

President's Message

We did it!

There is of course, the old saying, "never look back." However, sometimes it is worth the effort. In our case the RHS achievements of 2007 are astounding. Christmas of 2006 saw us caroling at St Mary's in a cold room with no windows or lights, full of construction equipment including a giant scaffold and building materials stacked everywhere. Undaunted, our ingenious ladies decorated that old, dingy, and dark room with a Christmas tree, Christmas lights and delightful hot drinks and cookies! Although attendance might be considered modest, a wonderful time was enjoyed by all who attended.

Now, fast forward through 2007 to caroling at St Mary's once more. What a change! The scaffolding is replaced with beautiful chandeliers and the building materials with pews. Charming windows, a beautiful floor and softly painted walls captivated a capacity audience who enjoyed singing, instrumental renditions, and a refreshment table overflowing with food. The entire event was nothing less than "elegant"

The completion of St Mary's to the point of hosting our first wedding on September 22 is a tribute to Gene Johnson and his merry band of volunteers, over three hundred in number. Please note that as the bride came up the front stairs, Gene was backing out the annex door attaching the doorknob as he departed!

Space does not allow a full and complete accounting of the immense effort expended in 2007 to finish the restoration of the building. So many should be recognized and commended for their dedication and perseverance in this endeavor. We will make every effort to revisit this topic later. It required eight months and twenty-two days of 2007 to raise St Mary's from a derelict to a delight. Two years and 5 days from the day St Mary's was pulled into the 21st century, a bride walked down the front steps into her new future.

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Saint Mary's and Heritage Park

Gene Johnson, Chairman, RHS Heritage Park Committee

We pulled out all the stops to meet our commitment to have St. Mary's ready for the 3 weddings starting Sept 22. As the date approached we chose debt over dickering and charging over charity. With the help of the community, we made it by the skin of our teeth. Nearly 5 years of weekly meetings and over 2 years of on-site work brings to mind the Finnish word Sisu (roughly translating to: guts, strength of will, determination, perseverance to complete the task in spite of impossible odds). Clearly we could not have met our goal without the contributions of every one of our donors and volunteers – watch for the volunteer recognition event.

St. Mary's is again serving the community as Rocklin Historical Society's Old St. Mary's Chapel. In addition to the 3 weddings, she has hosted two memorial services, one Christmas concert and one RHS general meeting. A piano concert is scheduled for March; weddings are signed up for May and July respectively. As President Roger Lokey predicted, it appears that St. Mary's will have a busy future and will be able to pay her bills.

Our September 2007 surge is history. Our first 2008 milestone will be met with the completion of a number of outstanding items needed to obtain our final occupancy permit – for example: door hardware and handicap signage. Additional needs include: fine tuning of the



The Grace Notes spellbound an overflow crowd with Christmas selections at Old Saint Mary's Chapel on December 23, 2007.

heating and cooling system; re-gluing the Whitney doors; installing rear entry posts, front trim and an audio-visual capability. Three historical displays are to be developed: St. Mary's history and artifacts; other historic Rocklin churches; and St. Mary's restoration. All in all there are over 80 entries remaining on the building "loose ends" list.

President Lokey and landscape architect Alex Miller are leading the landscaping effort in conjunction with the City of Rocklin. A new ADA entry ramp and landscaping adjacent to St. Mary's is expected to be in place by mid-2008.

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president

RHS took on a worthy and unique project with the restoration of St Mary's. But the impact of this work has yet to be fully appreciated by the Rocklin community. When this project is completed to include the Bride's Patio and landscaping, there is absolutely no doubt that St Mary's will be recognized and cherished as a beautiful and fascinating monument to the history of Rocklin. Thank you RHS!

Roger Lokey
President

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Gene Johnson

As with our museum, St. Mary's represents another big step from blight to beauty in central Rocklin. There is a current need for volunteers for on-going cleaning and maintenance of the building and grounds to meet the standards that have been set with the museum.

There has been time for rest and recreation. For Marg and I: the Cirque in San Francisco; Thanksgiving and Christmas with friends; gift books; a challenging kittens and cats jigsaw puzzle. Now, the 7 a.m. Wednesday morning volunteer meetings at Oracle are restarted for 2008. Come and contribute – food's good, price is right, camaraderie - second to none.

PS: Many images covering the restoration of St. Mary's taken by Holly Clark can be found at:
<http://clarkcorona.exposuremanager.com/g/documentary>

**To join the Rocklin
Historical Society call
Gay Morgan at 624-
2355**

Did You Know?

