



In This Issue

Spring Festival	page 2
Ranger Report	page 3
Visitor Center News	page 4
Parking Proposal	page 4
Cultural History on Web	page 6

The Docent Class of 2012

On Sunday, March 11, SYRSP Staff, members of the Board, and Docents spent the afternoon entertaining and enlightening 23 prospective volunteers. We shared information on the various aspects of our Park as well as the pleasant news that 'Bridgeport' will remain open, AND what that entails in additional tasks for our docents.

The attendees expressed the interest and ability to attend the State training sessions on March 23rd and 24th. Once they have completed the training session specific to our Park on March 31st, April 14th and 15th look for bright shiny faces and new badges around the barn and visitor center. We'll probably ask our current docents to do some mentoring for this "Class of 2012".



Bridgeport News

South Yuba River State Park

South Yuba River Park Association

SYRPA Newsletter

April 2012

President's Message

Spring will be here soon and with it the wildflowers. This is a wonderful time of year for our Park, so get out your shorts and walking shoes and get on our trails. Soon the river will be warm, so the children can enjoy swimming in our beautiful river. Now that our Park is expected to remain open, get out and bask in its beauty.

This year is the 150th anniversary of the construction of the bridge and the barn--their *sesquicentennial* (say *that* fast six times!). April 27, 28 and 29 will be a three-day celebration of that event and will be combined with our Spring festival. Friday will be focused on local school-children. Saturday will find us hosting State and local dignitaries, and Sunday will be an expanded version of our annual Spring Festival. Be sure to set aside Sunday to enjoy this great milestone.



Unfortunately, our covered bridge is still closed, but the detailed engineering assessment is complete and estimates are being prepared for the repair. Grants are being sought to provide funding for those repairs, and fundraising efforts are being planned to obtain the required local matching funds. It may take some time but we fully expect to repair the bridge and be able to enjoy it for many, many years to come.

A key factor in the decision to keep our park off the closure list was the agreement to offset some of the Park's operating costs by collecting daily parking fees. The North parking lot will be expanded to accommodate vehicles that will no longer be allowed to park along Pleasant Valley Road adjacent to the Park. We hope that everyone understands that this is a small sacrifice and needed to keep our wonderful Park open. Although it is not in place yet, there is discussion of creating an annual pass for frequent visitors to the Park. More to follow as plans are finalized. See you at the Park!

Dave Anderson

Help Needed for the Spring Festival!

The 150th year celebration at Bridgeport will be here soon, and I know we will have an amazing turn-out this year. We need your help! Please email me only (I am out of the country until March 22nd) and let me know if you can help as a volunteer on Sunday, April 29th.

I know we will need help for Denia with Gold Panning, Mickey for the Raffle table and selling raffle tickets, Vicky for the craft table, rovers and greeters, set up and clean up, and of course parking! There are 2 shifts for the day: 11-1:30 and 1:30-4. If you are helping with set up that takes place around 8:30 a.m. Looking forward to an amazing celebration and a day of fun for all!!

Janine Martin
janineandgalen@gmail.com

Hoyt's Trailhead Work

The photo is of the Hoyt's Trail entrance at the north end of the old 49 bridge. Trail cutting has eroded the trail entrance, and it's difficult to start up the trail. Rob and Frank, both maintenance workers from state parks, have begun work to restore the trail, and work should be completed soon. *Ranger Marc Wetherbee*



Spring Festival and 150 Year Celebration!

The South Yuba River State Park and the South Yuba River Park Association invite you to the Spring Festival and 150th birthday celebration at Bridgeport. The Historic Covered Bridge and Barn are 150 years old this year. The Park is planning a Sesquicentennial Birthday with the highlight being our annual Spring Festival Celebration taking place April 29, 2012. This year the historic 1927 Shell Gas Station will be open for tours. The Shell pump, lubesters and store products from the 1920's take you back to when Alfred Kneebone ran the resort and store. The goals are to recreate the 1927-1933 era: historic Shell products, automotive items normally obtainable in a gas station in 1927, emergency vehicle supplies, simple store products, flour, fruits, vegetable, canned goods, cold drinks, candy and basic food may be displayed. The garage section will incorporate tools, work benches, photos and displays of the Historic Shell Station while it was being operated.

