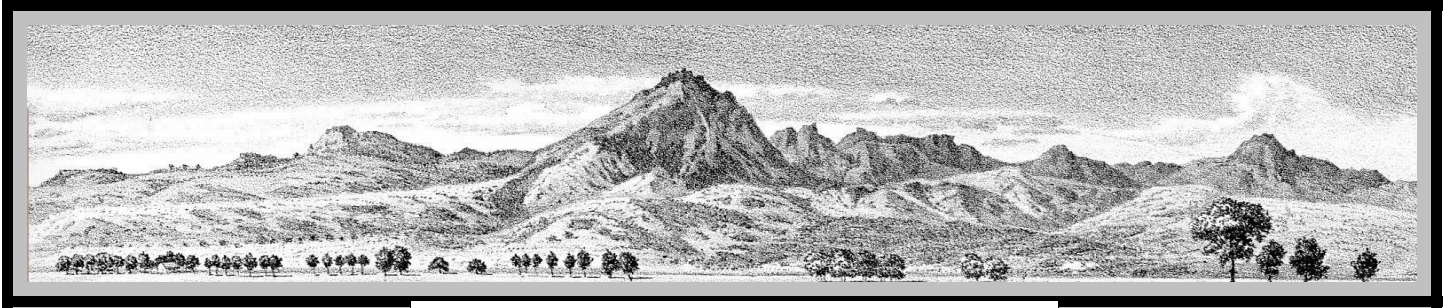


THE MIDDLE MOUNTAIN FOUNDATION



from Thompson & West *History of Sutter County 1879*

SPRING 2001

“Preserve the Sutter Buttes? From what? They will be here long after we are gone!”

Some of you challenge us with pointed questions that reveal a diversity of perspectives. Indeed, this small cluster of peaks that we now call Sutter Buttes have remained extant for more than a thousand millenniums! And in the shadow of this *Middle Mountain* humans have witnessed the passing of perhaps ten millenniums, and still these buttes remained virtually unchanged. But in the last century and a half a massive influx of immigrants new to this part of the world brought new ideas, new animals, new tools and implements. They carved out a place for themselves and they drastically altered the landscape. It is a testament to our forefathers industry that California now sustains and houses nearly a thousand times as many of us as it did 200 years ago. Meanwhile, only a minute fraction of the natural landscape that once was still remains. We are so fortunate to still have the Sutter Buttes in their presently undeveloped condition.

The Middle Mountain Foundation interpretive program provides small-guided treks that have opened the private rangelands of the Buttes to thousands of visitors over the years. Our outings reveal the evidence of the earth’s violent origins. We share the values and experiences of the native people who subsisted in harmony with their environment. Our guides facilitate an understanding and sensitivity to the connected web of plants and wildlife, and we endeavor to distinguish the remaining indigenous greenery from the pernicious exotics introduced by our forefathers. We explore

their pioneer homesteads and we gain a sense of admiration for their accomplishments. We also note how each succeeding generation has impacted the land more severely than the generation before. We strive to convey a sense of appreciation for the local families, some of whom have for as many as five generations, maintained the land with minimal impact or development. On most of our trips, hikers are afforded the opportunity to look outward to survey the grandeur of nature. On some, they look inward and draw inspiration from a unifying sense of spirituality in the Buttes that for centuries has moved those sensitive to the power of special places. The goal for our program is to promote an individual sense of stewardship and generate a community involvement in preserving the Buttes’ pastoral nature.

We have just celebrated the beginning of a new year, and as we look into the

21st century, new challenges confront us. Those of us in the MMF feel a strong sense of urgency. Recent developments convince us that all we have done so far is not enough. We need your help. Join us in the Buttes this spring for a memorable and educational experience and perhaps you too will be moved to assist our campaign to preserve a priceless geological and historical treasure for your children and their children to enjoy as well.



North Butte Pinnacles

Preserving California's Native Heritage

Esto Yamani, the Middle Mountain, has for centuries been an important natural resource as well as a prominent feature in the folklore of the native Maidu and Wintun peoples who lived around the mountain. Today the Buttes provide an appropriate tableau for learning about native lifestyles and cultures.

This season we have asked noted educator and ethnologist Brian Bibby to share with us his perspective on the significance of the Sutter Buttes in native cultures at a public slide show presentation that features his extraordinary experiences with California's native Communities. The program is scheduled for Saturday evening, March 3rd at 7 PM at the Sutter County Museum. He will also lead a hike in the Buttes Sunday March 4th at 10 am.

Brian will discuss how native oral histories and traditional myths reveal the special regard that this landscape held for these people. He will touch upon the existing native communities that retain cultural and historic ties to the Buttes.

Much of the program will be devoted to Brian's recent and ongoing work with the descendants of California's native people. His involvement with linguistic fieldwork and ethnographic research has resulted in the translation of historic myths of the Konkow, in a bilingual Miwuk/English trail guide at Yosemite, and videos that teach the Koyoongkawi language, for example. He has coordinated workshops and master – apprentice projects in several local native communities focusing on the transmission of traditional skills and values, such as native language preservation, basket making, and ceremonial regalia construction, from knowledgeable elders to younger tribal members.

