

Legacy Dinner a Success Saint Mary's Gets Funding Finn Hall sells out

Roger Lokey and Gene Johnson

The Legacy Dinner on June 5, 2006 raised over \$30,000.00 to be applied to the St Mary's church building and/or the Heritage Park project! Perhaps more importantly, it was attended by a cross-section of Rocklin residents including nearly all the City Council, many City Administration officials and the Rocklin Fire department. Please note every service club in Rocklin was represented. The dinner created a legacy of its own; Rocklin residents wanted to support its purpose, and they truly enjoyed an evening of camaraderie and commitment.

Kent Dazey and his team of volunteers deserve oodles of credit for a fantastic event put together in record time. At first we oversold the capacity of Venita

Rheas and moved the event to newly painted Finn Hall. Then we sold out Finn Hall. The Nu-Tones band and Kiwanis auction team, David and Cynthia Syndrey, did a superb job of entertaining. Society members and the community at large responded with great generosity. Whitney Ranch Developers stepped up as Gold Sponsors for the event. Silver sponsors included: Yuill Insurance and Financial Services, Granite Bay Ventures, Rocklin Cares, Halldin Public Relations, Rocklin Montessori Preschool, the Corral Family, Russ Hagey as well as Alfred Corral who donated St. Mary's original Granite Baptismal Font and Roy Ruhkala who donated new granite steps.

Crowd in the Pyramid

Gary Day

The pyramid-shaped Whitney family tomb is an often photographed curiosity near the 11th green of the Whitney Oaks Golf Course.

History doesn't record the tomb's construction date but one family member theorizes that Lucy Chadwick Whitney prepared it for her husband, Joel Parker Whitney, called Parker then, a few months before he died of kidney disease in 1913.

The family opens and reseals the tomb periodically, most recently in May 2006, and today it contains the cremated remains of 17 family members and close friends. Nine of these people had little, if any, impact on Rocklin's history or operations of the Whitney Ranch.

But the following eight tomb residents were known in Rocklin and, because of Parker's wealth, generosity and influence, were celebrities of their times.

George Whitney, (1801 – 1885) and his wife Sophia Whitney, (1807 – 1888) were Parker's parents. George ran a special breed of sheep on open Placer County rangeland in the mid 1850's and established the Whitney Ranch, later known as the Spring Valley Ranch, in 1857 with the purchase of 320 acres near Rocklin. George ceded control of the ranch to Parker in the early 1870's. The presence of George and Sophia in the tomb indicates that the family might have constructed the tomb as early as the mid 1880's.

Joel Parker Whitney (Parker), (1837 – 1913) was wealthy by his mid 30's, mainly from investments in Colorado mines and real estate. He acquired control of the Whitney Ranch from his father George in the early 1870's and expanded it to 27,000 acres by bring-

In Memory of

**Marie Huson
July 9, 1916
July 10, 2006**

Former City Council Member
and Former Mayor
Co-founder and Lifetime Friend
of the Rocklin Historical
Society

President's Message

May and June kept RHS members, friends, acquaintances and any casual observer who would speak to us, as busy as a one-legged duck. (See previous President's message.) The Legacy Dinner and annual Rocklin Jubilee occurred only 19 days apart. The timing and scope of these events required non-stop use of the brains and brawn of many outstanding RHS members. Both events were very successful (of course; consider the source) and RHS is extremely proud of all concerned.

President's Message

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Oops

Gary Day

The San Francisco Mint at Fifth and Mission, affectionately the city's "Granite Lady", survived the 1906 earthquake intact thanks to her floating granite foundation. A public outcry saved her when U. S. Treasury officials tried to surplus her after they moved minting operations to a new building on Hermann Street in 1937.

Soon the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society will spend \$80 million to restore her for use as a museum and commercial center.

Of course Rocklin takes pride in all of this because, as historians have been writing for at least the past 44 years, the Lady's granite originated in Rocklin's 19th century quarries.

