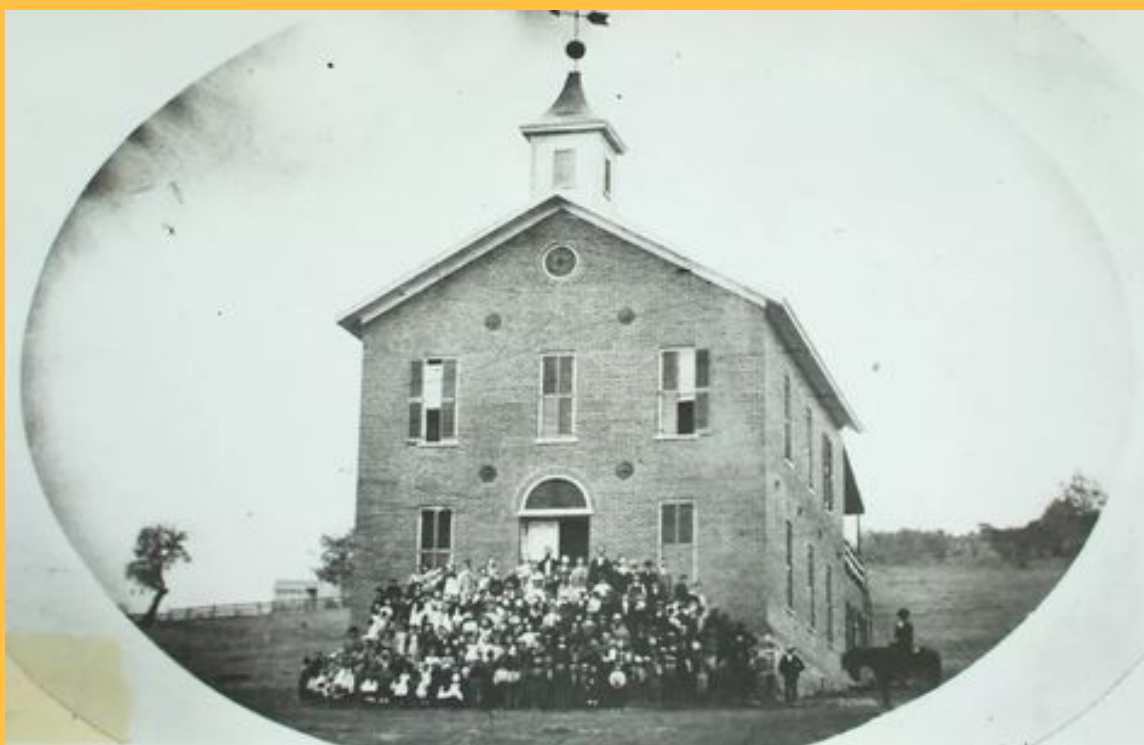


Sutter Creek Community Benefit Foundation

November Newsletter, 2022

How School Life has Changed in 150 Years

Sutter Creek's original grammar school was built in 1856 on a hill near Woodworth Street between Anna and Nickerson. When a racially motivated arson fire destroyed the school in 1870, the community responded quickly. The Wildman Mining Co. donated land on another hill across town above Broad Street. A bond was raised and a new two-story two-room brick schoolhouse was constructed in less than a year, just in time for the 1871 school year.



The new building was set back from Broad Street 200 yards allowing for a large play area to accommodate over

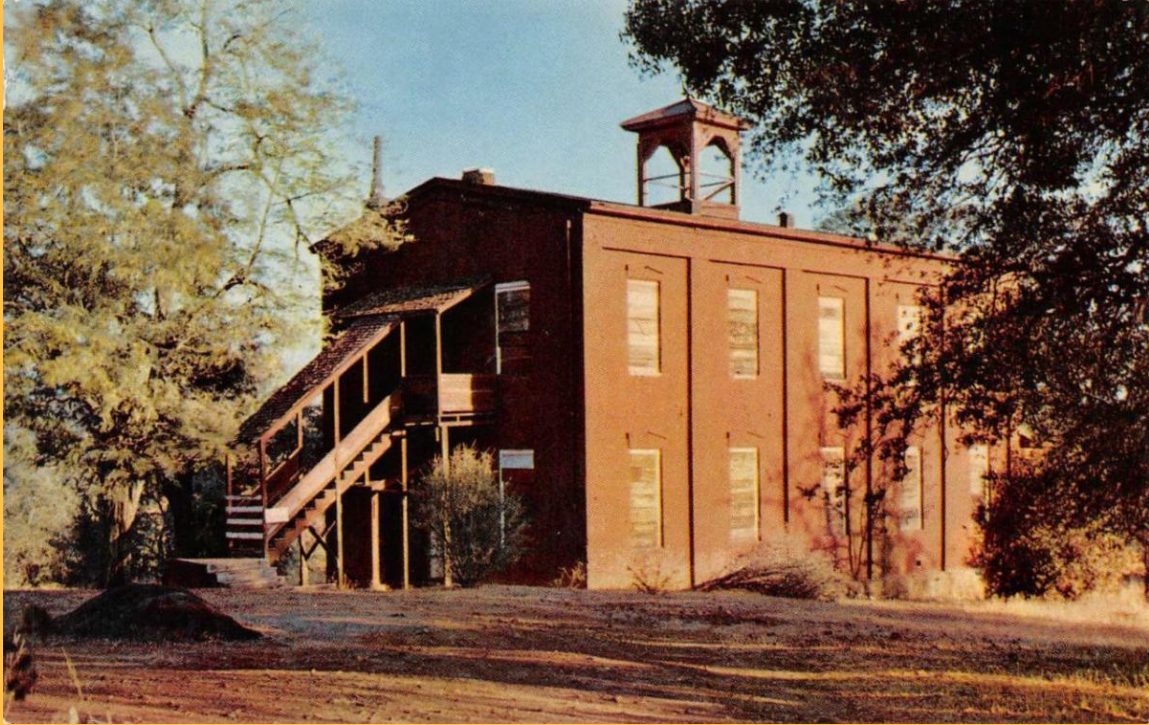
300 pupils in grades 1 through 8. This group of children was overseen by 2 – 4 teachers and 1 principal.



