

# THE COUNTY OF SOLANO AND BEYOND

## Was Once Home to the Patwin People



**LONG BEFORE THE SPANISH AND OTHER EUROPEANS** came to a state that would later become California, the area today known as Solano County was home to indigenous people called the **Patwin (which literally means “people”)** or Southern Wintun. The County is, in fact, named for a Patwin leader, Sina or Sem Yeto, for whom Spanish missionaries used the non-Patwin name “Solano” to identify him.

The earliest historic written records of the Patwin begin with the Spanish mission explorations and registers in the 1797. Like other California Indian tribal groups, the Patwin were organized with principal villages and subsidiary settlements. Their territory extended 90 miles from north to south, and 40 miles from east to west, from the lower hills of the eastern North Coast Ranges to the Sacramento River and from Princeton south to the San Pablo and Suisun Bays, including the City of Vallejo.

Among the recorded villages were the Kletwin (Kletsel), in Cortina Valley and Sand Creek, reaching below Williams south to the southern boundary of Colusa County; the Winkopah, in the Capay Valley, extending

from the head of that valley just north of Rumsey, hemmed in on the north, east and west by mountainous ridges; the Too-loos'too-e, from Suscol up to Napa; and the Poo-e-win, from the land west of the Sacramento River from Knights Landing to the Suisun and San Pablo Bays. Established research shows the Patwin occupied all of Solano County to the waterfront, including the City of Vallejo, which was once known as Aguasto.

The Patwin took advantage of the abundant natural resources offered by the land and water surrounding them. They hunted wild game, fished for salmon in the river, and gathered edible plant foods such as acorns. They created fine baskets, nets, boats and shelters from willow, and other native plants and grasses.

