

# OUR PIONEER HAPPENINGS

CALIFORNIA PIONEER HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Preserving Our Pioneer Heritage

Fall 2021



**NOVEMBER 6TH**

**. 4TH ANNUAL .**

**CALIFORNIA**

**PIONEER**

**HISTORY**

**DAY**

**FREE FAMILY EVENT\***  
9AM-3PM (PARADE AT 10AM)

Historical Presentations, Pioneer Crafts,  
Games, Kids Activities, and more!

Food available for purchase  
(or bring your own)

\*State Parking Fee \$8 per vehicle

MARSHALL GOLD DISCOVERY  
STATE PARK  
COLOMA, CALIFORNIA

## California Pioneer History Day Returns to Coloma

The California Pioneer History Day sponsored by the California Pioneer Heritage Foundation in cooperation with the James Marshall Gold Discovery State Park focuses on the significant contributions of early pioneers to and in California before California became a state and later.

California is now home to Indigenous, Latino, Pan-African, European, Asian and Pacific Island cultures. Groups will represent their pioneer history and contributions during the California Pioneer History Day in Coloma.

This 4th Annual California Pioneer History Day starts at 9:00 AM with the Pioneer Parade beginning at 10:00 AM. Young and old are invited to wear period clothing such as hats and bonnets boots and aprons while following behind the banner that represents their pioneer ancestry.



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## California Living History Specialists Participate in Folsom Stake Activity Day with Over 100 Children

*Temple Hill, Rancho Cordova  
May 08, 2021*

Over 100 children enjoyed being outdoors for the first time in over 15 months because of the global pandemic. They participated in rope making, pioneer doll making, calligraphy with quills and ink, and other activities. Ten members of the California Living History Mission, some of whom live in the Folsom Stake, organized the pioneer activities as part of the Folsom Stake Activity Day for young boys and girls ages 8 to 11.



**Members of the California Living History Mission**



**Activity Day children learn to make rope.**



**Making pioneer dolls with Toni Amaral and Carol Tullis and learning about Patty Reed's doll.**



**Dale Dennis writes children's names using a quill pen.**



**Children practice writing their own names.**



**Margo Howes explains how ink is made to the children.**

## Caldor Fire Reaches Mormon Battalion Historic Sites

### Sly Park, California

August 2021

By Peter Guilbert

The winds blew the Caldor Fire across the Mormon Emigrant Trail in the Sierra Nevada Mountains near Sly Park and Jenkinson Lake. The Mormon Emigrant Trail was blazed by discharged members of the Mormon Battalion in 1848, the year before the California Gold Rush. In 1848, many of the discharged Mormon Battalion soldiers and members of the Ship Brooklyn were anxious to join the main body of the Church in Salt Lake City. They wanted to take wagons, but the options to take the Truckee route that involved crossing the Truckee River many times during the spring runoff or pioneering a new route easier for wagons to use. The group chose a route going from Sacramento over what was later called Carson Pass and followed the Carson River until crossing north to the established California Trail in present-day Nevada. A portion of the roadway built by the group forging a new route to Utah now comprises the modern-day Mormon Emigrant Trail road.



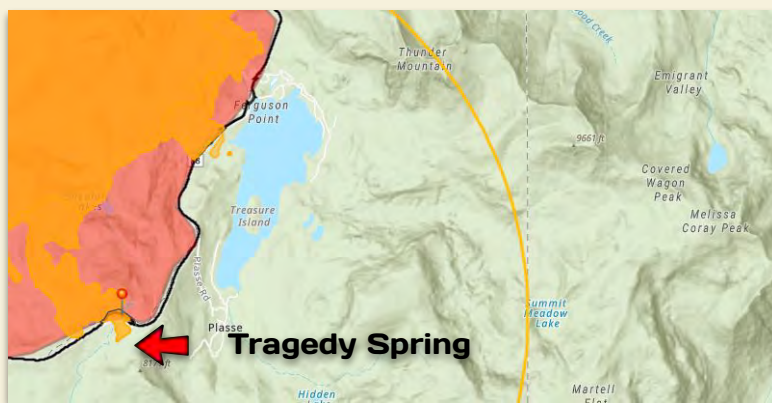
**Caldor Fire Crosses Mormon Emigrant Trail**

### Caldor Fire Damage at Tragedy Spring

September 2021

By Peter Guilbert

The Caldor Fire made a run from the north and burned around the Tragedy Spring area. An update from Ranger Rick Hopson said, "There were USFS archeology workers up in the area monitoring the fire damage to see what historical areas were damaged." The damage was minimal except for the wooden sign next to the cairn. There were downed trees all over the ridge in and around the Tragedy Spring site. Cairn repairs were still intact.



