

For Immediate Release

Los Gatos, Santa Clara County, CA Cutting Your Own Christmas Tree Ghost Town Restored & Christmas Trees Come Alive

The **PATCHEN** name goes back at least 2,300 years in England, before the Roman dominance and the birth of Christ. More recently, interesting characters and fateful events have dotted the landscape to shape Northern California's history and Christmas Tree shoppers at **PATCHEN** are able to enjoy some of this past and help preserve it for their children.

In the mid-1700's, the earliest writings about the wilds of the Santa Cruz Mountains, where **PATCHEN** stands today, were set down by Spanish explorers. Stories tell of untamed forests, where the countryside was replete with thirsty deer, great bounding grizzlies, and howling packs of coyotes. A visit to **PATCHEN**, brings back "memories" of those [centuries past](#).

The genealogy of **PATCHEN** traces back to one Joseph Patchen, who immigrated to America in 1634. Fast forward two hundred years, to find a notable race horse named "George M. Patchen" and his "get" nicknamed "California Patchen". They brought their names to California by showing well in San Jose, San Francisco and Sacramento around the same time as the first road across the Santa Cruz Mountains opened in 1855.

California was admitted to the Union in 1850, and the first white settler known among the pioneers was Charles Henry McKiernan, better known as "Mountain Charlie". He built the first road across the Mountains, but his most famous exploit was his encounter with a grizzly bear, after setting out to hunt deer near **PATCHEN** with neighbor, John Taylor and Taylor's dog. Spotting a grizzly, they both fired, but only stunned the great beast. With no chance to reload, "Mountain Charley" tackled the bear with his rifle until it snapped in two. The bear bit off a large piece of Charley's forehead but miraculously, McKiernan survived after having his terrible wound patched with a metal plate formed from two Mexican coins.

The town of **PATCHEN** once featured a hotel (Edgemont), a stage coach stop and a post office. The first local postmaster, D.C. Feely, represented **PATCHEN** at the American Exposition at New Orleans in 1885, taking fruit to exhibit along with him, from trees that still stand today. The famed novelist Jack London (1876-1916) spent much time just 100 yards down the road, and a careful eye will pick out the "*Call of the Wild*" road sign as you make your way to **PATCHEN**.

The Great Earthquake and Fire of 1906, and the more recent 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake destroyed much of what had been **PATCHEN**, but owner Jim Beck has restored what remains, having gradually purchased the land where the town once stood beginning in the 1960's. His goal in converting **PATCHEN** into a Christmas tree farm has been to preserve a bit of history and protect this mountain gem from development.

In its heyday, **PATCHEN** was a bustling town, with its own culture for more than one hundred years. It has found new life as a Christmas tree ranch, allowing the atmosphere to come alive once again in the form of a family-friendly Holiday experience. [You are invited](#) to come and celebrate **PATCHEN**, every Christmas season, and if you decide to choose and cut a Christmas tree to take home, you'll be helping to preserve a bit of California history.

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