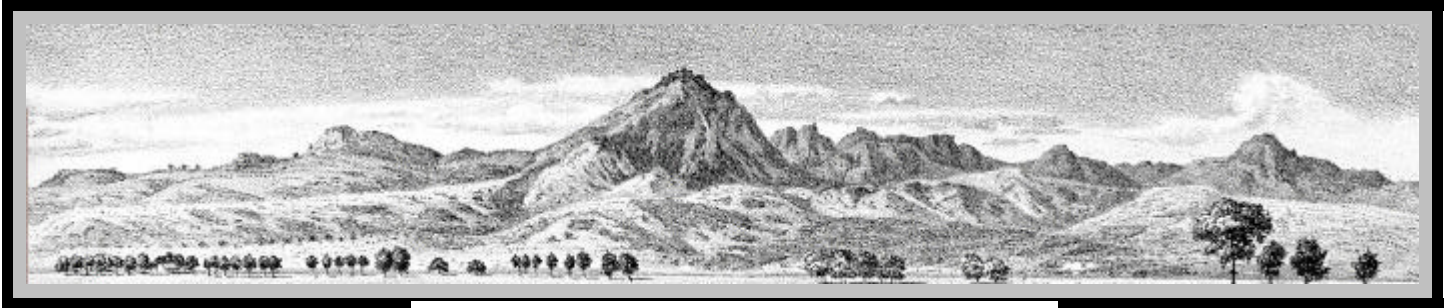


# the Middle Mountain Foundation



from Thompson & West *History of Sutter County 1879*

Fall 2001

## Invocation

From Pennington Road, four miles west of Live Oak, you can view the above perspective of the Sutter Buttes. Except for one home in the foreground, the mountains have remained unchanged since this picture was published 122 years ago.

That most of the Sutter Buttes landscape has remained in its natural state is due primarily to less than a dozen families. Historical county maps and documents from the 19th century reveal names such as Tarke, McPherrin, Powell, Coats, Spilman, and Dean (now Schnabel) whose fourth and fifth generation descendants still own ranches in the Buttes. This past century, additional families such as Fenn, Justeson (now Ford), Brady (now Schmidl), Lemenager, and Steidlmayer, have continued this tradition. Their ranches seasonal livestock grazing impacts minimally the natural and historical essence of the Buttes, preserving a truly unique heritage. We owe them all a debt of gratitude.

The Middle Mountain Foundation is not the first to select a likeness of the Buttes to convey a visual impression. Many historical publications have depicted their noble outline behind representations of this locale, which immediately distinguishes it by this unusual feature. Today the symbol of the Buttes is prevalent in numerous area business and government signs and logos. It appears frequently in local news photographs, art, and photo exhibits.

Why have so many chosen to emblazon its likeness on their signage and to associate it with their work and identity? What is the subtle message these recurring images convey? Is it a reminder of the beautiful wilderness that was once all around us? Does it evoke a nurturing and secure sense of home to us? Or does it convey a powerfully reassuring sense of permanence as we cope with an ever-changing modern lifestyle?

However you perceive it, the Buttes impinge upon our subconscious, uniquely coloring our sense of who we are and where we live. Perhaps this silhouette conveys a message that we regard the Buttes as a special place, and most of us, both landowners who shoulder the responsibility of their maintenance, and those of us who visit them would like to keep them as they are.

If we wish to preserve the Sutter Buttes' natural beauty, and not see them turned into just another hillside community, then we must come up with creative solutions that will preserve landowner property rights and values, while providing viable economic incentives to keep the Buttes landscape natural and picturesque. The goal of the Middle Mountain Foundation is to work in cooperation with landowners. By working together, we believe that

we can implement the programs, policies, and practices to preserve a unique historical legacy that will benefit landowners and the community as well.



Old Craggy from atop Old Man  
Photo by Sharon Bailey-Bok

## Mission of the Middle Mountain Foundation

*The mission of the Middle Mountain Foundation is to ensure the Preservation of the Sutter Buttes, a unique, rare and limited treasure, for future generations.*

### Beliefs

- The Sutter Buttes are a unique, rare and limited treasure worth preserving.
- Education of the public is important to fully appreciate the Sutter Buttes.
- Preserving the Sutter Buttes in cooperation with landowners is important.
- An experience in the Sutter Buttes fosters a fuller and deeper appreciation of their complexity.
- Landowners are the most appropriate stewards of the Sutter Buttes.
- The Middle Mountain Foundation can make a difference.

### Objective

The primary objective of the Middle Mountain Foundation is to work in cooperation with landowners for the preservation of the Sutter Buttes.

