

Native Daughters of the Golden West

Flag Presentation Ceremonies

Funeral Ceremony

Memorial Service

Adopted June 2017

CALIFORNIA BEAR FLAG PRESENTATION CEREMONY

Since time immemorial, it has been the custom of mankind to employ the use of banners and flags, not for the physical beauty that a piece of colorful cloth might have or to beautify the surrounding landscape, but as an emblem or symbol representing the principles he professes and the ideals for which he strives. On an occasion such as this, it is both fitting and proper that we pause for a few moments to recall the past and bring to mind some of the events and circumstances surrounding the birth of our California Bear Flag.

The Bear Flag of California was first raised on June 14, 1846, over the military fort in the mission town of Sonoma. That flag, however, was official only twenty-three days, for on July 7th of that year, it was replaced by the Stars and Stripes. Designers chose the grizzly bear as a symbol of great strength, the star to denote sovereignty, the colors red and white for courage and purity.

The original Bear Flag was preserved in the quarters of the Society of California Pioneers in San Francisco, but it was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1900. The Bear Flag was finally adopted as the official flag of our Golden State in 1911.

It is my/our pleasure in behalf of _____ Parlor No. _____,
Native Daughters of the Golden West, to present to _____
(name of recipient/group/entity) this beautiful banner. As daughters of California, it holds a place in our hearts second only to the Stars and Stripes. We ask that it be perpetuated and flown with the Flag of the United States of America whenever that emblem is displayed.

UNITED STATES FLAG PRESENTATION CEREMONY

History records the use of banners and emblems as symbols representing the principles of the people using them. On an occasion such as this, it is fitting that we recall to mind the meaning of our beloved Stars and Stripes.

Our glorious Flag is a cherished heritage from our Forefathers, and into it are woven the hopes and aspirations of our nation. The courage and purity symbolized by the red and white stripes, and the loyalty of the field of blue are crowned by the firmament of stars depicting the unity of our fifty States.

It is my/our pleasure in behalf of _____ Parlor No. _____,
Native Daughters of the Golden West, to present to _____
(name of recipient/group/entity) this beautiful banner. May the words of our pledge, "one Nation under God, indivisible" be always in our hearts with the prayer that this Flag, the emblem of our republic, will float forever over a free and independent nation.

CALIFORNIA BEAR FLAG AND UNITED STATES FLAG PRESENTATION
CEREMONY

The use of banners and flags has been the custom of mankind on every continent throughout the course of history. It was not the beauty of the bright pieces of cloth nor the beauty of the surrounding landscape enhanced by the banners that led to the varied colors and intricate designs of these flags. The banners and flags were emblems and symbols representing the principles man professed and the ideals of the people using them.

Our California Bear Flag became the official flag of the Golden State in 1911, but it was first flown on the plaza in the mission city of Sonoma on June 14, 1846. That flag was flown for only a few days, but it was a meaningful and beautiful symbol for our Golden State. The strength of the California pioneers was symbolized in the grizzly bear, the sovereignty of California was denoted by the single star, and the colors of red and white symbolized courage and purity. However, that Bear Flag was replaced by the Stars and Stripes on July 7, 1846.

The Stars and Stripes, the symbol of our united nation of fifty states, is a banner significant in many ways. It is a cherished heritage from our Forefathers, and into it are woven the hopes and aspirations of our nation. To symbolize the original colonies, there are thirteen alternating stripes of red and white; the red stripes symbolize courage, the white stripes purity. The field of blue symbolizes loyalty, and the fifty white stars denote the sovereign states that comprise our great nation. May our pledge, "one Nation under God, indivisible" be always in our hearts.

In behalf of _____ Parlor No. _____, Native Daughters of the Golden West, it is my/our pleasure to present to _____ (name of recipient/group/entity) these beautiful banners, emblematic of the Golden State and the United States of America. We ask that they be perpetuated and forever flown together, prominently and proudly, over a free and independent land.

FUNERAL CEREMONY

Upon notice of the death of a Sister, the President of the Subordinate Parlor or other Officer as specified in the Parlor By-Laws, shall consult with the family of the deceased Sister in regard to funeral arrangements. The wearing of hats and gloves is optional, and Parlor Members conducting the Funeral Ceremony may wear robes, if desired.

The Marshal leads the participating Officers to their stations around the casket, urn, or grave. The President is at the head, the Past President and the First Vice President are at her right, and the Second and Third Vice Presidents are at her left. The Marshal is at the foot. Attending Members stand in a semi-circle behind the Officers, or they may be seated together as a group in a designated area.

Marshal – (advancing one step)

There is a stream that all must cross, the River of Human Years

Now lying calm in the summer light, now splashed with the rain of tears.

Out from the hills of God it flows, and on to the shoreless sea

Where the noontide sun no shadow throws, and time is eternity.

(Marshal steps back.)

President – (advancing one step)

Of all the gifts in life, time is the most precious, for upon time other gifts depend. Our Heavenly Father controls the hands of time, and He saw fit to call

_____ (first and last names of departed Member) a
Member of the Native Daughters of the Golden West, to her/his eternal reward.

We knew and respected our departed Member as a friend, another of life's precious gifts. One comfort we all need in our journey through life is the love of friends; none of us can live life alone. The value of the life of our departed Member is pressed upon us.