"But wait" says Penryn historian and Rocklin Historical Society member Cliff Kennedy, "that granite is from Penryn, not Rocklin!"

And it turns out that Kennedy is probably correct. Kennedy's has comprehensively documented, from government records and personal diaries of the early 1870's, that the granite in the Lady actually originated in the Griffith Griffith Quarry in Penryn. The San Francisco restoration group has modified the Lady's written history accordingly.

Kennedy's work is on file in the Rocklin History Museum. Come on in and have a look.

Docent's News

Barbara Chapman 415-0153

The remaining six month's of 2006 docent schedules have been mailed. If you have not received yours, please let me know. There are extra copies in my box at the museum. If you need to change your assigned day, please contact other docents to arrange an exchange date, and feel free to notify me if I can help. Use the 2006 calendar in the small white desk drawer at the museum to mark down these changes when you are there.

Some reminders:

When at the museum, the front door should be unlocked and remain unlocked while the museum is open.

All volunteer hours need to be recorded as they are important to our museum recordkeeping.



Do not leave food items that will attract ants to our kitchen area.

Leave a note on the bulletin board if you notice supplies are out or running low.

Don't forget to put out the "donation jar" from the file cabinet and to return it when closing.

Your suggestions have developed the procedures at the museum. If you feel changes are needed, please let me know.

To those docents who have (or don't have) gift certificates for An Afternoon to Remember, when shall we go? The new gift shop is open and a cup of tea with its delicately fascinating aroma is most delicious when accompanied by friends.

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The Jubilee required an immense amount of planning and effort as we expanded the scope of our presentation this year. Our float might be the best ever and the judges' recognized that effort with a Second Place win in our category! The Tile Painting and Granite Splitting demonstration were unique and enjoyed by all visitors. Many positive comments were made about the RHS Heritage Park Project Planning depiction on display. Had the heat not been a major factor of the day, our visitor count would easily have tripled. People enjoyed our booth!

To our great surprise, on June 29, the United Auburn Indian Community graciously donated \$10,000.00 to the Heritage Park Project! Their check can be viewed at the Museum. Rocklin history begins with native-American people and we acknowledge them as the Founding Residents of Rocklin.

Please plan to attend the General Meeting on September 18 as it is a barbeque dinner at Johnson Springview Park in the outdoor pavilion. It will be an RSVP (head count) event with a charge of \$7.00 per person for food, drinks and entertainment. Sadly, space here will not allow recognition of all of the individual RHS members who contributed to the Legacy Dinner and Jubilee successes. Suffice it to say, RHS is blessed with smart, concerned and dedicated civic leaders who have stepped up to the plate and hit home runs. Rocklin is indebted to you for your gracious hearts and spirits.

Our RHS mission is to raise the profile of the Rocklin Historical Society in the eyes and hearts of the Rocklin community and to remain an enduring influence for the appreciation and perpetuation of the unique historical legacy of Rocklin.

We newer RHS members stand on the shoulders of giants whose accomplishments require our dedicated efforts to equal. I think we are on the right track.

Roger Lokey
President
Rocklin Historical Society

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ing water from the Bear River watershed and diversifying ranch activities. He befriended the native Nisenan and documented their life ways, built the Oaks mansion in the mid 1880's and founded the Placer County Citrus Colony in the late 1880's. Rocklin's northern and western development since the early 1960's has been mostly on the southern 12,000 acres of Parker's Ranch.

J. Parker Whitney (1878 - 1924) was oldest of Parker's three children. The J in his name stood for nothing, ala the S in Harry S. Truman. He was a bon vivant and a scoundrel, known in Rocklin prominently for his frequent forays at Porter's saloon. He once paid a girlfriend \$2,500 to drop charges that she had brought against him under a white slavery law after he had jilted her for another girlfriend, all of this during the last years of his marriage to the first of his three wives, wealthy socialite Daisy Parrott.