### Special Thank You's

2001 Fall Newsletter Thank You's to:

**Joan Robertson** for mailing donation thank you's.

**Karen Morrison** for initiating our first aid training program.

**Terri Eason** for writing a persuasive grant application.

**Joanne Jenkins** for organizing and compiling our archival scrapbook.

**Marsha Henderson** for assembling our first information booth.

**Mary Spilman Crane** for hosting our seasonal guides meeting.

**Rick Powell** for sharing family history and Buttes aerial photography.

**Pete Sands** for taking on the cumbersome task of maintaining and printing our mailing labels.

**Rich King** for newsletter layout on the computer.

**Sir Speedy Printing** for their outstanding assistance and generosity in printing our newsletters.

**Al and Bonnie Thoma** for labeling and organizing 1,000's of newsletters.

**Ludel Bouchard** for bulk mail bundling.

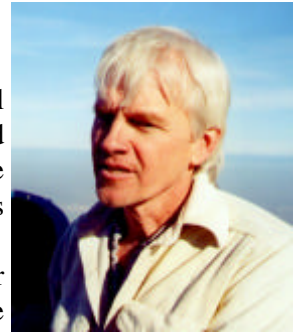
**Roberta King** for professionally and patiently fielding 100's of calls and questions.

**Our volunteer guides** for attending to hikers needs.

**Our advisors** for their time and counsel.

**And especially to all of you who made donations in the past year!**

## President's Notes



There is no lull between our spring and fall hike seasons. The discussions, meetings, and planning sessions that create a proactive approach to preserving a landscape keep us busy year around.

As we make our annual fall appeal for donations, this seems a particularly appropriate time to summarize our activities and appeal for volunteer assistance as well.

We now print our annual budget in our spring newsletter to demonstrate that the Foundation is responsibly managed. We are developing a multi-layered fund raising program that reaches individuals, corporate, nonprofit, and governmental funding resources. We have augmented our guide's experience with training meetings, and we are assembling an archival collection of published Buttes history. We have initiated synergistic networking with other conservation nonprofits. We are formulating a proactive program of specific steps to preserve parcels within the Buttes, and developing a carefully thought-out approach that will benefit landowners. And of course we provide an interpretive program of limited access to enhance public awareness of the Buttes' unique historical and natural features. And there is still much more that we intend to do.

Most of this is accomplished by volunteers – all of it is accomplished on a part time basis! **We need more help.** Come on a hike with us. We hope to connect with some of you so that you'll want to help. Work, wealth, wisdom, and connections. Please contribute what you can. Call me at 530-695-2440.

Mike Hubbartt

## Contacting Us

The Middle Mountain Foundation is a group of dedicated individuals who work on a part time basis - most of us volunteering our time.

Communication with us usually means leaving a message and waiting for us to get back to you. (Reservations for hikes are usually answered immediately at the 530 671-6116 number.)

You can reach the Middle Mountain Foundation at our web site ([www.middlemountain.org](http://www.middlemountain.org)), by email ([middlemountain@yahoo.com](mailto:middlemountain@yahoo.com)), or our telephone answering service (530) 634-6387, or P. O. Box 483, Live Oak, CA 95953-0483.

Please furnish your full name, address, zip code, telephone number and email address with your inquiries and requests. Provide us with a concise description of your needs and a reasonable time frame for response and we shall endeavor to accommodate you.

Email and phone messages are usually picked up every other day. Mail is picked up weekly. Our goal is to someday maintain an office and staff to greet and inform the public and to promote our programs. In the meantime, we appreciate your patience, and especially your interest in the Sutter Buttes.

# Middle Mountain Fall 2001 Hiking Schedule

## Interpretive Program

The Middle Mountain Foundation interpretive program provides access to the privately owned Sutter Buttes hillsides and peaks. Tour guides share its unique origins and history and examine with you a natural ecology that has become increasingly rare in our time.

All hikes fill up fast...only 15 participants are allowed on each hike. Hikes are provided on a reservations only basis. Call Roberta for reservations soon...(530) 671-6116.

<b>October</b>	Sunday 28th	Summit Ascent In a Sacred Manner Gentle Stroll
	Wednesday 31st	Full Moon Stroll
<b>November</b>	Sunday 11th	Summit Ascent Ridge Top Trek Geology Trek
	Saturday 17th	Summit Ascent In a Sacred Manner Geology Trek
<b>December</b>	Sunday 2nd	Summit Ascent

A day in the Buttes begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends around 3:00 p.m. Trips are scheduled to proceed in all but the most severe weather conditions. Participants should be prepared to expect uneven footing, stepping over rocks and boulders, crossing streams, and hill climbing. Spring hikers are likely to encounter wet squishy grass ankle-deep, while fall trekkers will be contending with thistles and stickers. Poison oak is abundant, but you will be warned of its proximity. Rattlesnakes, though common in the warmer seasons, are usually reclusive and inactive during our hiking seasons.