Gary Day

Adolf Pernu, owner of Rocklin's early twentieth-century California Granite Company, built today's Rocklin City Hall building in 1910 as a company store for his company's quarry worker employees. Pernu died in 1931, and as Rocklin's quarry businesses faltered with the Great Depression, Pernu's creditors took possession of the building and leased it to C.A. Moon who operated a market there until the late 1930s. The City of Rocklin bought the building from Pernu's creditors in 1940 and it has been Rocklin's City Hall since then.



Rocklin Historical Society Installation Dinner

The annual Rocklin Historical Society Installation Dinner is scheduled for Monday, January 21, at :

The Granite Rock Grill,
5140 Pacific Street
6:00 to 9:00 pm

RSVP with payment by January 18th so we can give a headcount to Granite Grill. Call Gay Morgan at 624-2355 or Karen Lokey at 435-9966.

Menu

Appetizers

Green Salad w/Italian Dressing

Main Course

Smoked Tri Tip

Dover Sole Almondine

Mashed Potato w/gravy

Garden Medley of Vegetable

Old Fashioned Dinner Rolls

Pasta Prima Vera

Deserts

Carrot Cake

Drinks

Soda, Iced Tea, or Coffee

Beer & Wine - On Sale

In Memory of
Ted Bravos
May 10, 1920
December 1, 2007

World War II Veteran
and
Former President and
Lifetime Friend of the Rocklin
Historical
Society

Rocklin Golf Courses—A Rocky History

Gary Day

Rocklin challenges golfers with two top-tier golf venues, Whitney Oaks Golf Course and the course at the Sunset Whitney Country Club. But in the late 19th century Rocklin was also home to one of California's first golf courses, a nine-hole circuit in the middle of the Whitney Ranch.

George Whitney established the Whitney Ranch in 1857 when he purchased 320 acres of rangeland west of downtown Rocklin to run a special crossbreed of Australian and California sheep. His son, Joel Parker Whitney, called Parker then, gained control of the ranch in the early 1870s, diversified its activities and expanded it to about 20,000 acres during the next 30 years.

By the early 1880s Parker was wealthy from his Colorado mining investments. He decided to transform parts of the ranch into a baronial estate to flaunt his wealth and to provide a permanent home for his wife Lucy and the couple's three small children. He built his 20-room *Oaks* mansion in the mid 1880s and connected it to downtown Rocklin, three miles away, by improving and extending the ranch's decomposed granite roads. Parker was enamored of English Society. He traveled to England yearly and built most of the twelve bridges on his road to Rocklin in the style of stone bridges of the English countryside.

In the late 1880s Parker founded the Placer County Citrus Colony to lure Englishmen to purchase small citrus ranches in Clover Valley and on the flatter lands to the north and east in Loomis and Penryn.

In the 1890s, as today, golf was a favored sport among Englishmen. English golf professionals were popularizing golf on America's east coast and Parker decided to please his English friends and provide recreation for ranch visitors and his family by building his nine holes on the slope of the knoll below the *Oaks* and on the surrounding lower terrain. A modern 9-hole course would occupy about 75 acres but history does not record the exact layout of Parker's course. A photo from the very early 20th century shows the tee for one hole near a boulder now at the corner of Hanover and Kali in Rocklin's Claremont neighborhood, about a quarter mile southeast of the *Oaks*' knoll.

Parker's diary indicates that he completed course construction in the late 1890s and that the course was still playable at the turn of the century. It must have been well maintained until at least 1910 because Parker touted it as a ranch feature when he

tried, but failed, to sell his ranch that year. When Parker died in 1913 Lucy moved out of the *Oaks*, and with the children gone the course probably started to deteriorate, with the land returning to its natural state. Whitney historian Richard Miller lived at the *Oaks* when his family leased the northern half of the ranch and ran cattle there in the late 1930s. Miller remembers that only vestiges of the course were visible then. Parker's golf course is now covered by residential neighborhoods near Mansion

constructed greens.

Sunset also provided access under Midas Avenue to a planned 9-hole executive course on the north border of Sunset Oaks in lower Clover Valley.

California touring golf pro Bob McAllister won the first Sunset Camellia Open in October 1964. But big name pros like Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus didn't appear and, despite intensive coverage by local media, galleries were thin. This tournament was Rocklin's first and only experience

with top PGA touring pros and its failure to draw big crowds was a marker for slow home sales and the demise of the Sunset City project in the mid 1960s, National Golf Courses Corporation bought Sunset Oaks in 1966 and changed the name to Sunset Whitney Ranch. A later owner changed the name to Sunset Whitney Country Club.

Today's owner at the country club plans to improve clubhouse facilities and build residences on course property. The site of Sunset's planned executive course is now covered by a residential neighborhood along Rawhide Avenue.

