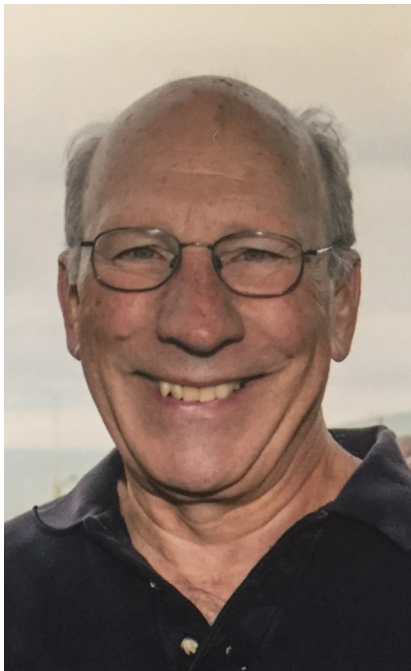


President's Message

Hank Lohse

As the year closes we look back at the Hits and Misses of 2017.

We started the year with a Vice President and no Secre-



Hank Lohse

tary and ended the year with a Secretary and no Vice President, well actuary Kathy Nipert jumped in and took over the VP job as Holly Clark moved to the Bay Area for a job promotion. Good Luck, Holly.

We weren't sure we were going to have a "Yard Sale" this year. All the summer time dates conflicted with some

(Continued on page 2)

Rocklin Hose Company Number One

Gary Day
updated and revised

In the early 1890s, demand for Rocklin's light-gray granite building stone grew steadily and Rocklin's quarries were at peak activity. Rocklin's railroad roundhouse employed 300 people and businesses flourished along Granite Avenue (now Rocklin Road), Front Street and Railroad Avenue.

But periodic fires continued to plague Rocklin's downtown business district as they had since the late 1860's. In 1893, as a nationwide economic depression was forming, fire consumed 25 business places from the Trott Hotel (now the Crossroads Church) southward along Front



Rocklin's first fire rig was similar to this 19th century hose cart.

Street. An equally disastrous fire a year later flattened the business block on the opposite side of the tracks along Railroad Avenue.

It was in this context that Rocklin Judge John H. Gregory convened a series of meet-

ings in the upstairs room at Porter's Saloon in the spring of 1894 for the purpose of forming a Rocklin fire company. At the third meeting, on June 4, 1894, each of seventeen men paid a \$2.00 initiation fee, elected officers and founded Rocklin Hose Company Number One, Rocklin's first fire department. The group elected Irishman William J. Byrne as company foreman, Rocklin's first fire chief. Every man was an unpaid volunteer.

The company's fire rig was a two-wheeled hose cart with a 100- 150 foot reeled fire hose. The rig occupied a room in Rocklin's first city hall, a 20' X 30' building partitioned for city council meetings and a desk for Rocklin's sheriff. The building was on Front Street on the exact spot of today's Old Saint Mary's Chapel.

In some American cities in the 1890's and early twentieth century, neighborhood fire alarm boxes were linked via telegraph-like circuits to firehouses. A person spotting a fire rushed to an alarm box and pulled down a handle sending a location-coded alert summoning the fire com-

(Continued on page 4)

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other project or activity. Finally we just closed our eyes and picked a date, good thing we did. The donations were starting to over run us. The "Yard Sale" was a big success and we made a respectable profit of over \$3700. As it turns out this will be the LAST "Yard Sale" on the Johnson Homestead.

On a high note, Old St Mary's Chapel had its best year with many weddings, funerals and Memorials. Thanks, Church Ladies.

The "Tree Lighting" on Front Street was a big hit, as usual, with free hotdogs, hot chocolate and cookies.

The Parade started at 4:00pm and the Tree Lighting at 6:30pm. With several stages and entrainment for the parents and kids. Some said it was the biggest crowd ever.

And finally the "Christmas Potluck Party" was extra special because Roy Ruhkala (you can call me Roy) was being Honored for his many years as a Docent at the Rocklin Historical Society Museum. Roy was also noted for his many years of service as one of RHS founding members.

Our goal this next year is to continue to grow our membership. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to join us as we continue preserving and sharing Rocklins amazing history.