Individuals and families may reserve a date for one of the open days by calling Roberta at (530) 671-6116. Cost is \$30.00 per person (Members: \$27.00). If a catered lunch or dinner is included, there is a small additional charge. Organizations may schedule a charter with Margit at (530) 846-5142 after 5:00 PM. The cost for charters is \$250.00 minimum or \$25.00 per person for groups of ten or more.



## Interpretive Hike Descriptions

**Summit ascent:** A climb up to the top of "The World's Smallest mountain Range" will test even the most experienced trekkers. Summit ascents are strenuous and physically challenging. Inclines are steep and narrow. We avoid those routes that might entail hand over hand climbing. Rather we set a pace that is conducive to periodic rests to catch our breath and share anecdotes about the peak's history and what we're encountering along the way. The elevation gain is 1,000 feet.

**Ridge Top Trek:** Pacing ourselves with frequent stops to collect the group, we examine the natural elements of the Buttes during our ridge top treks. We stop, look, listen, and learn. These are educational outings in which we develop an appreciation for nature's intricate web. A view from the ridge tops really puts into perspective the need to preserve wild places like the Sutter Buttes. The trek involves some steep uphill, but anyone who is in good health and exercises regularly can handle this outing.

**Gentle Stroll:** Our stroll takes us past a century old ranch house, cattle corrals and historic barns. Contented heifers with their new born calves graze as we move through shaded oak groves. After a short upward climb, lunch is enjoyed at beautiful Peace Valley Overlook. On a clear day one can see both Mr. Lassen and Mt. Shasta. Open meadows, birdsong and magnificent views of towering North Butte with scores of circling turkey vultures treat each stroller to a day to remember.

*Continued on page 6*

## Notes from the Hiking Coordinator's Desk

Please make your reservation after you are sure that the people involved can and want to go on the hike. Later changes are difficult. Guide lists are sent to your guide a week before your hike. If you need to cancel a reservation or change a participant please notify me at least a week before your hike, so I can make changes to the list before it is sent to the guide. MMF realizes this is not always possible. Half refunds will still be given if a cancellation is requested at least 24 hours prior to your hike.

Confirmation letters are sent after the fees have been received. Hikes are coordinated then a guide list is prepared and sent to the appropriate guide. Confirmation letters and guide lists are always titled and dated. Please make sure you note the hike you have reserved. It will be stated on top line of confirmation letter.

Changing your choice of hikes at the meeting site is not recommended.

Only one confirmation letter is sent to the person making the reservations. If there are more than one of you in your party, it is your responsibility to let each of the others know the name or title of the hike, what to wear, what to bring, where to go, what time, and any other important information noted in the confirmation letter. It is important that everyone has the information, please make sure they do. Call me if you lose your confirmation letter.

We sometimes do not have reliable early forecasts of weather conditions. You may also call me concerning the status of your hike. Please be available for messages if the weather looks threatening for your hike. Full refunds will be given if MMF cancels a hike because of weather.

## **“The rocks at your feet reveal the deep history around you”**

*From the up-thrust pinnacles and the mysterious concentric depression surrounding them, to the smallest pebble at your feet, you will explore and understand one and one half million years geologic history with volcanologist, Brian Hausback.*

Our brief hike description barely hints at the fascinating educational experience hikers are exposed to on our geology trek.

A memorable learning experience is directly related to the wonder of discovery and the demeanor of the teacher. Be assured that you will not soon forget your trek in the Sutter Buttes with Brian Hausback.

Tall, youthful, energetic, engaging, and informative, Brian conveys an extremely technical explanation in understandable laymen's terms with charts, and an up-close examination of those geologic features, which reveal each aspect of the Buttes' volcanic eruptions. He explores the uniqueness of the Buttes volcanic formation in relation to nearby thermal formations. He answers how geologists determine if a volcano is inactive, dormant, or extinct. And he addresses the local assertion that the Buttes are the "WORLD'S SMALLEST MOUNTAIN RANGE."

A geology professor at California State University, Sacramento, Brian has, in addition to his teaching schedule, been accessing the Buttes for 12 years, identifying, documenting, and mapping rock formations. His work builds on, refines, and revises the considerable research completed by Howell Williams in 1929, and then updated by Williams and Garniss Curtis in 1977.



