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ALTA CALIFORNIA
The Historical AMERICA 250 Edition
www.altacalifornia250.com

The Premiere Edition of Alta California, Touchstone of Architectural Heritage and Native Culture

Robert A. Bellezza, author of five pictorial books on the Alta California Spanish Missions from Arcadia Publishing, announcing the premiere of Alta California 250 – Touchstone of Architectural Heritage and Native Culture, a historical monograph from a series by the author depicting the Golden State’s cultural roots, celebrates the 250-year anniversary of California’s founding. Featuring stunning lost WPA photographs of California’s first architectural structures, leads to a new accounting of their place in history. A chronological display in their order of each settlement tracing an historical path through the 18th and 19th century. The author’s rediscovery of glass-plate negatives from the 1920s and 1930s redefines incisive stories gleaned from within Spanish diaries, and the known accumulated oral histories of California’s Native Americans. California founding landmark structures and their colossal colonial settlements, represent many familiar and well-known cities with over twenty architectural wonders, each built from the hands and labor of Native Californians. Recounting the intersection of European culture and the Indigenous people in Alta California, the stories present more than a fleeting chapter in American history, focused on the often-overlooked tens of thousands Native laborers subjected to the Spanish colonial system for fifty years. The struggle in regaining former freedoms and traditions revealed as the plight of Native Americans, brought later court rulings with one dispersement story called, “The California Trail of Tears”. Native American oral histories expound on past and current day events, weaving together Indigenous chieftains and leaders’ dramatic appeals arising in the annals of California history. The stories within the founding brings new light around the establishment of Alta California, with images of its first architectural wonders built by Native hands, convey a tumultuous history of courageous laborers, fulfills a long-awaited void in history, in unveiling several inconvenient truths throughout the book.

Today’s increased daily attendance to the Alta California Spanish Missions present-day historical sites takes its visitors well beyond decades of the past. When touring California from a nearby harbor or presidio, the founding settlements provide over twenty Spanish Adobe, brick and stone structures of immense proportions, each agrarian colonies are each now completely reconstructed and restored like the original. Alta California’s past and present offers a series of symbolic unique icons in a mixture of Spanish, Mexican, American, and Native American culture, representing the esteemed heritage from 250-years ago, leading to California Statehood and coinciding with today’s AMERICA 250 commemorations of the 1776 Freedom Fighters of the United States.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Bellezza

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