Roy Ruhkala is honored at the annual Christmas party

Gay Morgan

It has happened before, many times, and always well-deserved. The Rocklin Historical Society honored founding member Roy Ruhkala for faithfully serving as a docent at the Rocklin History

has lived most of it.

At the History Society's annual Christmas party, President Henry Lohse presented Roy with a photographic memory album and commented on the years of service. Fellow docent Jack Schwab said he felt he had received an education listening to Roy. Daughters Royce Ann Burks and Bonnie Neumann shared

some family memories.

The album was lovingly assembled by Shirley Corral and Charlene Rhodes.

Roy says he is retired, he is 98 after all, but the possibility of running in to him at the Museum is pretty good. We all wish him well



President Hank Lohse honors President Emeritus Roy Ruhkala.

Photo Ronna Davis

Museum since it opened in 2002. Visitors on the first Sunday of the month were fortunate to have found the person who knew the history of Rocklin best because he

RANDY PETERS
CATERING & EVENTS
PLAN. PARTY. REPEAT.

Old Saint Mary's Chapel News

Nancy Lohse
Old Saint Mary's Chapel Chairperson



Old St. Mary's was once again the centerpiece for the 2017 Rocklin Tree lighting ceremony. Decked out in lights and the big tree shining beautifully in the chapel, many people would pause and take their family Christmas photos. A big shout out to the our men who strung the lights for the tree. It gets harder each year as it grows! A big thank you to the church ladies who helped decorate inside and outside around the chapel.

And also a thank you to all who helped take down the decorations! This year our chapel was the site of 67 happy couples marched down the aisle and rang the bell celebrating the beginning of their lives together. It has certainly kept our wonderful band of church ladies busy! And we love it! What a happy way to volunteer for your community! Old St. Mary's was also the site of 6 funerals and 4 memorial this year. What a beautiful, serene place to celebrate lives well lived. Please watch for upcoming events to be held at the chapel including our speakers series on February 19th. There will also be a special presentation in conjunction with Rocklin Friends of the Library on Women in History. All the monies collected from these events goes to the Rocklin Historical Society to continue their work of preserving our city's history. We are open Wednesday nights from 5-7 pm booking tours. Please stop by and say "Hi!"

Visit us for a chapel tour on Wednesdays from 5 pm until 7 pm
916-415-1150

www.OldStMarysChapel.com
email: oldstmaryschapel@gmail.com

(Continued from page 1)

pany. But Rocklin employed a fire bell located atop city hall for this purpose. A person spotting a fire would walk, run or travel on horseback, possibly as far as a mile, to enter the hose cart bay to pull the fire bell rope to summon the fire company. A person from the east side of town might have to wait for a train to pass before crossing the tracks to pull the rope.

On hearing the bell, fire fighters rushed to city hall, rolled the hose cart from its garage and moved it quickly to the fire. Sometimes they ran with it on foot.

Sometimes they paid as much as \$1.00 to the owner of

any nearby team of horses that they could recruit to pull it.

The firefighters elected each other to pre-assigned duties. At the fire site the hydro man connected the hose to the closest hydrant. The cart men pulled the cart ahead to unreel the hose. The nozzle man connected the nozzle to the hose and signaled the hydro man to open the hydrant.

The nozzle man was especially important in the process. He sometimes ran to the fire alongside the hose cart cradling the nozzle to ensure its safe transit. His special skill was in attaching that nozzle quickly and squarely to the hose's end. Wealthy nineteenth century quarry owner and land broker John Mantyla was a nozzle man. The fire company practiced

twice each month to minimize time needed to "show water" at the nozzle.

In 1910 quarry owner Adolf Pernu offered the work shift whistle at his Capital Quarry, now Big Gun Quarry, as an alarm bell substitute for east side residents, and later the hose



Rocklin's first firehouse was a 20 X 30 garage-like wooden building on Front Street at the site of today's Old Saint Mary's Chapel. Rocklin's city Council held meeting in the rear and Rocklin's sheriff occupied a desk at the front window.

company installed a fire siren



Replica of Rocklin Hose Company Number One firehouse is next to the Old Saint Mary's Chapel on Front Street

east of the tracks and across the street from today's Rocklin rail station. But the late Rocklin historian Ruben Ruhkala didn't remember that Rocklin ever used a neighborhood alarm box

system. He noted that, because of Rocklin's cumbersome alarm system, houses northeast of downtown would sometimes burn to the ground before the hose company could respond. Rocklin's early twentieth century fire fighters addressed each other as "comrade". They met

for business meetings at least once a month, mainly in the city hall's hose company facilities. Meeting minutes show that discussions of fire suppression experiences and other fire-related topics occurred only twice in the 21 year period from 1894 to 1914. The men were probably heroes in the community.