By 1896, overcrowding had become a serious problem, and another bond was raised in order to construct an addition below Cole Street. The four new classrooms added 4,000 square feet to the original 2,000 and gave the school it's familiar and distinctive "T" shape.



Today, Sutter Creek's Historic Grammar School still stands on the northeast side overlooking the City. It is one of only a couple of 19th century two-story school buildings west of the Mississippi River, the other being in Columbia.



The Columbia schoolhouse is a beautifully restored building originally constructed in 1861, predating our schoolhouse by nearly ten years. It too is all brick and stands on a hill overlooking the Tuolumne town of Columbia. Hillside locations were chosen so the bells could be heard all over, summoning children to school. The two buildings were of similar size (before Sutter Creek added space), shape, capacity and hilltop locations. Columbia opened to over 300 pupils, 4 teachers, and 1 principal in 1862.





The reason so few 19th century brick structures survive is California's propensity for earthquakes. Earthquakes have always been a facet of life in our State. The hugely destructive 1906 San Francisco 'quake would have been a louder wake-up call had news not been suppressed and downplayed by the powerful Chamber of Commerce.

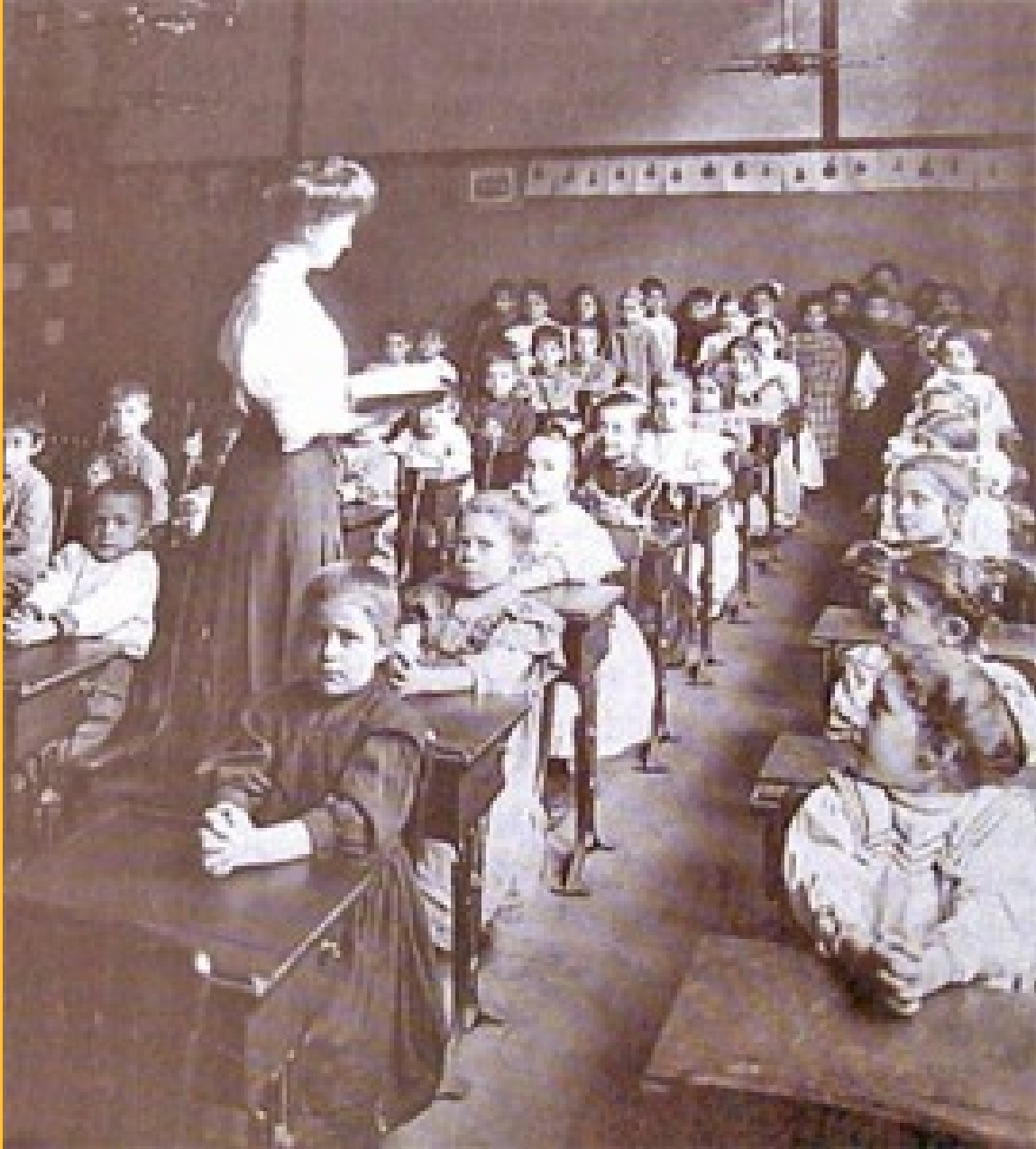


But when the Northridge earthquake struck in 1933, over 150 unreinforced masonry schoolhouses were destroyed. The California legislature began enacting earthquake standards in 1935 outlawing new construction of unreinforced masonry schools and mandating retrofits or closures.



Both Columbia and Sutter Creek eventually closed to students and fell into disrepair. Fortunately, both have been, and are being, restored as a source of pride in their respective communities.

In the 150 plus years since the original construction of the Sutter Creek schoolhouse, building design has not been the only dramatic change brought about by the march of time. The norms and methods of administering education, as well as discipline, have changed dramatically.



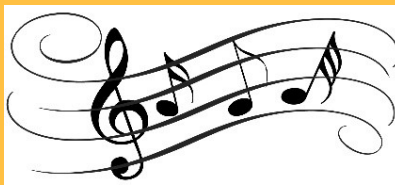
Female teachers were paid a salary of \$65 - \$70 per month, male teachers received \$76. After a period of five years, the Board of Education may approve an increase of 25¢ (25 cents) per week, amounting to an additional \$13 per year with deductions for missed time.

The following list of “Rules and Duties for Teachers and Students” was compiled from school districts across the country. Lists and rules were established in the years following the Civil War up to the years leading to World War I when restrictions began to “soften”.

Some of the rules and restrictions teachers were required to follow were:

- Teachers must not drink alcohol or smoke cigarettes.**
- Neither men nor women should be seen in any saloon,**

- pool parlor, or smoking room.
