

President's Message

Dr. Jim Carlson

We are off and running for 2010. We have had a successful transition of officers and boards with a wonderful Installation Dinner at Sunset Whitney Country Club. The new Board studied and revised the by-laws, standing rules and budgets. A new Communications Committee was established. This committee currently needs a chairperson, with e-mail skills. A mailing effort resulted in an increase of membership.

Our society has benefitted from good press with feature articles and photo spreads. Speakers at our monthly meetings to date have been excellent with more coming, including a presentation in June coordinated by our newest board member, Gary Noy of Sierra College.

Upcoming events include a trip to Mare Island in April, our Legacy Dinner in May and the Rocklin Reunion in June

Let others know, that despite a name that some think is a bit stodgy, we are a group that has fun and makes history. If you are not a member please consider joining at www.rocklinhistory.org.

Save your stuff

The Rocklin Historical Society will be scheduling a garage sale later this year. Please save your unwanted items and donate them when the date is announced. The society has 501 (c) (3) status, donations are usually tax deductible.

Mary Etta Holland is scrap-booking

Mary Etta Holland is keeping a scrapbook of published information about Rocklin's history and The Rocklin Historical Society. If you spot an item in your reading please clip it with the publication date showing and drop it off at the Rocklin History Museum tagged for Mary Etta or call Mary Etta at 435-9043.



Jean Sippola

She met her first husband in High School and they were married after graduating from Junior College. They moved to Sacramento so he could attend Sacramento State. Jean worked for the Secretary of State in the Capitol building where the Visitor's Office is today.

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Know your docents

Gay Morgan

Jean Sippola was born in Auburn and spent her early years in Georgetown on a dairy ranch. She attended school in a two-room schoolhouse. It was heated by a pot-belly stove that the teacher had to get going each morning. There was no indoor plumbing. When it was hot the teacher would lead the students to a nearby ditch for a drink. The downstairs classroom was for the first through fourth grades and the fifth through eighth grades met in the second story. Jean was excited about entering the fifth grade because when there was a fire drill the students would climb out a window and down the fire escape. But about that time the family moved to Auburn and Jean still regrets not getting to go down the fire escape.

Jean went through the Auburn School system and went on to graduate from Placer Junior College that shared a campus with Placer High School. Jean's graduating class chose the name "Sierra College" for the soon to be built new college in Rocklin.

Join the fun Take a tour of Mare Island

Allan Stone

On Wednesday, April 28th, the Rocklin Historical Society has a reservation for a tour of the facilities at the historic Mare Island Naval Base and Shipyard in Vallejo.

The tour commences and ends at the Mare Island historic museum and includes the beautiful St. Peter's chapel with its' authentic Tiffany stained glass windows, goes inside the Admiral's mansion, visits the stately Colonial Revival era mansions on officers row and the dry dock, which was built using Rocklin granite.

The guided tour is part drive and part walk. We will drive in our own vehicles from place to place on the island and then walk through the various sites with our guide.

The tour will start at 10 am, conclude at about 1 pm and will be followed by a lunch at a recommended restaurant in Vallejo right across the channel from the island.

The tour cost is \$14 per person payable at the start of the tour by cash or check.

We will organize car pools, leaving at about 8 am from 5th Street in front of Gene Johnson's house. Please call Allan Stone at 916-315-8699 to be included in this outing or to get more information.

Information about Mare Island is also available at www.mareislandhpf.org.

**The Rocklin Historical Society Presents a one act play
The return of Joel Parker Whitney, "My friends call me Parker"
Written, produced and directed by Dani Loeb
Starring Sierra College History Professor Dan Defoe as Joel Parker Whitney**

Gary Day

In the mid 1850s, George Whitney crossbred Australian Merino and California Saxony sheep in an experiment to improve the quality of California's wool. He ran his stock on open Placer County rangeland at a place pointed out by his son, Joel Parker Whitney who was called Parker then. Parker had noticed the beauty and agricultural potential of the area in 1852 at age 17 on his way from San Francisco to Auburn to find gold. By 1857 the cross breeding project was successful and the Whitney wool was in high de-

mand, so George decided to give the operation permanence. In 1857 he established a sheep ranch with the purchase of 320 acres in the midst of thousands of unoccupied acres. That purchase, which became known as The Whitney Ranch, was in the Stanford Ranch neighborhood of today's Rocklin. Meanwhile throughout the 1850s and 1860s Parker travelled widely and was a risk taker. He was a real estate investor, a civil War officer, an Indian fighter, and an ambassador to France for the Colorado Territory. His hunt-

ing prowess and his investments in Colorado gold and silver mines made him wealthy before age 40. Parker assumed control of the Whitney Ranch when his father George retired in the early 1870s. He diversified into a wide variety of agricultural products by bringing water from the Bear River watershed.

