

President's Message

Roger Lokey

Appearances can be deceiving. Consider a duck swimming on a quiet pond. Apparently quite at ease, our duck effortlessly makes its lazy way across the water. However, just below the surface, the duck's feet are moving furiously to propel him on his way. The surface progress of RHS this winter season may appear much like a duck on a pond to the casual observer....but that is certainly not the case!

Below the surface and out of sight, great effort is being applied to move your RHS forward across 2006. When the sun shines again and community activities begin, the RHS will be positioned to begin implementation of our St Mary's Heritage Park vision.

To define, focus and fund our vision, the Park Funding Committee, chaired by Kent Dazey, is composed of the following committees which have worked sacrificially and tirelessly for the past several rainy months. The committees are: Church/Park, Public Relations, Event, Membership/Sponsor and Grant Writing/Foundation. They are chaired respectively by: Gene Johnson, Susan Nelson, Kate Hay, Dr. Jim Carlson, and Carol Powell. The recommendations of these committees will drive RHS efforts for 2006.

This year and next will be busy, challenging and productive times

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A Pyramid for a Tomb?

Gary Day

In January 1913, Joel Parker Whitney, called Parker then, died at Del Monte California after a long bout with kidney disease. He was 78.

According to Richard Miller's *Fortune Built by Gun*, Parker had prepared a pyramid-shaped mausoleum for himself at his Spring Valley Ranch near Rocklin where his family entombed his remains shortly after the funeral.

The pyramid is now an often-photographed curiosity in Rocklin's



J.P. Whitney's Mausoleum

Joel Parker Whitney's pyramid-shaped mausoleum is enclosed by *The Fort*

Whitney Oaks neighborhood. It is constructed of granite blocks and juts about 15 feet skyward from a 40 foot diameter enclosure of piled rocks and native-granite boulders. Nearby boulders show bedrock mortars where Nisenan women and

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Saint Mary's Appeal

Gene Johnson

The historical society is leading the restoration of Saint Mary's, Rocklin's only remaining 19th century public building.

Saint Mary's is in her new home in Heritage Park. Scaffolds are up. Spring is here. When the rain stops we will be starting with the upper structure.

When the restoration is complete, in December, Saint Mary's will be an outstanding historic venue for weddings, meetings and concerts.

The building is small, the schedule is tight. We have received funds and in-kind donations of approximately \$100,000. Our challenge now is to raise \$176,000 more to complete the restoration

You can help by spreading word of the opportunity to help. You can help by volunteering for one of the committees described in the President's message (column one) or by naming individuals, organizations or businesses willing to contribute funds, skilled labor or materials. Call 624-2378 if you can offer help.

Look for a newsletter in May detailing sponsorship opportunities. But don't wait, contribute today if you can

Heritage Park Update

Mark Riemer, Director of Rocklin's Department of Community Services and Facilities confirmed recently that The City of Rocklin will spend \$250,000 for utilities and general landscaping for Phase One of Heritage Park. Riemer expects that the city will complete the work by Summer 2007.

Ralph Trimm, of Trimm Building Materials, installed scaffolding for Saint Mary's restoration at a nice discount. We will be climbing when the rain stops.

New Train Depot Still on Track

Rocklin's new train depot is on track for completion this Spring. Meanwhile, Chamber of Commerce CEO Robin Trimble is looking forward to occupying her new digs in the depot's clock tower.

Buck's Barbeque Donates Oven

Buck's Barbeque on Front Street donated a Traeger pellet-powered smoker oven, complete with cook book and chef's cap. The cooker is heavy, high quality and retails for over \$800. The unit is available for historical society functions

\$100 = \$26,000, Here's How

Rocklin Historical Society membership is at least 260 families. If each RHS family contributed \$100, we would put \$26,000 in the bank for Saint Mary's restoration. Can you do your part now? Write that check, make that pledge, or do the Paypal thing at www.rocklinhistory.org.

A DOCENT is a PERSON WHO SERVES AS A WELL-INFORMED GUIDE

Barbara Chapman

Have you thought of "shadowing" Gay Morgan as she presents the program for the visiting third graders? Have you thought of "shadowing" Ruth Williams, Roy Ruhkala or Ruben Ruhkala when they present the program in our basement for the third graders? If not, make a commitment to give it a try before our school year is over. Strengthen your skills in handling "crowds" and strengthen your knowledge specific to our granite history and how it affected the economy of our city.



Gay has a list on the bulletin board in the museum office listing the dates the schools will be visiting. Please consider committing yourself to the time to re-hear and re-learn about our history. And please, let Gay (624-2355) know when you plan on coming.