Brian has published numerous studies and abstracts, many on Sutter Buttes volcanism, and recently completed a study of the Isla San Luis and La Reforma volcanoes in Baja California, Mexico, funded by the National Geographic Society. As director of the Volcanological Society of Sacramento, he offers bimonthly meetings to promote volcanic studies, publishes the annual Volcano Calendar ... see website: <http://www.asn.csus.edu/geol/Deptwebpage/faculty/Hausback.html>

Brian Hausback: teacher, researcher, writer, and outdoorsman. Walk with him. Your geology trek in the Buttes is a rare opportunity to see and comprehend how the rocks at



your feet reveal the formation and deep-history of the landscape around you.

Volcanologist Brian Hausback, with back to camera, explaining geological history in Bragg's Canyon

## 2001 Annual Donation Appeal

Hikers come from all over the North state to explore the mysterious Sutter Buttes, and we are pleased to offer a popular educational and recreational experience for a modest cost. At \$30 per person, we gross thousands of dollars at the end of the year! Surely that provides a substantial donation towards preserving the Buttes' natural and undeveloped character.

Yes and no.

Our 2001 budget (which we included in our spring newsletter) projected \$27,500 in revenues, but after expenses for guide fees, part-time coordinator salaries, landowner access fees, operations and administrative expenses, newsletter publication and mailing, we hope to net about 10% of our revenue over expenses, which is ensconced safely away into our growing land acquisition fund.

Do the math. Hiking fees from our Interpretive Program **WILL NOT PRESERVE THE SUTTER BUTTES**. We still need to appeal to those of you who have accessed the Buttes and have been touched by that experience.

If you derive some measure of satisfaction when gazing upon those rugged hillsides unencumbered by development ...

If you have strolled peacefully among those peaks, deep inside and away from our frenetic twenty-first century lifestyle ...

If you have immersed yourself in a larger-than-life Monet landscape of fragrant wildflowers, a rippling sea of colors ...

If you have closely examined the surprising intricacies of nature thriving beneath a rock or under the bark of a dead snag ...

Or if you have gazed in awe at the panorama of the quilted ranch lands spreading out far below ...

And if you would like to share such moments with your children or grandchildren, then **NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT**. Now is the time to make a contribution towards the preservation of an irreplaceable part of California's heritage – The Sutter Buttes. Please return the enclosed envelope this week with your generous donation.



Walt Anderson, Middle Mountain Foundation Director Emeritus, shares his knowledge and experiences with hikers at the foot of North Butte

Roy Dankman, Jan Schmidl, Gene Trapp

**Advisors**

Walt Anderson  
**Director Emeritus**

Julie Stark  
 Margit Sands  
 Jeanne McClard

**Directors**

Arleen McClanahan

**Treasurer**

Roger Ewers

**Secretary**

Joe Bouchard

**Vice President**

Mike Hubbard

**President**

**Board of Directors**  
**Middle Mountain**

Address Service Requested

To:

Non Profit Org  
 U. S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Permit No. 1001  
 Chico, CA  
 95927

**the Middle Mountain Foundation**  
 P. O. Box 483, Live Oak, CA 95953-0483  
 Telephone: (530) 634-6387  
 Web Site: www.middlemountain.org  
 email: middlemountain@yahoo.com

## Hike Descriptions

*Continued from page 3*

**Full Moon Stroll:** Quiet reflection is the emphasis of this stroll. As the late afternoon shadows lengthen, we gather to begin our spiritual walk. We will meander through sun dappled oak groves and a pause often to look out over the pastoral hillsides. After a sack dinner overlooking beautiful Peace Valley, we have a chance to hear the hooting of owls and possibly the soft snorting of wild pigs. There will be time for star gazing and silent contemplation. Your evening culminates as we slowly descend the slopes bathed in luminescent moonlight about 10:30 p.m.

**Geology Trek:** The violent origins of this tiny mountain range will be revealed on this outing. From the up-thrust pinnacles and the mysterious concentric depression surrounding them, to the smallest pebble at your feet, you will explore and understand one and one half million (1,500,000) years of geologic history with volcanologist Brian Hausback.

**In a Sacred Manner:** A walk with Stan Padilla: focuses on the reverence for life and balances the mythology, botany, geology, and minerology of the Buttes with active hiking and contemplative free time.

**In Remembrance**  
 of  
**Janet Gilcrist**  
 beloved mother  
 by Alan and Pamela Tompkins