Newspaper accounts show that they fought many fires in those early years. But their

main concern, discussed at length at most business meetings, was the maintenance of a dance platform and the conduct of July 4th Firemen's Balls and other dances. Sometimes they scheduled dances as often as weekly, on Saturday nights. The meeting minutes show that the hose company paid to have the dance platform stored away in the winter months and that they probably located it at different downtown sites each year. In 1910 the hose company formed a separate corporation to profit from renting out the platform for dances and other uses, including roller skating. Ruhkala remembered a 1920s era platform for both dancing and roller skating on the Railroad Avenue hill across Rocklin

(Continued on page 5)

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president*

Road from today's Rocklin rail station.

By the early 1930s Rocklin's volunteer fire fighters had acquired a four-wheeled fire cart that they sometimes pulled with an automobile. They acquired their first motorized fire unit, a Dodge VanPelt, in 1936 with surplus city funds. The Van Pelt



Rocklin's 1936 Dodge Van Pelt shows up at many community functions

was too big for the space in the Front Street city hall so the fire-fighters moved fire station operations to larger facilities on Rocklin Road near the railroad tracks. Later, in the early 1940s, the city vacated and demolished the 50-year-old Front Street firehouse and moved city offices to the granite building at 3980 Rocklin Road. That building was originally a company store for employees of Adolf Pernu's California Granite company. Early this decade the Rocklin Historical Society and the Rocklin Fire Department developed plans and secured funding to build a replica of the Rocklin Hose Company Number One firehouse about 100 feet south of its original spot. Construction finished in 2017. An old schoolhouse bell replaces the original bell which has disappeared. The replica building is now a fire fighting museum with room for grooms to prepare for their wedding ceremony in the Old Saint Mary's chapel next door.

History Series Continues

Ronna Davis

The Rocklin Historical Society's History Series continues on Monday evening, 7 pm, February 19, 2018 at Old St. Mary's Chapel.



Historian Michael Stark, always a popular speaker will be presenting "Roaming the Sierra Nevada Foothills." Invite a friend and come to enjoy this presentation. Stay for refreshments, always served following our programs.

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.

Historical Society Tidbits

Gene Johnson

Museum Roofing: Just in time, M. S. Clark Roofing (Mike Clark) installed new roofing on the Rocklin History Museum.



The City of Rocklin published a list of venues related to the year-long celebration of the city's incorporation in 1893. Although it seems appropriate, Front Street and the just completed replica of the Firehouse/City Hall built at that time are not on the list. Opportunity knocks.

The City is moving Front Street (at Farron St.) a few feet farther from the RR tracks to facilitate legal left turns to and from Front Street - expect more traffic by OSM, Cante ao Vinho and Peter Hill Heritage Park. New yellow fire hydrants are being installed as part of the project. PCWA donated a vintage hydrant for display at the Rocklin Hose Company Number One

2017 went un-noticed as the 10th anniversary of Old Saint Mary's Chapel

Gene Johnson



Old St. Mary's (OSM) passed her 10th anniversary in September with little fanfare but with an outstanding record of achievement. In what turned out to be a first step in Rocklin's current journey from blight to beauty, RHS proposed the move and rehabilitation of OSM and initiated negotiations with Union Pacific for its new location. The city assumed responsibility for the lease of the property and for landscaping; RHS rehabbed the building with the help of 400 contributors and volunteers. We committed that Amy Calahan would be our first bride on Sept 22, 2007. With a nervous Amy monitoring progress the steeple was installed the night before and plantings, borrowed from Home Depot, were

put in place for the event. Last year, 2017. Nancy Lohse's chapel team did more than 70 weddings and other events.

