



News Release

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Sutter's Fort SHP

Sutter's Fort to Present "Hands on History: *Commerce at the Fort*" on July 15

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Continuing a popular series of fun and interactive "Hands on History" activities offered each month, Sutter's Fort State Historic Park (SHP) will present a special "Hands on History: *Commerce at the Fort*" event on Saturday, July 15, 2017 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Fort visitors will be delighted to see the recently completed restoration of the historic walls, gates and blacksmith shop plus have the opportunity to step back in time to the 1840s to learn how and why Sutter's Fort was the first commercial center in the Central Valley. As background, John Sutter left Europe and settled in the Sacramento Valley hoping to build a better life. At the time, the only gold in his original vision was thousands of acres of ripening wheat and the only metal was the clang of hammers in his manufactories. Because Sutter had to find a market for his agricultural goods and his manufactured products, he built a Fort that became a haven for other Europeans and Americans looking for a new life and a trading center that provided goods and services to trappers, sailors, settlers, farmers, Native Americans, and finally gold seekers. The Fort packaged and sold flour, fruits, and vegetables, bales of hides, arrobas of tallow, and barrels of jerked beef, salted salmon as well as coarse canvas and drill for crude pioneer clothing. His talented blacksmiths made agricultural tools, hinges, and horseshoes while the gunsmith cared for the weapons of Sutter's Native American Army and repaired the weapons of individual settlers.

Fort visitors are invited to spend the day enjoying hands-on activities helping the "laundresses," seamstresses, cooks and leather workers make belts, pouches, outer-ware, and saddlery. In addition, there will be a display of guns and weapons from the Gold Rush era and demonstrations of black powder weaponry in action including the crowd-favorite firing of Sutter's cannon. As a highlight, historian and author Cheryl Anne Stapp will deliver special presentations at 11:15 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. in the Distillery to talk about her recent book titled *Before the Gold Rush*.

All "Hands on History" activities are included in the cost of admission. Sutter's Fort SHP admission costs are as follows: \$7 per adult (18 and older), \$5 per youth (ages 6 to 17) and free for children 5 and under. For more information, call 916-445-4422 or visit www.suttersfort.org

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