

President's Message

Hank
Lohse



Every two years the Rocklin Historical Society Board goes through a major retooling. We lose some members, and we add new ones to take their place.

Most importantly, we change the office holders. Kathy Nippert has stepped down as President. Your former Vice President, I have become the new President.

Holly Clark, a new board member, is the new Vice President. Patrice Cardott has stepped down as Secretary and left the board.

The position of secretary remains open. If you or someone you know is interested in accepting this position, please contact me. Russ McNeill has agreed to stay on as Treasurer for the next two years.

As many changes occur, our mission stays the same ... "Save, Restore and Teach ... Saving our Past to Protect our Future."

The funding tool, Big Day of Giving (BIGDOG)

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Wedding evokes memories of school field trip

By Nancy Lohse

Who would have thought a simple school field trip would turn into something wonderful 13 years later?

Taking my third graders on the Rocklin history field trip was always fun. It gave them the chance to see Rocklin's artifacts up close – not only at the museum, but also at various sites around the city.

We would visit one of Whitney's twelve bridges at Clover Valley Park and check out the front doors from his mansion, the Oaks, at Sunset Whitney Golf Course. We hiked down to the Whitney pyramid/mausoleum and out to Huff Springs by Spring View Middle School.

After eating at the park next to city hall and peering into the Union Granite Quarry, we headed back to school.

On a whim, I asked the bus driver to stop in front of St. Mary's Church on Front Street. The little old building with its peeling paint and sagging steps looked as if it would blow over in the next gust of wind.

When I explained to



Allison Jones was a member of the third grade class that started the coin drive to save St. Mary's Chapel. She selected the chapel as the site for her May 2016 wedding to Danny Liu.

the students that it was the oldest public building on Rocklin and that the current owner was planning to tear it down, those nine-year-olds became upset and wanted to know how to save it.

Luckily, the Rocklin Historical Society was thinking the same thing. We started a coin drive, including all the third-grade classes in the district.

Eventually, the chapel was saved and moved to its current location in 2005. After hours of volunteer labor, the chapel was ready for weddings.

Fast forward to May 2016. I had just opened the Old St. Mary's e-mail to check on wed-

ding inquiries and noticed one was from Allison Jones. I had an Allison Jones in my class back in 2004 when we went on that field trip and began collecting all those coins. The message was from that her! I had been showing her photo to third graders for years!

Allison and Danny met at UC Davis Primatology Club. They spent their first two months of dating in separate countries as they both traveled over the summer.

When they started planning the wedding, Allison thought she wanted an intimate venue that was reasonably

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Out and about Old Town Rocklin

By Gene Johnson

Fixit Projects: The monsoon rains resulted in oodles of seepage in our museum basement and several inches of flooding at the lowest point. Fortunately, damage was confined to paper labels – some in the water and many more labels suffering from the high humidity. (Jean and Gary Day quickly replaced the labels).

Complacency brought on by years of procrastination (mine) and drought had delayed installation of a sump pump. In response to popular demand, a sump pump was installed by Hank and me. (It was good experience as I had to do the same at home.) There was no obvious external entry for the seepage.

The crew addressed drainage issues around the museum and George Salgado led a team to repair a clogged storm drain. We cross our fingers the seepage will not return.

By the way, we still need a cheerleader/drumbeater/manager person to replace Bob Mart– another person who loves to make things happen on Tuesday mornings. Have you ever yearned to boss people? Could you be the one? Or, can you help recruit that special person?

Women's Improvement Clubhouse on 2nd Street: The vintage home of Mel and Bertie Nevarez (both now deceased) once served as the Rocklin Women's Improvement Club building and community library. RHS informed the City of the home's heritage.

Most of the structure has been removed by the new owner of the property. However, the original front room remains suspended over the new foundation. It will be incorporated in a new, much larger



The former Women's Improvement Clubhouse on Second Street is undergoing a major facelift. While much of the house has been torn down, the front room will be incorporated into a new, much larger home on the property.

home being built on the property.

Deer Creek Park: Via our website, Daniel Frederick asked about "the origins of the name Deer Creek Park located at a granite quarry on Pacific Street... There seems to be no creek and no deer."

My response is based on recollections: The Geick family owned timber property on a stream in Nevada County. The stream was named *Deer Creek*. Circa late 1940s, the family purchased property in Rocklin and built a sawmill to process their timber; the mill was located immediately south of the quarry. (Sawdust and scrap was burned in a large conical burner or was dumped into their quarry ultimately filling much of the quarry.)

The Geicks then established a

retail store on property previously occupied by the Pilot Rock Café. The store was across Pacific Street from the mill. They named the business "Deer Creek Lumber Company." Sons Pete and Gene Geick operated the venerable Deer Creek Lumber Company and junk store for many years until it closed about 10 years ago.

The Geick brothers had a unique sense of humor evidenced by homemade articles they sold and the store's outlandish decor. They produced custom wooden signs, many of which were mounted in and around the store. One, "Deer Creek Park," appeared across the street in front of the large granite outcroppings at the quarry. And there you have it.