Prospective brides are invited to OSM 5 to 7 p.m. on Wednesday evenings (and often sign up); rehearsals typically happen Thursday & Friday with main events on Saturday or Sunday. Nancy says visitors are also welcome on 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesday nights

Happy Birthday to the City of Rocklin!

Kathy Nippert



On February 24th, 2018 the City of Rocklin will celebrate its 125th Anniversary of Incorporation with a party at Quarry Park from 11am to 3 pm. Kathie Nippert with the Rocklin Historical Society and Cris Gerard with Rocklin Kiwanis have been attending meeting with the City to help plan the event. So far we will have entertainment, food trucks, games and even a special dessert.

The Historical Society will have members of our Cemetery group "Voices of the Passed" dressed in period attire wandering about the park handing out membership forms, flyers to advertise the Cemetery Tour on October 28th, 2018 and providing photo opportunities. The service clubs in Rocklin were asked if they were interested in having a booth or an activity at the event. We will join up with other

service organizations, like Lions, Rotary and Kiwanis to share a booth to show what we have accomplished in the last 125 years and what we hope to accomplish moving forward.

It's a very exciting 125th Anniversary year for us and our city with lots of fun stuff planned. For more information, please go to the City of Rocklin's website <https://www.rocklin.ca.us/125th-anniversary-celebration>

Rocklin Hose Company Number One replica firehouse get Commemorative marker

Gene Johnson



With the help of the City of Rocklin a commemorative marker was installed at Rocklin Hose Co. No. 1. The plaque reads: "May 1893: another block fire on Rocklin's Front Street - 25 businesses destroyed – chambermaid Alice Irish lost her life. That same year the City of Rocklin was incorporated. Foremost on the new city's agenda was the need for fire protection and for a building to serve as the City Hall and Firehouse. The building was completed the following year on property provided by the Southern Pacific Railroad. Rocklin's City Trustees shared the office area with the City Marshal and a small Library. But the building was best known as the home of the carts that carried hoses volunteer firefighters of Rocklin Hose Company Number 1 attached to hydrants to quench fires. Too small to meet the needs of the growing city, the original structure was vacated and demolished circa 1944. This replica of the building was completed by the Rocklin Historical Society in 2017."

completed by the Rocklin Historical Society in 2017."



Above: Gene Johnson reminds us that heritage Park was once a derelict wasteland cynically called Smurfville.

Why you should join the Rocklin Historical Society

Gay Morgan

I have lived in Rocklin for almost 85 years and of course I am a proud member of the Rocklin Historical Society. Two hundred forty other individuals and families also belong. The current population of Rocklin is about sixty thousand plus. Many people talk about the good things the History Society has done, The History Museum, Saint Mary's Chapel, The Firehouse replica, The Quarry Quarterly etc. Other plans are being discussed. They will need workers, money and materials.

Rocklin is your town now even if you

Join us!

have just arrived from the Bay Area or parts unknown.

Many of you have said how much you like Rocklin, it's great schools, parks, friendly people, community spirit etc. Become a part of it. Find out why Rocklin is here and how it became what it is today. Oh I know, you work, you have busy lives, you have children. You can still join and show your support for new projects. Yes, we need volunteers but that is your choice. You don't have to attend meetings or volunteer unless you want to. It is a nice group of people. We work hard but we have fun too.

We do need your support and we will put your dues to good use. Think about it.

Rocklin historian is at the century mark

Gay Morgan



There is a pamphlet at the Museum that is a basic for anyone looking up Rocklin History. The author is not a native, in fact she grew up in Kansas, loved to read and went to Normal School to become a teacher. Like that other Kansas girl Dorothy, she left Kansas (but not in a tornado) and came to California.

As fate would have it she got a job teaching school in Rocklin. The State of California said she must get more education to earn a State Teaching Credential. And so she began, nights and summers for years. When she needed to write her thesis she decided to write about Rocklin History and that became one of our go-to sources.

This great lady is very private, she will probably scold me for writing this. But she is reaching a new milestone. She is a Lifetime member of The Rocklin Historical Society and will be 100 years old in January. Please join me in wishing a Happy Birthday to the lady from Kansas, Lila Harman.