According to Rocklin City staff, Rocklin's third golf course, Whitney Oaks, started life in the early 1990s as a Landmark Land Development Company course called Stanford Oaks. Landmark encountered financial problems and abandoned the project before starting construction. Live Oak Enterprises built Whitney Oaks Golf Course in the mid 1990s on the land intended for Stanford Oaks. The course opened for play in 1997.

Whitney Oaks covers the middle of a 250+ acre canyon-like valley which was the vineyard and orchard in the late 19th century of Parker's friend O.T. Brown. Parker provided water to Brown's valley in the late 19th century. In return Brown willed the valley to Parker. Brown Died in 1901 and Parker integrated the valley into the Whitney ranch.



Helen Beryl Whitney Graydon, Joel Parker Whitney and Lucy Chadwick Whitney tee off near the rock in Rocklin's Claremont neighborhood.

Oaks Park.

Sunset International Petroleum Corporation built Rocklin's second golf course, Sunset Oaks, in the early 1960s. It opened for play in June 1963. It is at the foot of Clover Valley surrounding Sunset Hill and it extends southward toward Roseville. Sunset Oaks was the centerpiece of a self-contained metropolis that Sunset intended to develop on the southern 12,000 acres of the Whitney Ranch. Sunset built their course to PGA competition standards in order to host an annual PGA tournament, the Sunset Camellia Open. According to former Sunset Vice President Dale Stringfellow, Sunset was flush with cash from the sale of a Southern California oil refinery at that time and spent willingly to ensure that the pros had the best of championship conditions, including specially

Frederick Hodges will play Old Saint Mary's

Gary Day

From Hodges' Publicity Material

California native Frederick Hodges specializes in the piano music and popular songs of the ragtime era, the 1920s, and the 1930s. Classically trained and groomed for a career as a concert pianist, he was happily lured away from this path after he discovered a stack of 1920s sheet music in this grandmother's piano bench. Exposure to the rollicking rhythms of player pianos and 78 RPM phonograph records sealed his fate, and he set out to master the ragtime and novelty piano playing styles that had captivated him.

While still an undergraduate at UC Berkeley, he was hired by Don Neely to serve as pianist and singer with the famed Royal Society Jazz Orchestra. Frederick has displayed his unique piano playing and singing talents on stage, on television, and in



Royal Society entertainer, Frederick Hodges will be in concert at Old Saint Mary's Chapel on March 16 at 2:00.

Hollywood movies. He has had the honor of performing for stars of stage and screen, royalty, captains of industry, and even Tin Pan Alley composers. He is a favorite at jazz festivals around the country.

Admission \$25.00

**Call Jean at 624-0241 for tickets
No ticket sales at the event**



Rocklin

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Newsletter proofreading by **Allan and Marie Stone**

Gift Shop Manager Needed

Bill and Laura Woods
Museum Curators

Your Rocklin History Museum needs a Gift Shop Manager. If you are interested in volunteering for this position, please call Roger Lokey at 435-1632 or Laura Woods at 625-0800.

Please Send Us your Email Address

Christy Barros
Publicity Chairman

Sometimes it is convenient for us to communicate with Rocklin Historical Society members via Email. But we have only a few Email addresses on our roster. If you have access to Email, please send us an Email message and we will add your Email address to the roster.

Christy Barros
christy@inetinc.net

Dues are due

This is a reminder that RHS renewal dues are due by January 1.

Please send your renewal dues to:

Rocklin Historical Society
P. O. box 752
Rocklin California, 95677

Mark Your Calendar

January 21

RHS Installation Dinner.

President Roger Lokey - state of RHS

February 18

General Meeting:

7 pm - Old Saint Mary's Chapel-
Jere Myers - History of area Indians

March 15

Saint Mary's Restoration Volunteer Appreciation Day

Old Saint Mary's Chapel
More later

March 16

Frederick Hodges in Concert at Saint Mary's

2 pm
Old Saint Mary's Chapel
Call 624-0241 for tickets.

March 17

General Meeting.

7 pm - Old Saint Mary's Chapel
Kevin Brown Supt. Of Rocklin Schools

April 21

General Meeting.

7 pm - Old Saint Mary's Chapel
Speaker to be announced

April 26,

Old Saint Mary's Chapel Grand Opening

More later

May 14

Legacy Dinner

Bemoaning the 100th anniversary of the Rocklin Roundhouse move to Roseville
More Later

May 19

General Meeting.

7 pm - Old Saint Mary's Chapel—
Speaker to be announced

Rocklin Historical Society

Planning - Meets every Wednesday at 7 am in Oracle's cafeteria.

Rocklin History Museum

Open Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, 1 to 4