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Can you find this?

If you want to find this lovely spot, join Dr. Jim Carlson on one of his monthly walks through downtown Rocklin.

The easy, 1 hour, 15-minute walks start at noon on the second Saturday of each month at Finn Hall on Rocklin Road. Dr. Carlson will point out 10 historic sites along the way.

The walk will finish by 1:15 p.m. at the Rocklin History Museum on Rocklin Road at San Francisco St.

Bring cameras to capture some of Rocklin's historic views.

If you're interested in joining the tour of historic sites in downtown Rocklin, call or text Jim Carlson at 916-624-0682.

Wedding

Continued from Page 1

priced and close to home. It was her mother who suggested Old St. Mary's.

"I do remember the coin drive," said Allison when we talked. "I remember when we first visited the chapel. It looked so run down and taken over by weeds. It was in real-

ly sad shape.

"Learning about the history of the chapel got us excited. We started gathering coins and my enthusiasm grew.

"I remember counting coins in class and the day the news reporter came. I got to see myself on TV when it aired. Above all, I just remember more coins than I had ever seen before."

While all the brides at Old St. Mary's are special, Allison is unique.

She was part of the third-grade class that was closely involved in saving a wonderful part of Rocklin's history.

The fact that she and Danny chose the chapel for their special day was an honor.

President's Message

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is right around the corner -- May 4. It runs for 24 hours (Midnight to Midnight).

I'm trying to secure "Matching Funds" to help increase our contributions.

If you know of any companies or individuals that would like to

contribute matching funds, please let me know via e-mail (hlohse3@yahoo.com) or call me at 916-300-2856.

Holly Clark has also started a "Go Fund Me" account. She is doing some fine tuning on the account. Check it out at www.gofundme.com/rocklinhistory.

**Big
Day of
Giving** **MAY. 4**

Grandmother's story attracts attention of Finnish relative

By Gay Morgan

First, I must apologize for repeating some stories, but you'll see why I must.

I've written about my Grandma, Annie L. Matson, before. To jog your memory, she was the wife of a saloonkeeper, John Jefferson Morys.

When he died, Annie was left to raise five children. She worked hard and did the best she could. A few years later, she married the bartender, Anton Matson.

Annie, John and Anton were Finnish immigrants. For the past few years I have been playing around with Ancestry.com trying to find where they came from, but had no luck. It seemed to me that the spelling of their names had been Americanized, so where to go from there?

For example, I first thought An-

nie's maiden name was Wietala, but later found Vieta. I found them in the census and some legal papers, but still no luck tracking the Finnish roots.

Then one day a message showed up on the Historical Society's website. It was from a man in Finland, who had read one of my stories in the Quarry Quarterly—the one about Anton Matson and Theodore Roosevelt.

Of course, I was astonished that someone living so far away had read my story. I was certainly excited to find out more.

Carl-Johann Masala has been researching his Finnish family for years. He was trying to find out if



Carl-Johann Masala

my step-grandfather, Anton Matson, was his Anton Mattson, a brother to Carl-Johann's grandfather. .

Carl-Johann had seen a note his father had made on his genealogy quest. It said "Anton to USA married to a Finnish speaking saloonkeeper." He also found a letter from my grandmother to his grandfather pertaining to the death of Anton. He went to "Dr. Google"

and was directed to my story.

We have since exchanged family pictures and information and now I know the place in Finland where Annie came from. Her maiden name was Viitala. I know who her father and mother were.

There is still much more we both want to learn, but my new friend Carl-Johann Masala and I are helping each other.

History can be fun.

Tending to our gardens

By Sally Huseby

As we sloshed our way through the bountiful winter rain, we took care of gardens at the history museum and St. Mary's Chapel.

The moisture should help the plants get a good boost toward spring growth.

We are pruning and fertilizing

to help the flowerbeds look their best for visitors to the museum and the people booking weddings and other functions at the chapel.

We are proud of our gardens and invite you to stop in on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. at the museum.

You can come by the chapel any time for a walk around the grounds. They will be quite attractive as we move into Spring.



RANDY PETERS
CATERING & EVENTS
PLAN . PARTY . REPEAT .

Rocklin

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Addendum: The quarry property is privately owned with the exception of a sliver of city land adjacent to Pacific Street. The quarry, one of Rocklin's earliest, was first operated as Pacific Granite Company by partners Brigham and Hawes.

One of Rocklin's 31 parks currently carries the name "Brigham and Hawes." Ironically, it is miles away near Whitney High School. More information could be obtained from the members of the Geick family who reside at the NE corner of Third and Farron Streets.

Great news about city management: After a brief flirtation with the city of Reno, City Manager Ricky Horst, who accomplished so much for our city in his first five years, has signed on for another five years.

Not so good news: As Director of Public Services, Rick Forstall, made the visions of Quarry District and Quarry Park realities. He will retire in November. Rocklin Historical Society will miss Rick.