NEW DOCENTS

Gay Morgan

If you have visited the Museum recently, you may have noticed some new faces. They are docents in training. They will be on the regular schedule in February. Stop by and say hello.

This group of five really didn't need a lot of training, four of them were born in Rocklin and the other moved here as a young bride and raised her chil-



dren here. We are happy to welcome Jennie Navarro back.

The other four are daughters of a Ruhkala brother. Recently retired docent, Roy Ruhkala is the father of Royce Ann Burks and Bonnie Neumann. Abner Ruhkala was the father of Joanne Lawson and Diane Bell's dad was Ben Ruhkala. As you might guess, all have many stories to tell about Rocklin. Welcome ladies.

Book a Tour

Gay Morgan

Rocklin History Museum Tours for ten or more people can be made by calling Gay Morgan at 916-624-2355 or gfmorgan@att.net



There is no charge but donations are appreciated.

Know Your Docents

Gay Morgan

Featuring Dr. James Carlson, D.C.

When he arrived in Rocklin in 1985, Jim said he immediately felt at home. There were only two “stop and go” lights and little traffic. He liked the older homes, the operating quarry and the lumber industry that provided the refreshing woodsy smell when you woke in the morning. The railroad running through town with its clickety-clack rail sounds and whistles reminded him of the small town in Iowa where he grew up. He wanted to know more about his new home and

began attending the Rocklin Historical Socie-



Dr. James Carlson

ty meetings in the old library on Fifth St. Co-chairmen at that time were Roy Ruhkala and Marie Huson. As he be-

came acquainted, he began to think of Roy as a surrogate father. Roy taught him many invaluable things such as the power and value of using plain words. Dorothy La Budde, a member of the History Society and the Friends of the Library became his surrogate mother. She mentored him, drilled him on Roberts Rules of Order and encouraged him to serve as the President of the Rocklin Friends of the Library. It was then that

we began to hear about “The information Highway” and how it would change libraries, and

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

many other things as well. Later the prediction came true with the advent of the internet.

He was elected as President of the Rocklin Historical Society at the turn of the century. One of his memories of this time was meeting at the Fletcher-Moon House with Roy and Frank Moon to make an agreement to buy the house to use as a Museum.

The Board of Directors voted to proceed with arrangement in early 2001. He remembers too meeting with the contractor on a beautiful September morning and learning of the first plane striking the World Trade Center.

Walking Tours.

The Tours begin at Historic Finn Hall and continue through Quarry Park and on to Front Street and end at the Museum.

Beside his community service with the History Society and Friends of the Library, Jim also works with the Kiwanis Club. He is a Doctor of Chiropractic having graduated from the University of Iowa and the Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport. When the San Francisco 49ers had their summer training camp at Sierra College in Rocklin, players used his service. He became friendly with some of the coaches and players and

in his church, takes great care of his beautiful dog, King and still has time for his photography hobby.

Jim says his hope for the future of the History Museum is that we adapt to the digital age by having more interactive exhibits and utilize technology to create a virtual reality experience.



The Rocklin History Museum opened in 2002 and Jim has been a faithful docent for all these years. In 2016 he began leading the Second Saturday

recently shared some of his mementoes of the team in the museum's collections display. His office and home are in Rocklin. He is active

Margaret *Margo* Ellen Ruhkala Kantola 1924-2018

Margo died peacefully at the home of her son Steven in Sacramento, CA. on January 3, 2018. She was the youngest of the eleven children of Matt and Eva Ruhkala of Rocklin.

She was preceded in death by her husband John. She is survived by her daughter Margot and sons Steve (Jill) and Rick (Heidi), seven grandchildren, three great grandchildren, numerous nieces and nephews and her brother, Roy Ruhkala of Rocklin.

Services will be at a later date.

Donations can be made to

The Rocklin Historical Society,
P.O. Box 1, Rocklin CA. 95677

Mark your calendar

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 City of Rocklin, Parks and Recreation Building in Springview Park

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

Springfield History Club

Fourth Monday of month at 1 p.m. in the Whitney Room at the Gables' main clubhouse on Park Avenue.

Contact Joyce Marcroft 251-7054

February 19, 2018 Speaker Series at Old Saint Mary's Chapel at 7 pm

Michael Stark

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



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