The Festival event is family oriented with an art show featuring local artists who love this area. There are activities for everyone: face painting, a wild flower and craft table, pioneer games for kids by Malakoff State Park staff, a worm garden by the Master Gardeners, the Audubon Society with bird houses, wagon rides, gold panning taught by Docents, tours of the Historic Shell Gas Station, Bridge and Barn tours and blacksmithing. All this takes place while music fills the air, provided by local bands and singers. Local author Carol Malnor will be there to sign her book "The Blues Go Birding Across America" and to tell children about birding at Bridgeport. There will be a special table set up by SYRCL to talk about the successful effort to remove South Yuba River State Park from the "closure list".

The Spring Festival almost always has great weather with lots of visitors. The Penn Valley Chamber of Commerce serves hot dogs, sodas, chili and baked potatoes – which have sold out in past years. June's Deli provides cakes, pies, brownies and cookies – pleasing everyone. Lazy Dog ice cream sells all the flavors anyone could wish for.

The Park Visitor Center has several items that have been custom made for the 150 Birthday Celebration. Cloth bags and aprons with the Covered Bridge and Park logo, and a commemorative pin. There are several new educational books for folks of all ages.

This year there will be a special treat. Local drama Director Marion Jefferies and actor Mark Lyon have teamed to write and produce a special dramatic production specific to Bridgeport. The play will have local actors and be set in 1862 alongside the Yuba River. The two shows will be at 12:30 and 2:30. In past years these shows have filled up, so don't be late.

All of this will be available on Sunday, April 29, 2012. Activities start at 11:00am and continue until 4:00pm. Bridgeport is just west of Grass Valley and 8 miles north of Penn Valley on Pleasant Valley Road where it crosses the South Yuba River. For more information, please call the Park, 530-432-2546 or go to www.southyubariverstatepark.org

Glenn Fuller

The Biggest BIRTHDAY PARTY--EVER!

How many of us get to celebrate our 150th Birthday?? On the last weekend of this April your South Yuba River Park Association will be holding a SESQUICENTEN- NIAL for its Bridge and Barn. From 1862 to 2012 is ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS -- So on this momentous occasion, SYRPA will properly observe this milestone by staging a three-day Celebration to commemorate that birthday of our beloved Covered Bridge and Historic Barn. Festivities will begin on Friday, April 27th, with a special fast-paced Tour for School children (Grades 1-3 in the morning, and 4-6 in the afternoon) with a myriad of activities just for the youngsters. On the following day, Saturday, April 28th, we will be hosting state, regional and local officials plus representatives of the families that lived at Bridgeport over the years.

To culminate this weekend, on Sunday, April 29th, we will "pull out all the stops" for our annual Spring Festival -- to which EVERYBODY is invited. It will include the Anniversary Pageant, wagon rides, gold panning, tours, and everything else that has made this such a popular event in the past. Your "Nifty One- Fifty" Committee has been working on this "special" Special Event since last October, and we invite you, as our treasured members and volunteers, to join us for this special event.

Don Denton, Chair -- and Co-Chairs Diane Marten, Steve Pauly, Glenn Fuller, Mickey Springer, Jean Wilson, and Supervising Ranger Don Schmidt

Ranger Report

I have been here almost two years now, and I find that it's hard to believe all the things that have happened since May 2010. In my 30 years with California State Parks, I can't remember a time as turbulent as this. However, the status of South Yuba River SP is looking much more settled now than it has in the past year, and I'm breathing a bit easier. There are two more challenges to meet, that of paid parking, and our 150th Birthday Celebration, both at Bridgeport.



