



UTILITAS • FIRMITAS • VENUSTAS

Northern California Chapter
Society of Architectural Historians

The Newsletter

Volume 12, Number 2
August 2009

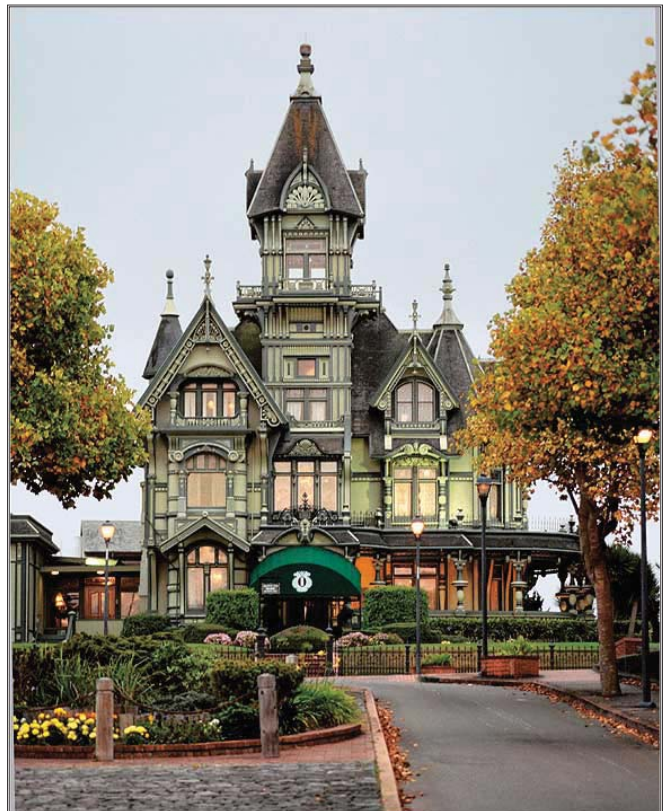
THE CITY OF EUREKA & HUMBOLDT COUNTY OCTOBER 3-4, 2009

Join the NCCSAH for a tour of the rich historic and architectural resources of Humboldt County and the City of Eureka on the weekend of October 3 and 4, 2009. The tour will particularly focus on the logging industry and the redwood economy of the region.

The Saturday, October 3 tour will include lunch at the historic Benbow Inn followed by a tour of the Founder's Grove in Humboldt Redwood State Park and the historic company town of Scotia. The Sunday October 4 tour begins with a ferry boat cruise of Humboldt Bay on the 1910 Madaket, followed by a tour of Eureka Old Town, lunch and tour of the Carson Mansion, one of the most famous Victorian houses in America. The tour includes attending the Eureka Heritage Society annual house tour during the afternoon.

For those who want to stay later on Sunday, we will tour the Blue Ox Mill and Historic Park (www.blueoxmill.com) on Sunday afternoon after the house tour.

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*Carson Mansion, Eureka, California
(Photo Courtesy of Ingomar Club)*

UPCOMING EVENTS & NEWS

National Preservation Institute

Section 106: An Introduction
San Francisco, CA
www.npi.org
September 21-23, 2009

National Preservation Institute

NAGPRA and ARPA: Applications and Requirements
San Francisco, CA
www.npi.org
September 24-25, 2009

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Annual Conference 2009
Nashville, 2009
www.preservationnation.org
October 13 - October 17, 2009

APTI (Assc. of Preservation Technology) Annual Conference 2009

Los Angeles
www.apti.org
November 2-6, 2009

National Preservation Institute

Conflict Resolution and Negotiation
Tools for Cultural and Natural Resource Projects
San Francisco, CA
www.npi.org
December 8-10, 2009

THE CITY OF EUREKA & HUMBOLDT COUNTY, *continued*

The Discovery of Humboldt Bay

Since its earliest history, Humboldt County has been isolated from the main population centers in California. The County was north of the area settled during the Spanish and Mexican Periods of California. The northernmost mission was in Sonoma. Mexican land grants on the California north coast reached as far north as the Ukiah Valley in Mendocino County.

Various expeditions of the English, Russians and Spanish explored the California coast beginning with Cabrillo in 1543 but none ever entered Humboldt Bay. A group of fur-seal hunters with the Russian American Company may have entered the bay in 1806, but never established a settlement.

