

THE

ARGONAUT

SACRAMENTO LIVING HISTORY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2024

The weather phenomenon pictured above is called a sun dog. This only happens when sunlight is refracted off of ice crystals ([diamond dust](#)) in the atmosphere. Sun dogs typically appear as a pair of subtly colored patches of light, around 22° to the left and right of the Sun. Sun dogs are caused by the [refraction](#) of light from horizontally oriented plate-shaped [hexagonal ice crystals](#), which act as [prisms](#).

Picture courtesy of Michelle in South Dakota

Hi Living History!

Happy 2024! I am eagerly diving into the New Year which is already almost a month in!

I hope to see many of you next month at our first event of the year, "Meet the Presidents and First Ladies" after our Second Saturday meeting on Saturday, February 10. Looking ahead, there are other fun events on the horizon, but still plenty of room for your ideas to chair something new and exciting for Living History. Have an idea for an event, but not sure where to start? Reach out to myself or the Leadership Team. We are here to make it easy and collaborative, you never have to do it alone.

Speaking of the Leadership Team, the annual Leadership Team Elections will be happening in March. We have at least 4 open positions for the coming year. As a reminder, to join the Leadership Team it is a minimum one-year commitment, with the option to extend to a two-year term, and you only have to have been an active Living History Member for one full year. The Leadership Team works with Museum staff to help make the goals and dreams of the entire Living History volunteer membership happen. If you are interested in learning more, or throwing your hat in the ring, let me know!

I am looking forward to seeing what traditions we will continue and what new activities we will undertake in 2024. I have a feeling it is going to be a very exciting year!

Best, Aly



UPCOMING EVENTS...

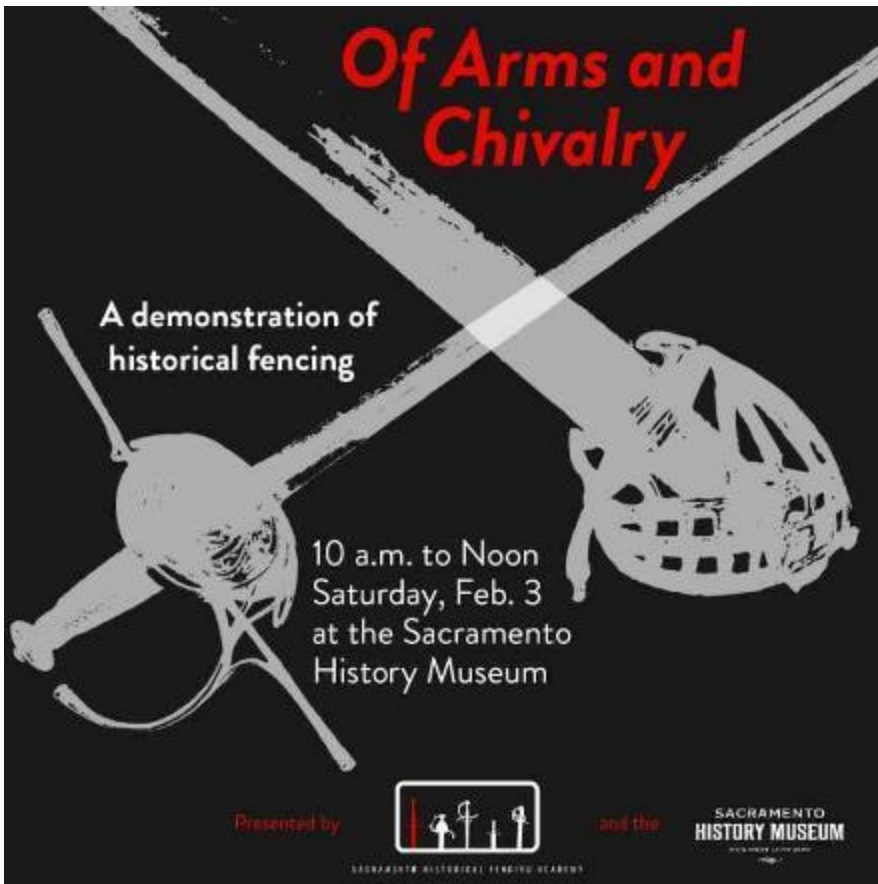
PRESIDENTS & *First Ladies*

February 10th, 2024

12pm-3pm

- **Patriotic music**
- **Mingle with a Tea & Cookie reception**
- **Speeches 1-2 minutes (Half a page)**
- **Promenade and meet your constituents**



- **If you are not portraying anyone, wear something patriotic**
- **Meeting from 10-11am, Lunch from 11-12pm**



Of Arms and Chivalry

A demonstration of historical fencing

10 a.m. to Noon
Saturday, Feb. 3
at the Sacramento
History Museum

Presented by  and the 

SACRAMENTO HISTORICAL FENCING ACADEMY

SACRAMENTO HISTORY MUSEUM
1850 WASHINGTON ST. SACRAMENTO, CA 95814



PARADE

MARCH 16TH

THIS IS NOT THE

MEETING DAY

FROM MISS WITHERSPOON'S KITCHEN

Dearest Reader,

Winter time in Sacramento City; wet, gray, and cold. It simply makes one long for those rich, warm, and comforting foods that sustain us through this dank season. So, where better to be than in the kitchen, the warmest room in the house? Let me then share with you a few receipts that not only would be thought of as “comfort” foods, but are also truly traditionally American dishes.