Another reminder: Whenever you come to the museum for any docent or society work, please record your time so Treasurer Karen Lokey can

Barbara Chapman continued accurately document our hours in her reports about our non-profit status.

And finally, are you ready to say "I do"? Heritage Park planning is moving ahead and the restoration of St. Mary's is underway. We need a committee to design and decorate the interior of the building and plan what we can offer to a prospective bride. Please call me to indicate that you would like to undertake and dedicate yourself to this project. We need to meet soon. This project will require lots of research, lots of meetings, and lots of sharing.

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President's Message

for the RHS. However, funding must precede restoration and vision implementation. To that end many good people have dedicated their time and treasure this winter to resolving this issue; starting with the Park Funding committee. Those collective efforts and activities will begin to unfold in the weeks ahead.

Appearances can be deceiving; and like our duck, the efforts and activities that make RHS successful are not always obvious....but the results of those efforts will soon emerge, to be enjoyed and appreciated by Rocklin residents for decades to come.

Roger Lokey

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children ground acorns into mush until the early 19th century.

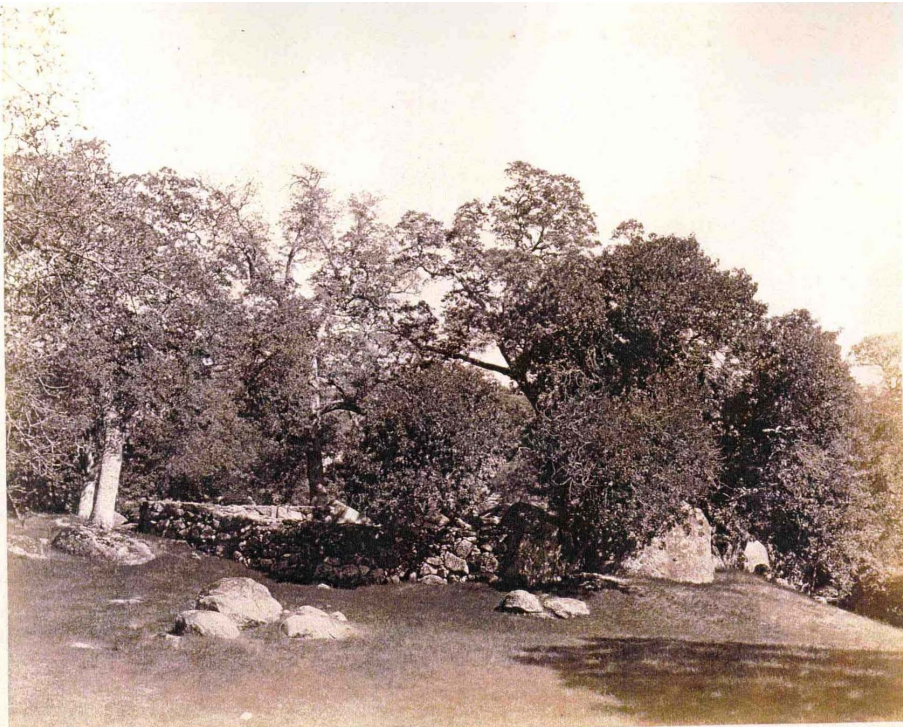
The enclosure abuts a seasonal stream in a grove of oaks, but it predates the Mausoleum, probably by at least 20 years. In the mid-1880's Parker commissioned Runnels and Stateler of San Francisco to photograph his newly constructed *The Oaks* mansion and other scenic areas of his ranch. The enclosure, without the pyramid, appears in a photo titled *The Fort*. Speculation of former Whitney Ranch area residents and Whitney family members is that Parker built the fort as a children's play area. His three children were all younger than 10 years old then. Parker must have started thinking of the fort as a potential burial ground only after his children outgrew it.

History doesn't record the pyramid's maker or its construction date. However it seems, from the fort photo and Miller's account of Parker's demise, that stone masons built it sometime between the mid 1880's and 1913. Parker was very sick during his last 3 years and it might have been then, as he saw the end approaching, that he ordered construction by one of Rocklin's granite quarrying firms. But why did Parker want a pyramid for a mausoleum?

The late 19th century saw the advent of a belief that pyramidal forms hold special spiritual powers. The belief is called "Pyramidology". A few 19th century religions integrated its tenets and by the early 20th century it would not have been unusual for Parker to believe that pyramids can restore good health and assure reincarnation.