**Caldor Fire Devastation Extends to Tragedy Spring**  
Fire Damage Pictures Below Courtesy of Jonathan Pierce, CALFIRE



Before



After



# California Admissions Day

*Sacramento, California  
September 09, 2021*

California became the 31st state on September 09, 1850 and is celebrating as California Admission Day. The timeline for statehood began in February of 1848 when Mexico and the United States signed a treaty that ended the Mexican War and yielded a vast portion of the Southwest, including present day California to the United States. On January 24, 1848, gold was discovered on the American River. An immense increase of population to California came with the Gold Rush that necessitated a need for civil government. In 1849, Californians sought statehood and, after heated debate in the U.S. Congress arising out of the slavery issue, California entered the Union as a free, nonslavery state by the Compromise of 1850.   
Source: [California Parks and Recreation](#)



Current California Flag

## The Bear Flag Revolt

### 25 Days as an Independent Nation The California Republic

On June 10, 1846, retired General Mariano Vallejo, an influential Mexican Army officer surrendered to a small band of American frontiersmen under the leadership of William B. Ide and Ezekiel Merritt. The Bear Flag was raised at Sonoma, a small town in the Mexican territory of Alta California, signifying the separate Republic of California. The short-lived republic's flag and subsequent twenty-five days when California was an independent nation became known as the Bear Flag Revolt.

The United States had declared war against Mexico on May 13, 1846. This news apparently had not reached the Bear Flaggers at the time of their revolt. Since the ultimate goal of the Bear Flaggers was to make California part of the United States, they now saw little reason to preserve their "government."

On July 9, forces under Commodore John D. Sloat occupied San Francisco and Sonoma, claimed California for the United States, and replaced the bear flag with the American flag.

With a cotton sheet and some red paint, they constructed a makeshift flag with a crude drawing of a grizzly bear, a lone red star (a reference to the earlier Lone Star Republic of Texas) and the words "California Republic" at the bottom.



Smokey Bassett, a California Living History Specialist portrays William B. Ide at historical reenactments.

## Tragedy Springs Restoration Progress Report

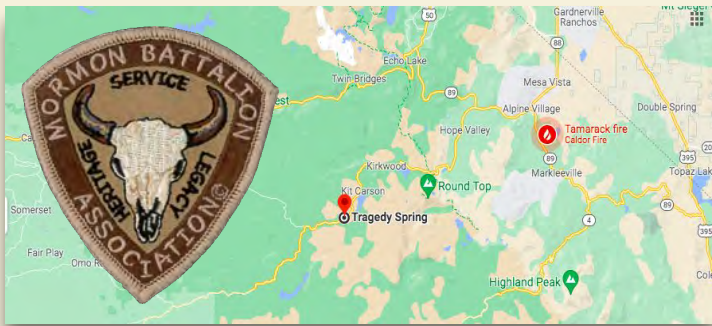


**Tragedy Springs, Hwy 88  
June to August - 2021**

*By Peter Guilbert*

*Pictures: Dennis Amaral and Peter Guilbert*

During the Winter of 2021, a very intense storm with high winds wreaked havoc on the ridge where Tragedy Spring is located. Winds were reported at the nearby Kirkwood Ski Area at over 180 mph. Downed trees two to four feet in diameter blocked the entire ridge up to the spring and along with the upper portion of Mormon Emigrant Trail.



Members of the California Living History program discovered the damage on May 16, 2021, during a Mormon Emigrant Trail discovery trip. Dennis Amaral was returning from the Carson Pass area and stopped by to see the spring. He took several pictures of the damage. The tree adjacent and below the grave along with two other trees below fell over during the wind event. Damage to the lower part of the cairn was extensive. Large parts of the concrete and stone covering were broken up and fell into the hole left by the tree stump. If there were any human remains still in the ground, they were undisturbed.



The combined root ball from the three trees that fell over was 28 feet long and 14 feet high leaving a hole up to five feet deep.

The famous spring piping system was also damaged by another tree's root system ripping a pipe out of the ground and breaking some connections. This system currently consists of a sealed concrete box where the spring daylights and a pipe moving water down the hill to a cistern that holds the water.

Water from that cistern has been in use for 40-50 years by the public and a private landowner about a quarter mile away. When the tree fell during the storm, it ripped out the piping and water was running across the ground instead of into the cistern.

The US Forest Service (USFS) District Ranger Rick Hopson, the USFS Archeologist, Frank Tortorich Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA), and I met to discuss the damage and work on the USFS documentation to allow volunteers to do the work in repairing the damage and making it safe for visitors to use the site. I set up a plan on what repairs needed to be made to repair the spring piping, fill in the hole left by the tree stumps, make a safe trail up to the spring and beyond to the marked Emigrant Trail above the spring, repair and replace the cairn stones, and general cleanup of the trail and picnic tables for public use.

### Tragedy Springs in 2020

A cairn is a mound of rough stones built as a memorial or landmark



## Tragedy Springs Restoration Project Progress Continues

On June 6, 2021 Dennis and Toni Amaral, Frank Tortorich, Virginia and Peter Guilbert started the initial work on the project. The broken piping from the spring box was cut and flexible couplings were installed to route the water back into the cistern. Rocks were placed under the piping to help support the pipe. Dirt and rocks from the respective root balls of the fallen trees were loosened to fill in the hole and support the lower part of the cairn preparatory to installing the rocks and mortar to resurface the grave to its prior condition. It is still undecided as to what to do with the actual trees on the ground. Volunteer work was monitored by the USFS Assistant Archeologist to ensure artifacts discovered were documented. No prehistoric or immigrant artifacts were found.



