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December 15, 1959

Mr. Jerry MacMullen
Serra Historical Museum
Presidio Park
San Diego
California

Dear Mr. MacMullen:

Channel six, in Sacramento, has an opportunity to produce a TV program for national distribution by National Educational Television. Channel six is an affiliate of NET. There are about forty-five educational stations in the United States, supported by School systems, Universities, or by a community. Channel six is supported by a community.

NET is a producing organization with offices in New York City and Ann Arbor, Michigan. NET is supported by the Ford Foundation.

In September, NET sent to each affiliate a letter announcing an opportunity to produce a half hour program based on a general title. The title is "Main Street." The only restriction, other than technical requirements, is that the program develops from the idea of "Main Street." This main street theme might be a philosophy, to others a place, to some a way of life.

To me, being new to California and to Sacramento, "Main Street" is the Sacramento River. I have read your book, Paddle-Wheel Days in California; which is serving as a basic source and inspiration.

The theme for the program is the expedient development of a natural highway or water-way to the gold fields, the scope of commerce on the river, and then the decline of the river as a highway. I am told that a statement of the river being dead as a commerce carrier is not quite true as the present day tonnage is greater than the tonnage during the best days of the steamers. This helpful information came from the River Lines. I do not quite know what this information will



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do the thematic development of the program. But I feel that the theme can become "optimistic" with the program ending with the development of the Sacramento deep water channel.

I feel that a TV program about the Sacramento River, the program recorded on film or video tape, would be of some value historically...before it is too late. I am discovering that there is not a steamer on the river, and the men who worked on the boats are few and far apart. Perhaps an old time boat could be found, repaired, and given to the State as a monument to the Gold Rush days.

I would like to know what you think about such a program, and perhaps you might have some ideas about such a show.

Sincerely,

Bill Winterbottom

Bill Winterbottom
Producer-Director
KVIE