The discovery of gold brought 200,000 men to California in 1848-49. The first gold discovery was on the American River in January, 1848 attracting the first prospectors to the Sierra Foothills from Coloma to Mariposa. Gold was subsequently discovered on the Trinity River in July, 1848 and by 1849 prospectors



Historic View of Scotia, California

en masse moved to this area also. Supplying the Trinity River miners by overland routes from Sacramento involved a long and arduous journey up the Central Valley. In November, 1849, Josiah Gregg and Lewis Wood led a party of early American explorers who attempted to find a river transportation route to the Trinity River (which they thought flowed into the Pacific Ocean at Trinidad Bay). In their expedition they instead discovered Humboldt Bay traveling west from what is today Trinity County. The Gregg-Wood expedition explored the Arcata area at the north end of Humboldt Bay with the help of Native Americans in December, 1849.

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THE CITY OF EUREKA & HUMBOLDT COUNTY, OCT 3RD & 4TH, 2009



Registration for Oct 3rd & 4th:
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Name: _____

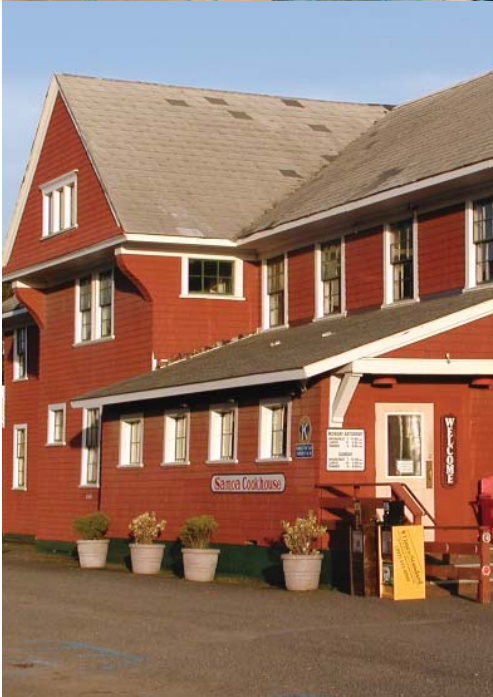
Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email address: _____

Total Enclosed: _____



Registration \$100 members/ \$120 nonmembers
Please make checks payable to:

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(NCCSAH)

and mail to:

Richard Sucre
Page and Turnbull
NCCSAH Tours
724 Pine Street
San Francisco, CA 94108

Payment must be received by September 25, 2009

No refunds after September 25, 2009. For more information please
contact Ward Hill at whill@pacbell.net.

TOUR ITINERARY

Saturday, October 3, 2009

12:45 – 2:00 PM Lunch at the Benbow Inn (benbowinn.com), followed by a tour of the building. The drive from San Francisco to the Benbow Inn is approximately 4 hours. The Benbow Inn is near to Highway 101 at the Benbow Exit.

2:30 – 3:30 PM Nature walk of the Founder’s Grove with a Humboldt Redwoods State Park park ranger (humboldtredwoods.org).

3:45- 5:30 Tour of the Town of Scotia (townofscotia.com) and the Scotia Museum with Frank Bacik, Vice-President of the Town of Scotia Company.

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Top: Winema Theater, Scotia; Middle: Samoa Cookhouse, Samoa; Bottom: Carved Bears Welcome You To Humboldt County

THE CITY OF EUREKA & HUMBOLDT COUNTY, OCT 3RD & 4TH, 2009



TOUR ITINERARY, *continued*

If you would like to join a group for Saturday night dinner at the 1890 Samoa Cookhouse, contact Ward Hill at whill@pacbell.net. The cookhouse acted a community center for the loggers and millworkers in the Humboldt Bay area (www.samoacookhouse.net for more on cookhouse history). The Samoa Cookhouse is the only surviving example in the area. Expect hardy food!

Sunday October 4, 2009

9:30 – 10:30 AM Tour of Humboldt Bay on the Madaket, a 1910 ferry boat which is the last survivor of the seven original ferries that transported mill workers and families around Humboldt Bay (humboldtby-maritimemuseum.com/madaketcruises.html).

10:30 AM -12:00 PM Local Historian Ray Hillman will lead a tour of Old Town Eureka. Old Town Eureka is a 350 acre National Register Historic District with 154 buildings largely dating from the 1870s-1880s.

12:00 – 1:30 PM The Old Town Eureka tour will end at the mansion of lumber baron William Carson (ingomar.org) where we will have lunch in the family dining room. After lunch we will tour the mansion.

