and activities

BCHS Membership Application

Check one:

___Individual	($40)	___Supporting	($60)
___Family	($50)	___Sustaining	($110)
___Senior	($35)	___Organization	($40)
___Senior Family	($45)		

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ ZIP _____
Phone _____
E-mail _____

Mail with your check to: BCHS, P. O. Box 2195, Oroville, CA 95965

BCHS PROPERTIES

Ehmann Home
1480 Lincoln, Oroville
Saturdays — 11:00 am - 3:00 pm
530-533-9418

Museum - Archives
Corner of Spencer and Baldwin
Oroville
530-533-9418

Museum
Open Fridays Saturdays
11 am to 3 pm
Archives
Thursday and Friday
9 am - Noon

Oregon City School
2100 Oregon Gulch Road
Oregon City, CA

530-533-9418

Bangor Church
5730 LaPorte Road, Bangor, CA
Noon to 2 pm on 1st & 3rd Saturday
Closed: Dec., Jan., Jul. and Aug.
530-679-2112

Elections for 2027

A meeting of the general membership of the Butte County Historical Society will be called to order at 1:30 pm on November 21st 2026 for elections of Directors and Officers for 2027.

At right is the slate of officers approved by the Board of Directors at the October 14 business meeting. Please note the vacancies on the slate and be assured our nominating committee continues to seek qualified candidates for those positions. While our bylaws do not allow for nominations from the floor at the time of the meeting, positions may be filled through action of the board at any time during the year.

We encourage you to attend and participate in the meeting and to enjoy the presentation immediately following adjournment. Refreshments will be provided. We hope to see you there.

The BCHS Mission
is to preserve Butte County's rich and varied history, making it engaging and meaningful for all.

Board Meets at the Museum,
1749 Spencer Avenue in Oroville on the 2nd Wednesday at 7 pm.

2026 Officers
President - Larry Mauch
Vice President - Daniel Ballard
Vice President, Finance - Open
Secretary - Lucy Sperlin
Treasurer - Open

Board Members at Large
Marjorie Daley
Dale Wangberg
Sandy Brodrick

Publications Staff
Diggin's - Nancy Brower
Slickens - Dale Wangberg

2027
Board of Directors Nominations

President: Dale Wangberg
Vice President: Open
Second Vice President: Open
Treasurer: Lucy Sperlin (Interim)
Secretary: Lucy Sperlin

Director at Large Positions

Term Ending 12/31/2029
1. Daniel Ballard
2.

Term Ending 12/31/2028
1. Sandy Brodrick
2.

Term Ending 12/31/2027
1. Marjorie Daley
2.

Past President: Larry Mauch
Diggins Editor: Nancy Brower
Slickens Editor: Dale Wangberg
Membership Secretary: Nancy Brower



New Members

Dean Callender - Salinas

AnDi Irvin - Oroville

Upcoming BCHS Events

November 21
General Membership Meeting and Program: Nancy Leek on Nancey Kelsey

December 12
Holiday Open House
at the Ehmann Home

January 16, 2027
Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

Feb. 6 (tentative)
Fundraising Event TBA

Great Fun at the BCHS Fundraiser Dinner!

As we prepare to send this edition of Slickens to the printer it is too soon after the event to provide a proper report on the funds raised but we can tell you we did quite well. The funds are designated to be used in the repair and rehabilitation of the Ehmann Home with windows and roofing being the priorities. This is the beginning of a multi-year project to assure we are preserving the wonderful historic home for the education and enjoyment of future generations.

We would like to thank our sponsors: Gray Nurse Hardware, Sean and Lori Pierce, Kusel's Big Store, Hodge's Family Nursery, Ron and Nancy Brower, Dorothy Lindsay, Dale and Lori Wangberg, Dixie Hargrove, Sandy Brodrick, Oroville Old Time Fiddlers and Provisions.



Catherine Rose and Doug Maxfield, descendants of Freda Ehmann.



The Oroville Old Time Fiddlers provided musical entertainment. Very entertaining!



A look at the crowd as dinner is served!