Brian will share with us a most extraordinary

Photo by Oleg Yaensenko,
used with permission of NEWS FROM NATIVE CALIFORNIA

cultural exchange experience with the Grindstone Rancheria dancers who traveled to St. Petersburg,

Russia. There they participated in a music and dance festival and toured the Kunstkammer, an 18th century museum housing perhaps the largest and most significant pre-Gold Rush collection of native material in the world, most of it collected in 1841 in Northern California.

The evening slide show presentation is offered to the public free of charge at the Sutter County Museum, 1333 Butte House Road, Yuba City, CA at 7 PM, Saturday, March 3rd. The guided outing in the Buttes on Sunday March 4th will focus on identifying natural resources and discussions about aspects of the native societies' traditional cultural life. Space is limited and subject to our usual hike fees. Hikers will need to call 530-671-6010 to make a reservation.

New President's Notes

I am honored to assume the Foundation Presidency, and to be affiliated with those who preceded me. Even now I still seek their input and counsel. I am honored by the confidence that the Foundation Board of Directors has in my ability carry on this noble work. And I am honored by the public – those of you who hike in the Buttes and attend our programs and encourage and compliment us for our endeavors.

A change in the Middle Mountain Foundation Presidency does not signify a dramatic shift in our philosophies or methods. Our Board of Directors remains committed to the following tenants. We lead interpretive walks and provide educational experiences to foster public awareness of the need to preserve the Buttes' unique geology, natural history, and cultural history. We work cooperatively with landowners to facilitate conservation easements and enhance profitable land use that is consistent with the long-term stewardship of preserving the Buttes' rural nature for future generations. And we function as a land trust to secure uninhabited parcels from outside development to insure the preservation of the Buttes' natural beauty.

While I offer the reassurance of continuity, I also promise, with the Board's endorsement, a more proactive agenda to preserve this historical legacy. Several of us recently attended a three-day workshop on fundraising and effective strategies for land trusts to implement conservation easements to preserve open land. The preservation of the Buttes can best be accomplished with programs that involve and benefit landowners with the support of the public and local government.

Note how our 2001 budget reflects an increased public outreach agenda. This important work can only be accomplished with your help and support. To date most of our work is accomplished by volunteers. But we need to do so much more. Together we can meet the future.

Mike Hubbart

Middle Mountain Spring 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 King, Hike Coordinator, for reservations soon...(530) 671-6010

February	24th-Saturday	Geology Trek
March	4th-Sunday	Native Heritage
	17th-Saturday	Bragg Canyon
	24th-Saturday	Summit Ascent
		In a Sacred Manner
April	1st-Sunday	Summit Ascent
		Ridge Top Trek
		In a Sacred Manner
		Gentle Stroll
	7th-Saturday	Full Moon Stroll
	21st-Saturday	Evening Serenade
	22nd-Sunday	Summit Ascent
		In a Sacred Manner
		Gentle Stroll
May	12th-Saturday	Bat Research Field Trip

A day in the Buttes **usually** 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.



Indiv idu

als and families may reserve a date for one of the open days by calling Roberta King at (530) 671-6010. Cost is \$30.00 per person (Members: \$27.00). An extra charge of \$7.50 is made for hikes with box dinners. Organizations may schedule a charter with Margit Sands 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

Bragg Canyon: A trek up Bragg Canyon on the West side of the Sutter Buttes, hosted by family members of this historic property, reveals unique and preserved features that are hidden within its mysterious interior.

Massive flat boulders pocked by centuries of Wintun Indians grinding acorns convey a sense of serenity among the native cultures that lived in harmony with each other and the seasonal elements of nature.

We'll locate the solid stone basement of a pioneer homestead, complete with a hand dug well. Nearby stonewall fences and rock roadbed retaining walls demonstrate the life long commitment of our forefathers to making their homes in the wilderness.

We pause for lunch near a peaceful stock pond, in the canyon that was once the central lakebed of the Sutter Buttes volcano. Half a mile across and a 1000 feet high, lined with concentric rings of erosion, it resembles a Herculean amphitheater.

Then for the physically fit, we tackle a final steep ascent up Yana Peak to inspect the caves. We catch our breath and linger awhile to reflect upon the history of a truly unique landscape.

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.

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.

(Continued on page 5)

Gentle Stroll: Our gentle stroll takes us past a century

**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, with community assistance, 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

**THE MIDDLE MOUNTAIN
FOUNDATION**

**acknowledges the following
contributors and individuals:**

George Chumbley, Al and Bonnie Thoma, Luedel Bouchard, Roger Ewers, Rich King and our helpful staff of volunteer assistant guides.

Sutter-Yuba Internet Exchange (syix.com) for their assistance in creating and hosting the Middle Mountain web page at www.middlemountain.org

Sir Speedy Printing Copying and Networking for their outstanding assistance and generosity in printing our newsletter.