Starting May 1, we will begin collecting \$5 per car, per day, at both the Main and North Lots at Bridgeport. At this time, these are the only locations within SYRSP where we will be charging for parking. During April, we will begin construction on an additional parking lot next to the North Lot. We will also install a small kiosk, trench for utilities, and then pave & stripe the old North Lot. Lastly, we'll install self-pay stations in both locations. This will obviously be a big change for everyone – visitors, volunteers, and staff – but I hope everyone will accept the changes that will help keep this park open. Details of the parking plan can be found in the article on the next page and on the SYRPA web site. If you have any questions, please ask me or the staff.

On a more positive note, California State Parks is working with SYRPA to sponsor the sesquicentennial of the Bridgeport Covered Bridge and Barn from Friday, April 27th through Sunday, April 29th. The focus on Friday is school groups, with special stations and lessons planned that relate to Bridgeport's history through time. On Saturday, we've invited special guests and partners who have influenced and supported SYRSP over the years. Lastly, we give the bridge and barn a big public party in the form of an expanded Spring Festival, culminating in cake and song. I hope you and your friends will be able to join us for this once-in-a-lifetime event.

I have to keep reminding myself of something I once heard from a very wise ranger-mentor when I was feeling very frustrated with the state of parks years ago. He said, "Change is whatever you make it, so try to make it good." I intend to do just that, and I hope you will too. Enjoy your spring!

Don Schmidt

Visitor Center News

With the approaching 150th Birthday Celebration and the State's decision to keep the Park open, the Visitor Center is well stocked. A popular item is the newly designed lapel pin in black and white (\$5.). We also have new aprons (\$20.), tote bags, towels and pot-holders all embroidered with our logo in a variety of colors and created by our own Bev Morgan. Come in and shop while the supply lasts!



A new docent class is about to start its training, and we hope to implement our mentoring program which has been so successful in the past.

A special thank you to Sharon Anderson and Daphne Towns for keeping the Visitor Center staffed with their expert scheduling. No easy job!

Ardie Obert

Parking Proposal for Pleasant Valley Road

by Supervising Ranger Don Schmidt

In 2011, South Yuba River State Park was placed on a closure list for FY 2012 – 2013 due to legislative budget cuts. In order to mitigate the potential closure and loss of public safety and maintenance staffing, the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) will implement fee-based parking in both parking areas at the Bridgeport Historic District. This parking plan does not currently include charging parking fees at 49 Crossing, Independence Trail, Purdon Crossing or Edwards Crossing.

In essence, the plan includes:

- Establishing fee collection (electronic or static) points in both parking lots beginning May 1, 2012
- Expanding the North Lot by approximately 50-60 vehicle spaces
- Posting “no parking” signs along both sides of Pleasant Valley Road from the main parking lot entrance west to Sanctuary Road, and 400 ft. along the north side of Pleasant Valley Road across from the north parking lot
- Removing approximately 60-75 potential road shoulder spaces
- Staying within the guidelines of the South Yuba River Management Plan goals
- Utilizing the existing paved road shoulder adjacent to the North Lot as a paid parking area

Based on a formal request by DPR, meetings on site with Nevada County officials, and the Nevada County Board of Supervisor's Letter of Support dated 1-24-12, DPR is requesting that the county, through ordinance, post the areas delineated above as “no parking”. Also, based on discussions with NC Public Works staff, DPR is asking for delineation of a pedestrian walkway along the Pleasant Valley Road bridge shoulder to provide safer passage for pedestrians traversing from the North Lot to the historic area.

Parking Lots

Current capacities:

Main Lot: 30 cars

North Lot: approx. 75

Pleasant Valley Road: 100-160

Total 205-265

Proposed capacities:

Main Lot: 30 cars

North Lot: 135

Pleasant Valley Road: 30-40

Total 195-205

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

Bridgeport currently has two parking areas; one 30-space paved lot (Main Lot) adjacent to the historic area, and one 75-car unpaved lot on the north side of the river (North Lot). In order to provide vehicle space following elimination of the road shoulder parking, DPR will be constructing a 60-car unpaved parking area immediately east of, and connected to, the North Lot. Emergency vehicle, helicopter, and public pedestrian access to the river will remain.