1:30 – 3:30 PM The annual Eureka Heritage Society house tour (1-4 PM). Six or seven private Eureka homes will be included in the house tour.

Optional Tour

For those who want to stay in Eureka later, Vivianna and Eric Holtenbeck has generously offered to give us a tour of the Blue Ox Millworks on Sunday afternoon after the house tour. The tour would last about 90 minutes. The Blue Ox Millworks specializes in using 19th century craftsmanship techniques to produce authentic interior and exterior finishes, primarily for Victorians. They have facilities for fabricating iron work and decorative cast plaster. They have a unique collection of original 19th century mill working machines. The Millworks restored many of the exterior moldings and ornamental details on the Carson Mansion and other significant 19th century buildings in Eureka. More info at www.blueoxmill.com.

Contact Ward Hill at whill@pacbell.net if you are interested in the Blue Ox Mill tour.

The drive from Eureka to San Francisco is approximately 5 hours.



Top: Winema Theater, Scotia; Middle: Samoa Cookhouse, Samoa; Bottom: Carved Bears Welcome You To Humboldt County



Historic View of Pacific Lumber Company Mill, Scotia, California

THE CITY OF EUREKA & HUMBOLDT COUNTY, *continued*

In Spring, 1850, the schooner *Laura Virginia* led by Elias Howard and Captain Douglass Ottinger of the United States Revenue-Marine sailed to the Humboldt coast to discover the entrance to Humboldt Bay based on accounts from the Gregg-Wood expedition. San Francisco investors financed the venture with the ultimate goal of establishing a depot to distribute goods to the miners in Trinity County. They thought they were going to discover the mouth of the Trinity River in the vicinity of Humboldt Bay. Unbeknownst to them, the Trinity River joins with the Klamath River in the mountains of Trinity County. The crew nevertheless traveled north and discovered the opening channel to Humboldt Bay. The ship entered Humboldt Bay in April 1850. They searched for sites for a settlement and named the bay for the German naturalist, Baron von Humboldt. Ottinger made an official report noting the potential importance of the area as a future shipping port. Various other explorers, including Sam Brannan, followed Ottinger and made claims for sites on the shores of Humboldt Bay. The Brannan party founded the town of Eureka in May 1850.

Historic Background: the Towns of Eureka and Arcata

The towns of Eureka and Union (later Arcata) were laid out in 1850 along the southeast and north sides of Humboldt Bay. By the end of 1850, the town of Eureka had a population of 23 in ten houses and tents. In 1853, Humboldt County was divided off from the western part of Trinity County (which originally included what is today Trinity, Humboldt, Klamath and Del Norte Counties). Union, at first the dominant town and the County seat, served as a supply point for gold prospectors on the Klamath and Trinity Rivers. Mining soon diminished and the lumber industry gained prominence. In 1856, the Humboldt County seat moved to Eureka. The Eureka port developed into one of the America's major lumber ports given its proximity to the substantial redwood and fir forests of the north coast. The first successful sawmill – the Ryan and Duff Mill - in Eureka began operation in 1852. The mill machinery was shipped on a steamer from San Francisco. By 1854, Eureka had seven operating sawmills.

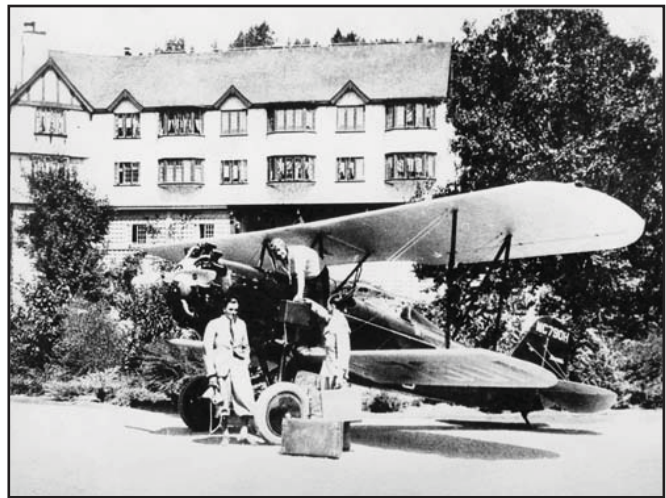
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Strategically located, Humboldt Bay continues to be the only shipping point for large vessels between San Francisco and Coos Bay, Oregon. Despite the problems navigating the narrow Humboldt Bay channel, vessels loaded with lumber made regular runs to San Francisco, Southern California and the South Pacific. Eureka had over 600 structures by the 1870s. After a depression in wood products in the mid-1870s, a building boom in 1880s in San Francisco and Southern California created increased demand for redwood products and one of the most prosperous periods for the lumber industry. Despite its isolation, Eureka became the major commercial center north of San Francisco in Northern California. Eureka's population grew to 2,600 in 1880 and to well over 7,000 by the turn of the century.