Let us gather round the fire, well stoked, keeping in mind Miss Catherine Beecher's advice, “The best wood for fires is the hickory, hard maple, white ash, black birch, yellow birch, beech, yellow oak, and locust. The best are paced first. The following are inferior in quality. Elm, soft maple, white birch, pepperidge, and pine. The following are not fit to

burn, either because they snap, or will not burn. Chestnut, butternut, cedar, Sassafras, red oak, and buckeye. Any person can learn to distinguish each kind by a little attention and instruction.” (*Miss Beecher's Domestic Receipt Book, 1850*)

Well, to that I say, “Needs must,” use what you have available, but do keep warm!

With warmest regards and most sincerely,

Miss Acadia Witherspoon

Macaroni and Cheese

Godey's Lady's Book 1861

It's a common adoration, and not a recent one either. The earliest written receipt for it dates back to 1769. Godey's receipt is not quite so old, but it is only one sentence. It read:

Boil the macaroni in milk; put in the stewpan butter, cheese, and seasoning; when melted, pour into the macaroni, putting breadcrumbs over, which brown before the fire altogether.

Not a lot to go on, but I will expand a bit for you below. In this method the noodles are cooked in milk which releases the starch and erases the need to thicken the sauce. In the 1860s “pipe macaroni” would be used, but any tube shaped pasta would work; ziti, rigatoni, penne. Today we use cheddar, but then an aged cheese like Parmesan would be used. As for seasoning, mace would have been readily available.

2 1/2 cups ziti or pasta	1/4 teaspoon black pepper
4 cups whole milk	1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg (or mace)
3 tablespoons butter	1/4 cup bread crumbs
1 cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated	



Heat the milk in a large saucepan over medium heat, then stir in the dried pasta. Let come to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer. Cook until pasta is al dente, 10-12 minutes. Most of the milk should be absorbed. Add the butter to the pan, and stir until melted. Add grated cheese, pepper, and nutmeg and continue stirring. When the cheese has melted, pour mixture into a small baking dish and top with bread crumbs. Bake in preheated oven 400 °F until lightly brown, about 20 minutes.

Pork and Apple Fritters

Godey's Lady's Book 1867



Prepare a light batter, freshen* or use cold boiled or baked pork. Cut it fine enough for hash, and fry it a little to extract some of the fat for frying the fritters. Peel sour apples, and cut or chop them quite as fine as the pork; mix first the pork and then the apples in the batter, and fry them brown. Potatoes, parsnips, salsify, or any vegetable desired can be used in the same manner.

*“Freshen” refers to salt pork placed in cold water and simmered. Repeat as necessary

Sally Lunn

This dates from the 18th century. The story goes that Sally Lunn was a baker who sold her wares in the streets of Bath in England. Her cakes were so popular that a musician named Dalmer made up a song about her and her famous “bun.” Another version is that she was from France and her real name was Solange Luyon. Though most likely if she wasn’t a real person then the name may have evolved from the *soliel lune*, a type of French sweet bread where the golden top is referred to as the sun and the pale interior is like the moon. Either way the receipt has been here since the first colonists and was reportedly a favorite of George Washington.

The Williamsburg Art of Cookery, (c 1770) from Governor Spotwood's granddaughter

Beat four eggs well: then melt a large Tablespoon of Butter, put it in a Teacup of warm Water, and put it into the Eggs with a Teaspoon of salt and a Teacup of Yeast (this means Potato Yeast); beat in a quart of flour making the batter stiff enough for a spoon to stand in. Put it to rise before the fire the night before. Beat it over in the morning, grease your cake mould and put it in time enough to rise before baking. Should you want it for supper, make it up at 10:00 o'clock in the morning in the winter and 12:00 o'clock in the summer.

Godey's Lady's Book (1862)

A pint of the best, new milk, lukewarm, add to it one quarter of a pound of butter, a little salt, a teacupful of yeast*, one and a half pound of fine flour; mix them together, and let stand three quarters of an hour. Bake them in tins nearly (350 °F) an hour.

*This amount would be for homemade yeast. Use 2 tablespoons active dry yeast and let stand for one hour.