On June 26, 2021, we had a work party including five members of the Oregon-California Trails Association along with Virginia and Peter who performed some work at Tragedy Spring. The primary focus was to get the spring pipe secured and covered. Members of the OCTA did an excellent job of taking care of the spring piping.



In the afternoon on June 26, 2021, Ranger Rick Hopson met with us and invited a professional timber faller, Brian Oneda, to determine what could be done with the fallen trees next to the gravesite. After some discussion and advice from the faller, the decision was made to cut the lower tree and winch that root ball back into the hole. That was more difficult than we thought; however, with a lot of winching and jacking, it was eventually coaxed back into its hole. The faller then cut out a path through the small tree and the big one. Now there is a safe path for the public to come to the spring.



On July 20, 2021 another small work party of Dennis and Toni Amaral, Jim McIver, and Peter Guilbert worked at the project to begin repairs to the cairn. To our good fortune, Jim was experienced in building stonewalls. We struggled moving many large stones into place and used some of the original rock surface stones to build up a wall from the remaining root ball pit up to the new surface of the cairn. Rocks were collected from the ridge well above the site as well as some stones from the nearby "quarry", stockpiled rocks from CalTrans roadwork.

Much more work is needed to complete the project: filling the hole left by the large fallen tree, removal of a torn out pipe, blocking the temporary trail next to the marshy area below the spring, clearing up around the picnic tables, and general cleanup. Members of the CLHP plan to have a rededication of the grave in conjunction with a historical trail hike this fall.



Peter Guilbert is a member of the California Living History Program, Mormon Battalion Association, and Oregon-California Trails Association.

Tragedy Spring Grave 2021 Repairs

# COLFAX RAILROAD DAYS SEPTEMBER 18-19



## A 2 DAY FREE FAMILY EVENT

Food & Refreshments

Union Pacific Railroad Display

Model Train Displays

1840's Reenactment Camp

Black Flag Gang from Old Sac

Face Painters & Balloon Artist

Music & Craft Vendors



**COLFAX**  
RAILROAD DAYS



SCAN ME

Colfax Railroad Days is a celebration of Colfax's role in the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad. It was the terminus for supplies, equipment and laborers for their push to build the railroad bed through the Sierra and beyond. The California Living History Specialists will host the 1840's Reenactment Camp.

## Preserving Our Pioneer Heritage



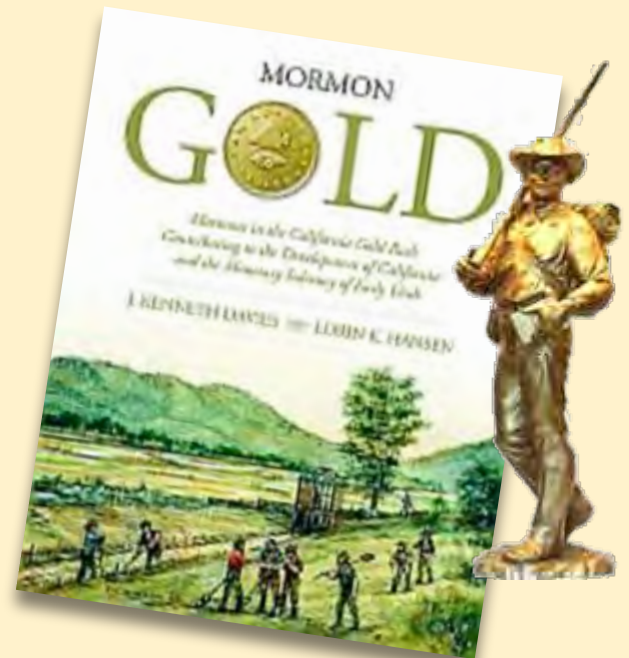
The mission of the California Pioneer Heritage Foundation is to promote recognition of the contributions made by the men and women who came to California prior to 1869, with particular emphasis on the contributions of pioneers who were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

We will accomplish this by:

- ❑ Encouraging research
- ❑ Producing and distributing educational materials
- ❑ Preserving and establishing monuments and historical sites
- ❑ Sponsoring and supporting commemorative events and activities.

As a 501c (3) non-profit corporation, the California Pioneer Heritage Foundation enables donors to help us accomplish worthy goals through through tax deductible contributions.

Thank you for your interest in preserving California's pioneer heritage. Your contribution will assist us in identifying and preserving historical sites and records, and educating others about the contribution of California pioneers.



### **Limited Time Special!**

For a donation of \$100 or greater we will be happy to send a gift of the book

“Mormon Gold“, a regular \$49.95 value.  
(request book at time of donation)

California Pioneer  
Heritage Foundation

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