Eureka and Arcata were dependent almost exclusively on the sea for the transport of people and supplies until the completion of the railroad in October, 1914 (a number of small railroads had existed earlier around Humboldt Bay). The only other transportation out of Eureka was an overland stage, suitable for travel only during the summer months. The rail line to Eureka took twice as long to build and cost three times as much as originally estimated because of the treacherous terrain in southern Humboldt County. The Panama Canal opened the same year the railroad was completed. Shipbuilding flourished in the Eureka



Historic View of Pacific Lumber Company loggers



Historic View of Benbow Inn, circa 1930s

harbor. Some thought the Eureka harbor would soon rival San Francisco and Seattle. After the railroad finally reached Eureka, its population doubled to 15,000.

Roads south to the Bay Area were not improved until the construction of the Redwood Highway (i.e. Route 101, completed between 1924 and 1926). This event marked a significant shift in Humboldt County from ocean and rail transportation to travel by automobile and truck. The improved highway access created new opportunities for tourism. The elegant Benbow Inn (designed by San Francisco architect Albert Farr) opened in 1926, attracting the early Hollywood elite. Eureka enjoyed its new rail connection for less than fifteen years before the combined forces of the 1929 stock market crash, the Great Depression and the shift to vehicular traffic lead to the elimination of rail service by the 1930s.

In the post World War II years, the Humboldt County lumber industry, which now had to meet the huge nationwide demand for housing, came roaring back from years of stagnation. The population of Eureka reached 22,000 in the fifties. The population of Eureka today is about 27,000 and the combined population with Arcata is about 35 % of the total for the entire County. In recent years the lumber industry has declined. The Humboldt Bay economy is now largely based on services, education and tourism. *Cont'd, Page 7*

William Carson & The Carson Mansion

William Carson came to California in 1850 to make his fortune during the Gold Rush in Trinity County. After this endeavor proved unsuccessful, Carson moved to Humboldt County to operate a saw mill. Over the next decades, Carson became the Humboldt County's most notable lumber baron amassing a huge fortune based on redwood. Carson's business partner John Dolbeer revolutionized the logging business by replacing manpower with machine power with the 'Steam Logging Donkey.' The Dolbeer and Carson Lumber Company bought up extensive tracts of timberland and they invested in early local rail lines and shipping vessels. They also invested in companies producing finished wood products in addition to owning the Humboldt Bay Woolen Mills and Humboldt Shoe Factory. Carson was also the founder of three Humboldt County banks.

The Carson Mansion, constructed in 1884-1885, is a three story, eighteen room structure with a prominent central tower. The Newsom Brothers of San Francisco, well-known architects throughout California, designed the mansion, considered an eclectic combination of most every style of the day (Second Empire-Queen Anne-Stick Eastlake). The Newsom Brother heartily embraced the concept of the 'picturesque', the quality that pervades the intricately detailed exterior and interior of the Carson Mansion. In addition to the abundant use of redwood, the interior finishes include a rich array of exotic woods from Central America, Philippines, Mexico and East India. The Ingomar Club purchased the mansion from the Carson family descendents in 1950.

In his pioneering book, *California's Architectural Frontier*, Harold Kirker described the Carson Mansion as "what may be the finest example of Victorian architecture in the United States....a tribute to the exuberance and self-confidence of the Victorians." Kirker further notes however that "if the Carson Mansion embodies the worst features of the Victorians, such as its sham substantiality and artistic confusion, it remains

both wondrous and exotic – a monument to a restless and troubled age that refused to countenance a plain surface, a continuous line or a uniform material."



Carson Mansion, Interior of upstairs stair hall

The Company Town of Scotia

Founded by the Pacific Lumber Company in the 1880s, the town of Scotia is considered one of the oldest company towns in the United States in continuous operation. A company town, once common throughout the country, is entirely owned and operated by the company. The first employee bunkhouse was built in Scotia in 1884 and Mill A, employing 150 men, was completed in 1887. A 100 individual houses had been built by this year.