J. Parker managed the Spring Valley Ranch at the turn of the century but eventually lost control to his brother Vincent. One family member credits J. Parker's poor management skills and irresponsible lifestyle with the start of the decline of the Whitney empire.

Katherine (Kate) Gorby Whitney (1886 - 1939) was J. Parker Whitney's third wife. J. Parker died four months after the marriage in 1924, but by court order his estate supported Kate and her children from a previous marriage until 1939. Kate and J. Parker once occupied the Gorby family home, later famously the Heback home, next to the original site of the Catholic Church on Front Street.

Lucy Ann Chadwick Whitney (1847 - 1926) was Parker's third wife and the

mother of his only three children, J. Parker, Vincent, and Helen Beryl. She married Parker in 1881 at Saint Paul's Church across the street from

Capital Park in Sacramento after the birth of her first two children. Lucy fought her children bitterly over Parker's will, losing out to her son Vincent and eventually winning only a small increase in her monthly allotment. Lucy's sister Margaret was in

ensuing marriages and divorces. She apparently was never a factor in Spring Valley Ranch affairs and finances, but Rocklin old-timers remember that she once operated a restaurant in downtown Rocklin. She was childless and the last of Parker's direct descendants to occupy the Oaks.

Vincent Whitney (1880 - 1966) was Parker's second son, a San Francisco Insurance Broker who wrested control of the Whitney Estate from his mother and siblings after his father's death and sold off ranch assets during the early and mid 20th century. Today the wealth of the Whitney empire of the late 19th and early 20th centuries has largely dissipated, although many family members retain valuable artifacts which they removed from the Oaks in the 1930's..

Sam Edwards was a family gardener, and evidently a favored servant because a tiny plaque inside the tomb indicates that Sam's remains are buried in an unmarked grave outside the tomb. So step carefully when you visit.

Next Time: Rocklin goes to the Races



Whitney Family Historian, Jean Day and Mary Whitney the wife of Joel Parker Whitney's Great Grandson Allen Whitney, pose inside of the white marble-lined Whitney pyramid during a May 2006 Whitney family picnic. 17 urns are behind the doors at left and right. The family has removed valuable artifacts because of periodic vandalism.

Lucy's wedding party and she is also in the tomb, however her importance in family and ranch affairs is unclear.

Helen Beryl Whitney (1884 - 1935) was the youngest of Parker's three children. She grew up during the halcyon days of Parker's Placer Citrus Colony and twice appeared promoting

the colony in Sunset Magazine, once on the cover. She eloped from college with Harvard football star Thomas Graydon in 1904 and graced newspaper scandal sheets through three

Mark your Calendar
Rocklin History Museum—
Open Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday 1 to 4
Historical Society Picnic
Monday September 18, 2006,
6:00 pm, Johnson Springview Park (business meeting at 5:30)
Heritage Park Committee -
Meets every Wednesday at 7 am in Oracle's cafeteria.

FINNISH TEMPERANCE HALL

Jean Sippola

John Mantyla, who arrived around 1880, was the first Finn in Rocklin. After he opened a small quarry, which prospered, Mantyla wrote long, glowing letters to friends and relatives in Finland encouraging them to come to Rocklin. His message may have fallen on unresponsive ears at first, since seven years later Rocklin's Finnish population had only increased to ten. But after Mantyla bought a large section of granite-producing land, which he subdivided and sold to his countrymen, the Finnish population had a dramatic growth. In fact, Finns dominated the quarry business in Rocklin, which may have been the most important granite center on the West Coast.