Hot Chocolate

Early American Cookery; 1841 Sarah Josepha Hale

To each square of chocolate, scraped off fine, and put into the pot, allow a pint (less if you like it strong) of water. Stir while boiling; and let it be uncovered. Let it boil about fifteen minutes, or half an hour, then pour in your cream or rich milk, and let it boil up. Nutmeg grated over a cup of chocolate improves the flavor.

Chocolate dates back to at least the winter of 1667-68. Along with coffee and tea, chocolate was a common drink in colonial America, more commonplace than in Europe. However the drinking chocolate colonists enjoyed doesn't resemble modern cocoa: it was thicker and had a much stronger chocolate flavor because it was made from scraped or melted chocolate rather than cocoa powder. Drinking chocolate at this time did not have sugar. The first eating chocolate was developed in the mid 1800s, but was not well received due to its coarse and gritty texture. In the 1870s the Swiss developed the first appealing eating chocolate by adding milk, and the rest is history.





In the Gold Rush, when mining didn't pan out, men often turned to a career of crime.

The short life of **RATTLESNAKE DICK**

By **ROBBIN RIGGINS**

Rattlesnake Dick was born Richard Barter in Quebec, Canada. A contemporary report describes him as a young man who was "nearly six feet in height, and weighed about 160 pounds, slight of build, but very muscular." His father, a British army officer, along with his mother died about 1850, so he, his brother, sister and her

husband, and a cousin moved to the U.S. They took a wagon train to Oregon and built a home in Sweet Home, Oregon, near Corvallis. While there, they kept hearing about the gold strikes in California, so Dick, his cousin, and his brother headed south.

The best ore was being found at Rattlesnake Bar on the American River, from which he gained his nickname. But all claims had been staked already so they had to go to work for others for a while. A year later, the brother and cousin were ready to go home, but not Dick. He was confident there would be a new find. But nobody ever found anything significant.

Rattlesnake Dick's criminal career began in 1853 when he was arrested for stealing some clothes from a store. The following year he was convicted of grand larceny and sentenced to a year at San Quentin.



It was during his imprisonment that Dick met Tom Bell. Dick joined Bell's outlaw gang and participated in a string of horse thefts, robberies, and killings in California's mining country. Following Bell's death in 1856, Rattlesnake Dick took control of the gang. Under Dick's guidance, the group conducted several daring thefts, including the February 1857 burglary of a Wells Fargo safe in Fiddletown and the robberies of three stagecoaches for a heist of more than \$30,000. Huge rewards were issued for the arrest of the bandits, but the gang continued to evade law enforcement.

Several times Rattlesnake Dick was captured and brought to justice, but he repeatedly managed to escape custody. In 1858, he was caught trying to break out of Auburn prison while there awaiting trial. Reluctant to return to San Quentin, Dick repeatedly filed for a continuance, delaying his court date. Before the trial could take place, Dick successfully escaped! Once free, the outlaw sought to avenge his capture. He camped all night outside the house of lawman John Craig Boggs. The constable was absent and did not return until the following morning, at which time he found a threatening note from Rattlesnake Dick pinned to his front door. Time was short for the young bandit, however on July 11, 1859, a posse caught up with Dick and a companion on a stage road near Auburn. The outlaws shot their way out of the ambush, killing one posse member, but not before Dick had taken two bullets. Rather than be imprisoned once more, he finished the job with a self-inflicted shot to the head.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All events need a Chairperson

January 2024 **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

13th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am Take it to the streets

20th- New member training 9am-3pm

February 2024

3rd-Of arms and Chivalry 10am-12pm at Museum

10th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am

10th-Presidents & First Ladies 12pm-3pm

March 2024 **Easter is Sunday, March 31st**

9th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am Take it to the streets

16th-Patrick's Day Parade

April 2024

13th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am

28th-Spring Festival **Sunday**

May 2024 **HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!**

11th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am

11th-Powder, Poker & Petticoats, 12pm-4pm

June 2024 **HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!**

8th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am

July 2024

4th of July

13th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am

August 2024

10th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am

10th-LH Showcase

September 2024

9th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am

9th-California Statehood Extravaganza

October 2024

12th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am

Ghost Tours

November 2024

9th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am

Holiday Potluck Decorating Party

December 2024

14th-Living History Meeting 10am-11am

Holiday Cheer



CONTACTS

Meeting Location—Hastings Annex

1002 Second Street,
Old Sacramento, CA 95814

Hybrid Zoom & In-Person Meeting every

2nd Saturday

10am-11am

Mailing address

Sacramento History Museum
Attn: Living History 101 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Living History Experience Manager

Alexandra Kowalski

akowalski@sachistorymuseum.org

(916)808-1946 –direct

(916)808-7059 –museum front desk

Submit articles & ideas to Aly
Deadline for submissions is the 10th of
the month.

Content compiled by Robbin Riggins



**SACRAMENTO
HISTORY ALLIANCE**
Connecting People Through History