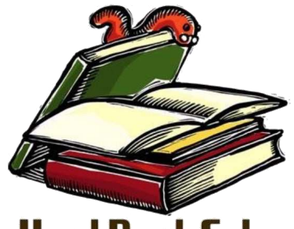
James Lenhoff with daughter Kay Castro

The Holidays Are Here!

If you are looking for a gift for the local history enthusiast on your gift list, we can help. Our museum store is well stocked with publications about very interesting people, places and events involved in local and regional history. This includes all issues of our quarterly Diggin's, published since 1957. Come see us on Saturdays between the hours of 11 am and 3 pm, do some shopping and tour the museum.

We are happy to report that the Association of Northern California Historic Research (ANCHR) has two new books coming out very soon. One is about the Manzanita District near Gridley, an area with a fascinating history that many are unfamiliar with. The other is a history of the Bidwell Mansion, a subject that most all local history enthusiasts find interesting. Look for these books to hit local stores (including the BCHS Museum store) either just before the holidays or soon after. Check out their website:
https://www.anchr.org/about





More Books!

During the holiday season we will be offering a selection of gently used books covering topics of local and regional historic interest. These books are offered at a significant discount from the cost when new. They may have a previous owners name written inside and some may be signed by the author. Most all can be considered in very good to near fine condition. They will be available for examination and purchase during our normal open hours at the Museum, 11 Am to 3 pm on Saturdays through December 19th.

Digital Extra
November 2026

More Photos from our Fundraiser Dinner












A Blast From Our Past-1958



L-R, Jules Gerhardt, Hector Lee, Rockwell Hunt, Clarence McIntosh, at the 7th annual Symposium of Historical Societies of Northern California and Southern Oregon, held in Chico and Oroville, October 3rd and 4th, 1958.

Chico Enterprise Record September 27, 1958

Historical Groups To Meet Here And in Oroville

Chico and Oroville will be the hosts of the seventh annual symposium of the historical societies of northern California and southern Oregon.

Dr. Clarence F. McIntosh of the Chico State College faculty is chairman of the two day meeting. The public is invited to attend all meetings.

Registration for the symposium is scheduled for 1 to 2 pm October 3 in the Chico State College little theater. The fee for the general sessions is $1. No registration fee is required of those attending only the luncheon or dinner meetings, but advance reservations should be made by contacting Dr. McIntosh or the Butte County Law Library in Oroville. The dinner meeting at 7 pm Oct. 3 in Hotel Oaks is $2.50. The 1 pm luncheon in Prospectors Village in Oroville Oct. 4 is $1.75.

General sessions of the conference will be held in the college little theater from 2 to 4:30 pm on Oct 3 and in the Native Daughters Hall here 9 to 10:30 am on Oct. 4. A social hour is also on the agenda for 4:30 to 5:30 pm, Oct. 3 in Bidwell Mansion.



Take It From Me

By Vida Shepard

'Tis marvelous that the Butte County Historical Society is now on sound footing after a slow start. It gained momentum with that summer trek to interesting old mining communities in the hills back of Oroville—Challenge, Forbestown, Strawberry, etc.

Now many persons are wondering when and where they may join the society and attend the seventh annual Symposium of Historical Societies of Northern California and Southern Oregon to be held in Chico and Oroville on Oct. 3 and 4, with Dr. Clarence McIntosh, history professor at Chico State College the general chairman. And of special interest is that Dr. Rockwell Hunt, officially "Mr. California," will be here; and although well in his 90's he is still writing. He will be called upon for remarks at the Friday afternoon session in Chico.

President Jules E. Gerhardt answers the question as to when and where one may join by saying that there will be registration tables at all sessions. One may join the society during the Symposium and non-members may attend by paying the registration fee.

Three of the four men pictured above were founding members of the Butte County Historical Society. Jules Gerhardt was President of the Society at the time of this article and Clarence McIntosh would serve as President in 1971. Hector Lee was Dean of Instruction at Chico State College. As an avid historian and folklorist, he produced a live radio program and later a live TV broadcast called "There is a Telling." Rockwell Hunt, named "Mr. California" by Governor Goodwin Knight in 1954 was a well known educator, historian and prolific author of books about California's history, including his 1942 publication "John Bidwell, Prince of California Pioneers."