



DEBRA BOWEN

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

DB08:095

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 2, 2008

Contact: Kate Folmar
(916) 653-6575

Secretary of State Invites Golden State Residents to Join Her in Exploring California's Diverse History During Archives Month

SACRAMENTO – Secretary of State Debra Bowen today encouraged Californians to experience the state's vast history during California Archives Month this October.

“The first act of the state Legislature 158 years ago created the California State Archives to preserve the political and governmental history of California,” said Secretary Bowen. “The California State Archives shed light on California's character and the forces that shaped it. I hope all Californians will explore the Golden State's rich history not just this month, but every month.”

The Secretary of State's office has been home to the California State Archives since 1850. As custodian of the State Archives, Secretary Bowen maintains the complete records of the official acts of the legislative and executive branches of state government, as well as Golden State history in the form of tens of millions of documents, maps, photographs, film and audio recordings and other artifacts.

To celebrate California Archives Month, the State Archives will host two big events this month.

- **California State Archives Open House on Saturday, October 4, from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.** Guests will be treated to behind-the-scenes tours of the State Archives and be able to explore other archival collections from Northern California. They will see “Capturing California's Vote: Presidential Elections in the Golden State” exhibit, which features military vote tallies from Abraham Lincoln's re-election, a 1920s-era demonstration voting machine and other political memorabilia. Also on display will be maps of early stagecoach and wagon roads that were used for transportation within the state. During a brief formal program at 5:15 p.m., the Society of California Archivists will honor Assemblyman John Laird of Santa Cruz and posthumously honor former State Archivist Walter P. Gray, III, for their contributions to archives and historical records.
- **Family History Day on Saturday, October 11, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Guests will have the opportunity to meet with professional genealogists, learn about using state records to research their family trees and obtain tips for preserving cherished family documents. There will be short classes on a variety of genealogy-related topics.

– MORE –

DB08:095
Page 2
October 2, 2008

Both events are free and open to the public and will take place at the Secretary of State's California State Archives building, 4th floor, 1020 O Street in Sacramento.

The California State Archives hold over 100,600 cubic feet of records in secure, climate-controlled rooms stretching over six floors of a Sacramento building. The State Archives employ nearly 30 staffers, including 13 professional archivists.

Among the treasures housed in the State Archives are:

- Original California Constitutions, dating to 1849 and 1879, respectively;
- Spanish and Mexican land grant records;
- Election records and political campaign items dating back to 1849;
- Articles of incorporation for world-famous California companies such as the Central Pacific Railroad;
- More than 400 oral histories, including the recollections of former Governor and President Ronald Reagan, Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown, Sr., and tax-limiting Proposition 13 proponent Paul Gann;
- Evidence, tapes, and photographs from the Los Angeles Police Department investigation of the Robert F. Kennedy assassination;
- 20,000 maps and architectural drawings;
- 7,500 video and audio tapes; and
- 250,000 historical photographs including prison "mug books" from the 1800s and snapshots of the construction of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge from the 1930s.

For more information about the California State Archives collections and upcoming events, or for assistance in a historical research project, go to <http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives>.

###