According to Archeologist David

Chavez, who studied the Whitney pyramid in the early 1980's, there is evidence that Parker developed an interest in Pyramidology at the 1867 Paris Exhibition. He was displaying Colorado mineral samples there, trying to entice investment in Colorado mines and real estate. Parker's Colorado investments



This Runnels and Stateler photo of the mid-1880's shows The Fort without the mausoleum. Some think that this was a play area for Parker's 3 children.

were the main source of his wealth. French Egyptologist Auguste Mariette had recently unearthed a unique form of pyramid at Abydos, Egypt, and had a model of it on display at the Exhibition. Mariette's Abydos pyramid features a single burial and a base with vertical sides. Chavez' theory is that Mariette and Parker met at the exhibition and discussed Mariette's find. This meeting might have started Parker's interest in Pyramidology, or it might have merely reinforced beliefs that he acquired from his reading and his extensive travels in the eastern states and Europe.

At his death, Parker's remains were alone in the pyramid, and the pyramid rests on an Abydos-like vertical-sided base.

Today the pyramid and the fort are enclosed in a one-acre iron-fenced compound at the north end of Monument Park, about 100 yards left of the 11th hole at the Whitney Oaks Golf Course. Whitney family members set aside the acre for their permanent use while they sold off Spring Valley Ranch land to other ranchers and housing developers. About a dozen of Parker's descendants gather at the site each year in May for a reunion.

Next Time: **Who's buried in Whitney's Tomb?**

Mark your Calendar

Museum— Open Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday 1 to 4

Historical Society General Meeting—Monday May 15, 2006, 7 pm, Rocklin Library

Roundhouse un-party—June 3, 2006 (tentative)

Heritage Park Committee - Meets every Wednesday at 7 am at Oracle's cafeteria.

Un-Party Brewing

Gary Day

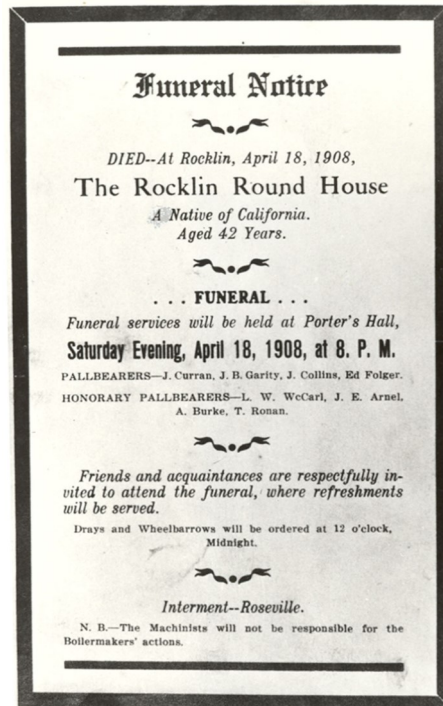
Bud Caldwell reports from Roseville that, on June 3, 2006, the Roseville Historical Society will celebrate the 1908 move of Rocklin's roundhouse to Roseville. The party will be in the middle of **old Atlantic Street**, near the steam engine that we see as we drive into Roseville on **new Atlantic Street**.

In 1863 railroad pioneer Theodore Judah planned to build the roundhouse in Roseville. But Judah died later that year and new railroad managers decided to build the roundhouse at Rocklin instead, closer to the point where trains needed extra engines to climb the steepening rail bed toward Auburn.

The Rocklin facility opened in May 1867. It included 28 engine stalls, a turntable and an 8,000 square foot woodshed where Rocklin's woodchoppers stored the 16 cords of wood that each engine needed for the 82-mile strain to the Sierra summit.

The Rocklin roundhouse experienced at least two major fires, and was rebuilt at least once, but it was in service continually until 1905 when railroad management

announced a major expansion. Rocklin's residents were elated as news came of a new and larger roundhouse for Rocklin and a new train station. But hopes were crushed in 1906 with news



According to historian Leonard Davis, Rocklin's Railroad employees published this Roundhouse Death Notice in the April 25, 1908 edition of the Roseville Register

from the railroad that the roundhouse would soon close in favor of new facilities in Roseville. The logic was that the round-

house should always have been in Roseville because Roseville was (and is) at the junction of two major rail lines. By April 1908 the railroad had moved roundhouse operations and closed the Rocklin facility permanently

In its heyday Rocklin's roundhouse employed 300 people.

From 1906 through 1908 Rocklin's population declined by 80% as roundhouse workers abandoned their homes or moved them to Roseville on flatcars.

By 1912 Rocklin's abandoned roundhouse had become a dangerous eyesore and Rocklin's City Council required the railroad to demolish it. The foundation, and parts of the west-facing exterior rock wall are still visible near the Crossroads Church.

More information about the June party is on the way from Roseville. Meanwhile, if you are interested in organizing an un-party in the midst of the Roseville revelers call Gene Johnson on 624-2378

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