Soon three Finnish boardinghouses were thriving in town. Some joker said that the opening of the first Finnish bar in 1889 suggested that Finns were arriving in greater numbers. Of course, the opening of that bar was followed by the birth of the Valo Nuorempi Temperance Society, which had a slow growth until it constructed a Finn Hall—small in size, but large enough for dances, meetings and social evenings,

In 1905, when the growth in membership seemed to have no limits, Valo Nuorempi made an impressive addition to Rocklin. The society built a second hall, a much larger Finn Hall that was the most magnificent building in the city. In 1948 the Finnish Kalevala Brotherhood and Sisterhood Rocklin Lodge #5 purchased Finn Hall, and in 1959 the lodge sold Finn Hall to the Rocklin American Legion. In 1962 the City of Rocklin purchased the old building for \$1800. Finn Hall, now owned by the City of Rocklin, was completely renovated by the city (with the help of the State of California) and rededicated as Rocklin's Finn Hall, in March 1990. The renovation cost over \$500,000. The hall is often referred to as The Grand Old Lady.

At the rededication a wish was expressed, "May she serve the community for another 85 years."

News and Notes:

Heritage Park/ Saint Mary's Restoration Fund Raising Update

We are half way to our goal of \$276,000 with large contributions from Whitney Ranch developers(\$5,000) and The United Auburn Indian Community(\$10,000). But hundreds of smaller contributions make up most of our funds and we are relying on you to write a check, make a pledge, or do the PayPal thing at www.rocklinhistory.org.

Or call Gene Johnson on 624-2378 to join local craftsmen, laborers and engineering professionals who are donating their time to the restoration.

St. Mary's Restoration Status

Clark Pest Control and Rocklin Pest Control cleared a pesky and dangerous bee colony from the rear of the church

RHS member Mike Clark is installing trusses and a new roof .

We still hope to complete all exterior work on the building by December. If you can help with siding refinishing, insulation, carpentry or painting, please call Gene Johnson on 624-2378.

High Power PG&E Lines Undergrounded in Downtown Rocklin

Thanks to public pressure generated by a group led by community activist Kent Dazey, PG&E has installed new downtown power lines underground instead of overhead as they had originally planned.

This is \$6 million investment by PG&E in our historic district and the future of Rocklin's downtown.

Third Graders do it again

RHS spin-master Susan Nelson calls it the "Change to Change Rocklin".

Third graders at Valley View, Parker Whitney, Breen and Antelope schools recently presented RHS President Roger Lokey with \$800 in coins for the Saint Mary's Restoration Project.

This is the third year that Valley View third grade teacher Nancy Lohse has organized a coin-drive donation to the Rocklin Historical Society as part of the schools' math and history curricula.

Roundhouse Un-Party

About a dozen society members, outfitted in mourning attire, mounted a solemn protest at the Roseville celebration of the 100th anniversary of the move of Southern Pacific roundhouse operations from Rocklin to Roseville in 1908. Carol Peterson and Ron Petersen provided black armbands and official antique mourning ribbons. Protest posters included "Rosevillains Took Our Trains" and a reprint of the Rocklin Roundhouse Funeral Notice originally published in the Roseville Register in April, 1908.

Train Depot Opened

Rocklin's new; vintage styled train depot is complete. Rocklin Chamber of Commerce CEO Robin Trimble is looking forward to occupying her new office within the clock tower. Unlike many public clocks, the depot clock will actually work and will maintain accuracy regulated via the Denver atomic clock.

Time Capsule Ticking

The Rocklin History Museum recently received a 26 inches high, ceramic time capsule from the Rocklin Chamber of Commerce for storage until 2031 when it will be opened for a look back at Rocklin in 2006. RHS member and leadership class student Christy Barros stuffed the artistic ceramic capsule with DVD's, newspapers and predictions about Rocklin's future.

Gift Shop Bargains

Gift shop operator Joyce Sherman reports that she has a new supply of Rocklin caps at \$16.00 each. The caps are available in several colors including a popular pink.

They show "Rocklin" in large letters across the front.

Joyce also has a supply of "Rocklin Pulls Together" tee shirts" - \$10.00 each for adult sizes and \$5.00 each for youth sizes.

Come on in between 1 pm and 4 pm on Wednesday, Saturday or Sunday and have a look at all of Joyce's offerings.