



# News Release

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## **Sutter's Fort Blacksmith Shop to Undergo Much-Needed Restoration Effort** *Crowd-Favorite Exhibit Room Restoration is Funded By the Sacramento Pioneer Association*

**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** – California State Parks and the Friends of Sutter's Fort are proud to announce the popular Blacksmith Shop at Sutter's Fort State Historic Park (SHP) will soon undergo a much-needed restoration effort made possible due to a generous donation by the Sacramento Pioneer Association. Led by California State Parks, the restoration of the crowd-favorite exhibit room will begin by early August and is expected to be completed this fall.

Once the restoration is finished, guests will enjoy an enhanced experience and gain a greater appreciation about the important role of the blacksmith early in California's history. Having a skilled blacksmith at the Fort was a real point of pride for John Sutter. In fact, blacksmith skills were in great demand to help transform dark metals into original tools and hardware to be used as shoes for horses, lance heads for soldiers, tires for wagons as well as for making door handles, hinges, latches, and much more.

Funded by the Sacramento Pioneer Association, the restoration of the Blacksmith Shop is estimated to cost \$26,000 and will include the following:

- The removal of all artifacts and exhibit furniture for a thorough cleaning and conducting any needed repairs;
- The uneven floor will be leveled and resurfaced with soil cement so it is even with the exterior pathways;
- The interior walls will be cleaned, repaired and painted;



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- The windows and entrance doors will be stripped, repaired and painted;
- The chimney will be reworked;
- Rehabilitation of Blacksmith Shop forge/firebox that includes work on shop's exhaust ducting.

"The Sacramento Pioneer Association admitted John A. Sutter as an honorary member in 1854," said Wendel Robert Flint, President of the Sacramento Pioneer Association. "The Pioneers assisted in the effort to save Sutter's Fort from demolition in 1889-90. Today, in collaboration with Friends of Sutter's Fort, the Pioneers are proud to continue the relationship forged so long ago with Sutter and his fort through our sole sponsorship of the restoration of the Blacksmith Shop."

This latest effort is part of a continuing series of restoration projects at Sutter's Fort SHP that include restoration of the Fort's historic exterior walls; repair or replacement of the east and south gates; a new roof for and seismic stabilization of the historic Central Building; upgrades to various pathways in and around the Fort; and installation of outdoor lighting for the interior courtyards. In total, this continuing series of recent upgrades represent the most extensive restorations at the Fort since a major reconstruction effort in the 1890s. And, it's important to note that the Blacksmith Shop was considered so critical during the reconstruction of the Fort in the 1890s that it was the first room restored and items created there are still visible and in use throughout the Fort today.

During the short restoration period, the Blacksmith Shop may be periodically closed to the public so work can progress as quickly and efficiently as possible. Updated information about these restoration efforts or about Sutter's Fort SHP in general is available at [www.suttersfort.org](http://www.suttersfort.org). For community members and/or businesses interested in contributing to future rehabilitation efforts are encouraged to call 916-323-7626.

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### **Sacramento Pioneer Association**

*The Sacramento Pioneer Association is a non-profit organization started in 1854 by a gathering of early Sacramentans who realized that they were living in important times. Their mission was to preserve Sacramento history for future generations. Through the years, they have been instrumental in preserving Sutter's Fort and many artifacts, documents, buildings, and publications. For more, visit [www.sacramentopioneer.org](http://www.sacramentopioneer.org)*

### **California State Parks Mission**

*To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation.*

