

News Release



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For Continuing Release
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Columbia Diggins

1852 Tent Town at Columbia State Historic Park

Just as the merchant economy seemed to spring up overnight in the gold fields, Columbia State Historic Park will be alive with activity in its own tent town as history is recreated for the public and school children during the first weekend in June. Although Columbia State Historic Park is open every day (except Thanksgiving and Christmas), only once a year is the public invited to step back in time at this premier living history event to see what the early Columbia Diggins may have looked like in 1852 when the town was just beginning.

For four full days, over 150 costumed volunteers recreate the daily life of an early gold rush mining camp when tent and shanty towns were as numerous as flakes of gold in the river. The public is invited to experience first-hand the sights, sounds and smells of 1852 Columbia (or American Camp as it was first known) and interact with volunteers who portray those early residents as they go about their daily life. One can observe women cooking over an open fire for the boarding house, work alongside miners as they perfect gold washing techniques or have a good political discussion of the day at the saloon. Sarsaparilla, tamales, baked goods, lemonade, jerky and pickles will be for sale along with other items from the time period for guests to purchase. Visitors will also have the opportunity to go bowling, wash clothes, watch live theatre performances, and listen to music throughout the day.

“Diggins isn’t just a day to look back in time, but really to experience it. Get your hands in the history and look at what the people before you overcame to make California a booming economy. Life wasn’t always easy, but visitors might even be wishful for a simpler time after the experience,” says Park Interpreter Danielle Belluz.

Columbia Diggins Tent Town 1852 is presented Thursday through Sunday, June 2nd to June 5th, from 10-4 daily, at Columbia State Historic Park, 4 miles north of Sonora in Tuolumne County, just off highway 49. Admission to the event is \$5 for adults and \$1 children 12 and under. Parking is free as is admission to the historic brick town. Call 209-588-9128, or visit www.parks.ca.gov or www.FriendsofColumbiaSHP.org for further details.

Publication quality photos attached.