Parking Fees

Parking or entrance fees have never been charged at any of the access points within South Yuba River State Park. In order to successfully implement this program with maximum public support, we are proposing that the parking fee per car will be \$5 per day. This fee may be adjusted depending upon the level of support that interested groups are willing to contribute in the future.

DPR has a number of fee payment options at this time, and a local pass is being considered. The fee schedule will be as follows:

- \$5 per car per day (no hourly fee planned unless electronic collections options become available)
- Self-pay and staffed collection will be used at both lot locations
- Enforcement of fees will be done by the rangers (peace officers) staffing the park
- Citations of \$71.50 will be issued for non-payment

Discounts and pre-paid pass options include:

- Senior discount; \$1 less per car per day
 - Disabled Discount Pass; \$3.50 to purchase, 50% off parking fee
 - Distinguished Veteran Pass; no fee, free parking
 - Golden Bear Pass (income limited); \$5 per year, free parking
 - Limited Golden Bear Pass (62 or older); \$20 per year*, free parking (with blackout dates)
 - Golden Poppy Annual Vehicle Day Use Pass; \$125*, free parking at most all state park units (Northern California)
 - Vehicle Day Use Annual Pass; \$195*, free parking at all state park units
- * Effective May 1, 2012

Signage

The County has stated that they will post the initial "no parking" signs along Pleasant Valley Road in the locations determined by DPR and county staff. DPR will post additional signage at each parking lot, along the paved shoulder parking at the North Lot, and in the area established as a loading zone directly across from the Main Lot. DPR will work with the County to replace damaged or stolen signage as it occurs.

Media

We are planning an extensive media campaign throughout the Northern California area beginning in March. Our Communications Office in Sacramento is aware of our needs, and will be working with radio, TV, and print media to publicize the parking plan.

As stated above, the implementation of this plan is necessary for the continued operation of South Yuba River State Park. Without the revenue generated by parking fees, DPR will not have the resources to continue staffing this park. Questions concerning this plan may be directed to Don Schmidt, Acting Sector Superintendent at 273-3212 or dschmidt@parks.ca.gov

Cultural History of the Park on the Web Soon

South Yuba River State Park has a rich cultural history extending from the Native Americans to the State of California. At Bridgeport, there have been thirteen owners or residents of the property over this span. Numerous docents and state park staff have researched the people, places and events that make up the Park's cultural history. Our archive includes photographs, newspaper and magazine articles, oral histories on cassette tape, family memorabilia, artifacts, research reports, and historical documents written by docents over the years. Much of this information (along with natural history information) was reproduced for the Docent Manual and given each year to new docents during their training.

Eventually the Docent Manual became unwieldy, and each year, many of the documents became increasingly difficult to read. In 2011, a decision was made to transcribe the cultural and natural histories onto our website. Most of the cultural history information has been transcribed, edited, compared and formatted for the web, and it will be online in time for the April 14 history training for new docents at Bridgeport. Of course, no history is ever entirely complete, and we have various additional articles and some research to complete. The online information includes articles on:

- Native Americans in the Bridgeport Area
- John Rose Arrives in the Area
- Urias and Emanuel Nye Arrive at Bridgeport
- Capt. Wm. Thompson and Charles Cole Arrive at Bridgeport
- Early Mining on the South Yuba River and Deer Creek and Mining Techniques
- Anthony House Stage Stop
- The Bates' Visit to Bridgeport in 1851
- David Wood Arrives at Bridgeport
- The 1862 Covered Bridge History
- The 1997 South Yuba River Flood and Bridge Damage
- The Virginia Turnpike
- Charles Cole's Bridgeport House and Ranch
- The Henness Pass Road
- The Kneebones and the Bridgeport Swimming Resort
- The Thompson-Cole-Kneebone Cemetery
- Post-Kneebone Farming, Sequoyah Challenge and State Park Eras
- The Independence Trail
- Upstream River Crossings
- Historic Treks and Ditches
- Interpretive Guide for Docents
- Published Articles
- Park Chronological History (J. Tamagni)
- Rice's Crossing (South Branch Turnpike)
- World's First Long-distance Phone Line

Steve Pauly, History Coordinator