At a get-together of some of the folks who have made our retirement in Rocklin special, I presented both with appreciation plaques and life memberships in the Historical Society.

Water Tank: While wandering in the City Corporation yard, I stopped to talk to the carpenter. His project: a replica water tank to be installed at Quarry Park in front of the Rocklin Road firehouse.

Rip/Rap

By Gay Morgan

LaVerne Willard McGrath Splan, one of our charter members, celebrated her 95th birthday at a special gathering hosted by her daughter and son-in-law, **Eileen and Gary Barone**.

* * *

Sadly, we must report the passing of **Edie Boyd**, a long-time Historical Society member. Her family plans a Memorial Service at a later date.

* * *

Third grade students from Rock Creek Elementary School recently toured Old St. Mary's Chapel, the Fire house/City Hall replica, Rocklin History Museum and Quarry Park.

They were greeted by **Nancy Lohse, Nancy Ustaszewski, Diane Wade, Kathy Reed, Pat Woessner, Gay Morgan, Patsy Pattison and Russ McNeill**.

More schools are scheduled in April and May. (It is interesting to note that most of the people who volunteer to help with school tours are retired teachers.)

* * *

Southern California wildflowers are incredible this year, according to **Margaret and Gene Johnson**.

* * *

Jean and Gary Day attended a snowy family reunion.

* * *

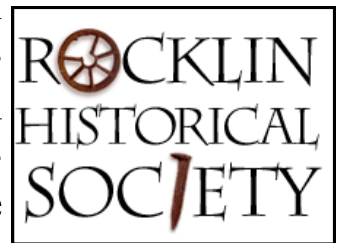
The committee for the Rocklin Reunion is making plans for a bigger and better reunion. Save the date for this year's event: May 28.

Help preserve Rocklin's history and support history-related arts projects.



The Rocklin Heritage Fund at the Placer Community Foundation supports the Rocklin Historical Society

Now it is possible to make tax-deductible gifts and perpetual endowments that will support Rocklin Historical Society programs including both visual and performing arts related to Rocklin's heritage. Please contact Veronica Blake at 530-885-4920 to learn how you can contribute, or go to www.placercf.org.



Local giving. Lasting value.



Rocklin Historical Society **Board of Directors**

Hank Lohse, President
Holly Clark, Vice President
Russ McNeill, Treasurer

Roy Ruhkala
Kathie Nippert
David Baker
James Carlson
Patsy Pattison
Nancy Lohse
Sally Huseby
Jeff Fultz
Ronna Davis
George Salgado

Springfield History Club

Springfield's History Club meets the fourth Monday of the month at 1 p.m. in the Whitney Room at the Gables' main clubhouse on Park Avenue.

There is no charge to attend. Visitors welcome.

Here are the scheduled presentations for the rest of this year:

March 27: Tales About Tahoe by Mark McLaughlin

April 24: Northwest Indian History by Charlotte Wilhelm

May 22: Seniors First by Janee Horning

Aug. 28: Environment Issues by Chet Blackburn

Sept. 25: The 1800s in California by Terry and Ray Earle.

Events Schedule

Old St Mary's Chapel Open for Tours

Wednesdays from 5 to 7 p.m.

Come take a look at the perfect location to host your next event!

History Walks

Second Saturday of the month

Meet noon at Finn Hall for a 75-minute walk led by Dr. Jim Carlson. The route is on flat surfaces and covers a variety of historic sites. For more information call or text Jim Carlson at 916-624-0682.

Rocklin History Museum

Wednesdays, Saturdays, Sundays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Docents always needed, For information call Gay Morgan at 624-2355.

RHS Board of Directors

Second Monday of month at 6 p.m. at Old St. Mary's Chapel

If you have comments or questions for the board of your historical society, this is your chance.

Fixers and Small Repair Crew

Second and fourth Tuesday of month

Meet at Old St. Mary's Chapel at 9:30 a.m.

For more information, call Gene Johnson at 624-2378.

RHS Planning Meetings

Tuesdays at 7:30 a.m. in the cafeteria at Oracle on Sunset Blvd.

Museum Committee

First Monday of month at 10 a.m. at Museum

Annual Memorial Day reunion

Sunday, May 28 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Fifth Street Community Center

General Meetings and Quarterly Socials TBD

Support the Historical Society by becoming a member! Annual dues, \$20 a year, can be mailed Rocklin Historical Society, P.O. Box 1, Rocklin, CA 95677.

Heads up: Rocklin Reunion slated May 28

It has been a long-standing tradition for the Rocklin Historical Society to host the Rocklin Reunion on Sunday of Memorial Day weekend. This year's reunion falls on May 28.

As always, we are planning a wonderful lunch from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and hope you will attend. It is great fun to catch up with friends from long ago or to tell new Rocklinites how the community used to be.

There will be old school pictures and interesting historic items on display. Maybe you have some to share.

Plan to make time to visit the Museum, Old St. Mary's and the new replica of the old fire house. Be sure to check out Quarry