Past Board Members Jan Schmidl and David Wilson for their outstanding leadership in prior years.
Foundation Members in 2000
Donors to the Foundation in 2000

MIDDLE MOUNTAIN FOUNDATION

2001 BUDGET--Adopted

December 7, 2000

REVENUES

Donations	\$ 5,000
Open Hikes/Charters	\$20,000
Interest Income	\$ 2,500
Other income	\$ 250

Total Revenues
\$27,500

OPERATING EXPENSES

Open Hikes/Charter Hike Expenses		
<u>\$11,250</u>	Coordinator Fees	\$ 4,000
	Guide Fees	\$ 3,000
	Landowner Fees	\$ 4,000
	Refunds	\$ 250
	Operations	\$
	Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 350
	Liability Insurance	\$ 600
	Miscellaneous	\$ 250
	Promotion	\$ 500
	Taxes, Licenses & Permits	\$ 50
	Safety/First Aid	\$ 500
	Newsletters	\$
	Printing	\$ 3,000
	Postage	\$ 1,500
	Supplies	\$ 200
	Administration	
<u>\$ 2,500</u>	Office Expense	\$ 500
	Supplies	\$ 500
	Telephone	\$ 750
	Travel	\$ 500
	Miscellaneous	\$ 250
	Projects/Programs*	\$
<u>3,850</u>		

In Remembrance

A donation in memory of a loved one commemorates that special person and helps preserve some of the wild flora and fauna in the open spaces of the Middle Mountains.

Kathleen Allen
Jill Bechtel
Kennety Broce
Helen Knox Dixon
Martin & Catherine H. Flaherty
John Kenyon, Sr.

Rosemary Levenson
Dorothy F. Martin
Marian McElroy
Roz Padilla
Mickey T. Pantalone
Herbert Zelinsky

Interpretive Hike Descriptions (Continued from page 3)

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 Mt. Lassen and Shasta. Wildflowers, open meadows, birdsong and magnificent views of towering North Butte with scores of circling turkey vultures treat each stroller to a day to remember. A silent walk and gentle reflection by a soft rambling stream rounds out the day.

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, meadows of baby blue eyes and 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 will culminate (end) as we slowly descend the slopes bathed in luminescent moonlight to return to our vehicles about 10:30 PM.

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

Evening Serenade: Catch the first glimpse of a sunset in the Middle Mountains while listening to chamber music (flute, cello and violin) as you eat your special box dinner (\$7.50 extra) after a short midafternoon hike.

Native Heritage: This outing, guided by Brian Bibby, on Sunday March 4th will focus on identifying natural resources and discussions about aspects of the native societies' traditional cultural life. Space is limited and subject to our usual hike fees.

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.

Bat Research Field Trip: Witness mammal biologist, Heather Johnson, conducting bat research in the Sutter Buttes after dark.

This extraordinary outing begins late in the afternoon as we stroll through the historic Dean Ranch sequestered within the Buttes. Evidence of Native American presence, pioneer history, and the Buttes' volcanic origins will be revealed before we settle in for a furnished box dinner (add \$7.50 to fee) and a brief lecture on the importance and benefits of bats in natural and cultivated environments.

We expect to be able to hear the bats' inaudible echolocation chatter with her ultrasonic detector as they forage for insects over a pond. We may even hear the bird-like chirp of the largest bat to be found on the North American continent! And with a little luck, we may get to see her capture and identify several of the eleven bat species thus far documented in the Buttes. But we can't guarantee how many bats we will encounter.

Bring a flashlight and a camera to record this memorable experience. This outing will change the way you regard the barren hillsides and cliffs of the Sutter Buttes, a priceless habitat for numerous species of elusive wildlife!

A word from the Hike Coordinator Roberta King

It was an interesting Fall Hike season. Weather threw us a curve this year. I think all those that did get to go on their hikes had a wonderful experience though. Those whose hikes were cancelled by high winds in October may chose a hike from the schedule - if you call before the hike of your choice is filled.

Please note that the telephone number for the open hike reservations has been changed to **530 671-6010**. Please call for reservations between 8 am and 5 PM and between 7 PM and 9 PM any day of the week. This new line should be operational after the first week of January, 2001.

Please remember that all hikes are to be paid for in advance. Send the fee to the Middle Mountain Foundation, Hike Coordinator at 711 Railroad Avenue, Yuba City, CA 95991. Confirmation notices will be sent to those who have paid for their hikes prior to two weeks before the hike is scheduled. The confirmation notice will include the meeting time and place, a map to get there, and suggestions on what to bring with you. Cancellation of hikes by the Middle Mountain Foundation is very rare. If they do occur calls are made if possible to the scheduled participants. Full refunds will be offered to hikers if MMF cancel. Or you may opt for credit on a future hike date as available.

Jan Schmidl, Past President
Roy Dankman
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

E-mail: middlemountain@yahoo.com
Web Site: www.middlemountain.org
Telephone: (530) 634-6387

LIVE OAK, CA 95953-0483
P. O. BOX 483
MIDDLE MOUNTAIN FOUNDATION

To:

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

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 by the Hike Coordinator at the 530 671-6010 number.)

You can reach the Middle Mountain Foundation at our web site (www.middlemountain.org), by email (middlemountain@yahoo.com), or our telephone answering service [(530) 634-6387], or our post office box (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.