Scotia's growth occurred primarily because of the early 1900s industrialization and building booms of the West, the availability of regional timber resources and the accessibility of the town to Pacific shipping ports along the coast. The emerging lumber milling industry's adaptability and susceptibility to changing markets, trends and regulatory policies also influenced both the town's physical environment and social organization. In 1903, the Mowatoc Hotel with 135 rooms opened in Scotia. Mill B, the world's largest redwood sawmill, began operating in 1910.

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Both the landmark Winema Theater and the Bank of Scotia (now the Scotia Museum), built in 1920, exhibit a rustic imagery of redwood combined with classical forms.

From its beginnings as a “family run” operation, Scotia has expanded and changed as each owner increased and diversified its holdings by expanding the mill operations, building additional residences, shops, services and purchasing large adjacent parcels of forest lands necessary for harvesting. Scotia’s history of single company ownership, where workers were provided basic needs by the owner, influenced the town’s social patterns, values and attitudes. Schools, churches, and other activities were instituted to maintain the town’s cohesiveness, identity and loyalty to the company.

Today, fostered by Scotia’s management and stewardship, a unified collection of distinctive architectural styles, functional methods of construction, and technical innovations, have survived in the town. Building types, reflecting the lumber mill’s functions, operations, production, practices and support, are traditional, utilitarian structures. Scotia has been the focus of nationally publicized environmental protests targeting the company’s owner, Pacific Lumber Company during the declining years of the lumbering industry in the late 20th century. Today, with new ownership, changes in lumber practices, and a new demand for sustainable products, Scotia’s lumber based industry continues to operate and maintain its distinctive history, character and small town atmosphere.

Humboldt Redwoods State Park

The earliest homesteaders in the area that is today Humboldt Redwoods State Park was during the 1870s. The Northwestern Pacific Railroad came to this area in 1914 and the original Redwood Highway was constructed in 1922. The new transportation infrastructure opened the larger area to both new logging and tourism. In 1917, the organizers of what would become the



Bank of Scotia, Scotia, California

Save-the-Redwoods League came to the area and recognized that the magnificent redwood forests of southern Humboldt County would be lost unless something was done to save them. They formed the League in 1918 and purchased the first redwood forest in 1921 in what was to become the state park. Since then over 100 memorial groves have been established in what today is Humboldt Redwoods State Park.

In 1927, the California legislature established the state park system, providing \$ 6 million in bond funds to purchase park lands. Humboldt Redwoods State Park was one of the earliest parks in the new park system. The League received its largest donation in 1930, \$ 2 million from John D. Rockefeller to purchase the 10,000 acre Bull Creek redwood grove from Pacific Lumber. Now known as the Rockefeller Forest, it is recognized as the largest contiguous ancient redwood forest in the world.

Established in 1931, the Founder’s Grove in the Humboldt Redwoods State Park is dedicated to the founders of the Save-the-Redwoods League, all nationally renowned naturalists: John Merriam, a professor of paleontology and President of the Carnegie Institution, Henry Osborn, President of the American Museum of Natural History, and Dr. Madison Grant, founder of the New York Zoological Society.

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The Founders Tree in the Grove is 346 feet tall, over 40 feet in circumference and 1,500 years old. The grove also includes the 2,000 year old 'Dyerville Giant' (362 feet tall and 52 feet in circumference) which fell in March, 1991. The sound of this gigantic tree crashing to the earth was heard miles away and it even created measurable seismic tremors. Many consider the tree is even more impressive on the ground than when it was standing!



Benbow Inn Dining Room

Additional Images of Tour Sites



Old Town Eureka



Benbow Inn



Commercial Buildings in Old Town Eureka



Front Porch at Benbow Inn

Please send your ideas or comments concerning The Newsletter to:
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NCCSAH Newsletter Editor
Architectural Resources Group
Pier 9, The Embarcadero
San Francisco, CA 94111
phone: 415-421-1680
email: jody@argsf.com

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Page and Turnbull

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The mission of the NCCSAH is to further the objectives of the Society of Architectural Historians of which the Northern California Chapter is an official affiliate; promote the study and discussion of our region's architectural history and its related fields; visit significant works of architecture; and increase public awareness and appreciation of our architectural heritage. Membership is open to anyone interested in architectural history and its related fields who agrees to pay the annual dues and subscribe to the by-laws of the organization.