- Must maintain a pure moral character.
- Female teachers must not be seen in the company of a man in any buggy or carriage (or later, automobile) unless he is a brother or father.
- Teachers may not marry during term of contract.
- Must be at home between 8:00 pm and 6:00 am.
- Female teachers may not dye or color their hair or cut it short.
- Clean lamp chimneys and fill lamps
- Bring in bucket of water and wood for stove.
- Arrive one hour early to start fire so room is warm by 9:00 am.
- Clean outhouses.
- Floors must be swept daily and scrubbed weekly.
- Lip rouge is prohibited.
- Dresses must cover ankles.



**School Days, School Days;
Dear old Golden Rule Days;
Reading and 'riting and 'rithmetic
Taught to the tune of a hick'ry stick...**

Not to be overlooked by the "rules" police, schoolchildren in grades one through eight observed:

- Faces and hands must be washed daily.
- "Abcedarians" – the youngest still learning the ABC's sit in front – oldest in back.
- Students provide transportation to and from school.
- Students to bring their own lunches.
- Older children will assist teachers when asked.
- No talking in class.
- Sit or stand quietly.
- Children must attend school when not working.
- One hour will be given for recess and lunch.
- Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may be punished at teacher's discretion. Suspension or expulsion may result.

Obviously, teachers in the 19th Century were ruled by, and ruled with, anything from a velvet glove to an iron fist. In classes ranging in age from six to fifteen and frequently exceeding sixty students, discipline was certainly vital to successful education.

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**Do you know someone who would like to receive our monthly newsletter?
Send contact information to info@sccbf.org to be added to our
distribution list.**

The Historic Sutter Creek Grammar School is rich in Gold Rush history. This beautiful building is California's second oldest two-story brick schoolhouse. The Sutter Creek Community Benefit Foundation has restored the first and second floor making it a wonderful rental for any occasion. There are four rooms within the Historic Grammar School that can be rented.



Contact the City of Sutter Creek for information on rates and availability - (209) 267-5647 ext. 230 or email info@cityofsuttercreek.org

Whether it's a love of our heritage, a special connection to our town's diverse, deeply rooted cultures, or a desire to improve your community, every donor's passion for Sutter Creek is unique. A donation to Sutter Creek Community Benefit Foundation is the perfect way to fund your passion and watch it prosper. By connecting people who care with causes that matter, we help ensure a stronger, healthier tomorrow. We provide a simple, powerful and highly personal approach to giving.

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