Her/His virtues and those splendid qualities that made her/his life commendable will never be forgotten.

Although her/his journey through this life is over, pathways lined with good deeds and signposts that point to love, friendship, and understanding have been left behind.

She/He has put down the burden of her/his tasks and joined Him in His home of beauty, joy, and peace.

(President steps back.)

Third Vice President – (advancing one step)

Often, when the heart is burdened with sorrow, we wander frightened and lost, but there is consolation in the pathway of faith – faith that leads us to the peace we are seeking.

Today we feel great sorrow as we pay tribute to our beloved Member. There is left for us, her/his friends, with whom she/he closely associated in fraternal and everyday life, a memory resplendent as our own California blossom – the poppy – which traces in every petal the dignity and majesty of God.

While we feel a keen sense of sorrow and loss, we know that the Lamp of Faith lights the way to Eternal Rest for our departed Member.

(Third Vice President steps back.)

Second Vice President – (advancing one step)

Our departed Member filled her/his station in life with unswerving loyalty and devotion to the principles upon which our Order is founded, exemplifying the virtues of Patience, Duty, and Filial Affection. In her/his life of true service to our Order, State, Country, and Humanity, she/he gave freely of loyalty and sincerity, typifying the highest ideals of noble womanhood/manhood and patriotic citizenship.

We shall ever think of our departed Member as one of God's finest creations, combining strength with gentleness, modesty with uprightness, and truth with courage.

In the days that are to come, as we gather for our accustomed deliberations, we shall miss the bright smile, cheery voice, and cordial handclasp of our departed Member, but,

knowing that she/he is in the wonder of God's presence, her/his kindly influence will continue to guide us as a sanctifying benediction.

(Second Vice President steps back.)

First Vice President – (advancing one step)

Our departed Member's earthly sojourn in her/his native land was filled with happy hours, and now she/he has journeyed over the great El Camino Real into the bright sunset, leaving the warm glow of her/his gentle personality as a cherished memory for those who are left behind.

Valuing highly her/his precious heritage of having this Golden State as the land of her/his birth, our departed Member exemplified the ideals taught by our Pioneer Mothers and Fathers and was tolerant in her/his dealings with all mankind. Because we knew and loved her/him, may we continue to emulate her/his finest qualities, until we, too, receive the final summons and find rest in His presence.

Let us look to our Heavenly Father for direction and consolation.

(First Vice President steps back.)

Past President – (advancing one step)

Glorious Father, Who art in Heaven, we thank Thee for the happy moments we shared with our departed Member, for they made up our fraternal lives. Moments are golden but fleeting; they are here and then gone forever. Be with us in these solemn services, and comfort us with the sense of Thy love.

Bring Thy Divine consolation, O Lord, into the hearts of the family whose circle has been broken. May they be given the strength to realize that Thy presence will compensate for all losses and sustain them in their sorrow. May the memory of our departed Member be forever cherished in our hearts. Amen.

(Past President steps back.)

President – (advancing one step)

In this solemn hour, we reverently thank God for the existence of the Native Daughters of the Golden West, not only because of its great service to mankind, but also because of the satisfaction and joy it brought to our departed Member who was proud of having affiliated with our Order.

At Home, on the beautiful hills of God, by the Valley of Rest so fair,

Someday, when our work is done, with joy, we shall meet her/him there.

In a little while the unique dream of life will be over for all of us. The “morning without clouds” will dawn, and we shall all meet at the gates of Heaven that are always open for those who have exemplified a virtuous life.

In anticipation of that reunion hour, we offer these flowers as a tribute to our departed Member. Farewell, dear friend, until we meet again.

(President and participating Officers place their flowers on the casket or in a vase beside the urn.)

President – (continues speaking)

Each Member of the Native Daughters of the Golden West please come forward to offer your floral tribute.

(Members advance with their flowers to be placed on the casket or in the vase.)

(After all Members have come forward to place their flowers, the President follows the last Member and leads the participating Officers back to their seats or to the rear of the room.)

MEMORIAL SERVICE

We are gathered here today to bid a final and fond farewell to our beloved Member and friend _____ . (first and last names of departed Member)

Her/his presence will be greatly missed by all of us who knew and loved her/him. She/He desired to be of service to our Order and to preserve the marvels of the land of her/his birth.

On _____ (date) our departed Member joined the Native Daughters of the Golden West, one of the oldest fraternal and patriotic organizations in California. In so doing, our departed Member fulfilled her/his desire to serve others and honor the beauty and wonders of California.

(Optional: She/He chaired the following committees in her/his Subordinate Parlor: _____ (names of Committees). She/he was also an officer serving as: _____ (names of offices). She/he devoted many hours to her/his favorite project which was _____ . (name of project)

She/He was dedicated to our principles of Love of Home, Devotion to the Flag, Veneration of the Pioneers, and an Abiding Faith in the Existence of God. She/He exemplified this dedication in many ways in her/his daily life through the acts of love, kindness, and thoughtfulness which she/he bestowed upon her/his family, friends, Parlor, and community.

_____ (first and last names of departed Member) touched our heartstrings in her/his own unique way, and now she/he is being rewarded for the good she/he did upon this Earth. It is our fervent prayer that the spirit of love which enveloped her/his heart will fill our hearts with fond memories of our beloved Member.

May she/he rest in peace until we meet again.