In the mid 1880's he reserved ranchland for a baronial estate for his young family. He built

Old Saint Mary's Chapel is ready for your event

Gary Day



On September 17, 2005 The Rocklin Historical Society moved the 122 year old Saint Mary's of the Assumption Catholic Church 1000 feet north along Front Street and restored it to become the centerpiece of Rocklin's new Heritage Park at Front Street and Rocklin Road.

The church, Rocklin's oldest public building, had been a target for demolition earlier in the decade when the owner planned to clear land for a new office building.

The restoration includes a new steeple and bell tower. The originals yielded to woodpeckers and foul weather in the 1930s.

The building sparkles in white with new landscaping across the street from the granite Barudoni building, another of Rocklin's historic downtown landmarks. The church is now the non-denominational "Old Saint Mary's Chapel" available for weddings, memorials and other public functions. Call Roger Lokey at 415-1150 to make reservations for your event.



Joel Parker Whitney (Parker) is the subject of a one act Dinner Theater play by Shakespearian playwright Dani Loeb. The Play stars Sierra College History Professor Dan Defoe as "Parker"

a mansion about 3 miles from Downtown Rocklin, adorned the property with decomposed granite roads and granite bridges and later built his own golf course and tennis courts. By the time of his death in 1913 he had expanded the ranch to 20,000 acres and left a fortune for his heirs. Western Rocklin occupies the southern 12,000 acres of Parker's ranch.

Meet Joel Parker Whitney when he returns to Rocklin to tell his story at the Sunset Whitney Country Club on May 21, in a play by Shakespearian Dani Loeb. For tickets call Gay Morgan at 624-2355.

An interview with Barbara Corral

Alfred Corral

In the early 20th century, Rocklin's granite industry was in decline and our area began to witness the arrival of our first Spanish settlers. Rocklin area Spaniards had left Spain and travelled with free passage around Cape Horn to Hawaii where they worked for two years in the pineapple industry. With their work contracts satisfied, they travelled to our area and some established fruit ranches here.



The Alva Children in 1923, from left Julia, Barbara, Gala, Frank, Laura, Irene and Carnation

On January 7, 2010, I, Alfred Corral a local historian interviewed my ninety-two year old mother Barbara Alva Corral, a daughter of Spanish immigrants. She shared her early memories of growing up in Rocklin.

My parents Telesforo and Marcelina Alva emigrated from Fuentesauco Spain in 1911, arriving in California in 1913 after two years in Hawaii. I was born on June 28th in Penryn.

My Father bought our ranch in 1922. I was five years old when we moved to Rocklin. The land had to be cleared of trees and brush.

My dad had a carpenter build the house on the hill near the large rocks. The Corral-Alva Park is located on the former ranch.

We walked over a mile to school, rain or shine, until my dad bought the Model T. I walked to school with other ranch kids like the Sasaki, Aguilar and Corrals.

I had fun at school, some of the games we played were; hopscotch, marbles and hide-and-seek. The other kids always wanted our bread, because my mom always baked fresh bread in the outdoor oven.

We spoke Spanish at home and English at school. I graduated from eighth grade in 1932. Living on the ranch was hard work, I had 5 sisters and one brother, we always had a lot to do.

Sometimes we would take strawberries or raspberries with us, and sell them on the way to school. Sometimes we would leave the ones we didn't sell at the Willard's House and pick the crate up on the way home. Mrs. Willard sometimes gave us cake.

My older sister Gala and I would walk to the Rocklin train station and ride the train to Penryn. We took the grocery list from our

mom to Dairiki's store. Mr. Dairiki would fill the order and then pick us up at the Boisa's house and take us back to the ranch.

The influenza of 1919 was something my mother always talked about. She lost her brother and his wife and two of their four children in a short period of time.

We always walked to the cemetery, and placed flowers on the graves. I still continue to do that.

We had big parties at the ranch celebrating different occasions. Many times my dad would hire a band from Lincoln to play in the house, everybody would dance. Many friends would come to the ranch, we loved these times!

The Corral's also had a ranch near us. They also came from Fuentesauco. I grew up knowing my future husband. Frank and I were married in 1937 and had four children Edward, Gene, Alfred and Shirley. I still live in Rocklin.

Dues are due

Please send your \$25.00 renewal dues for 2010 to:

**Rocklin Historical Society
P. O. box 1
Rocklin California, 95677**

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Jean Sippola

Before her husband graduated he enlisted in the USAF and they moved to Amarillo, Texas and later to Travis AFB where Jean started to work for the government. She worked for the IRS and then was a stay-at-home Mom until her third son was in first grade. She went back to work in various positions for the government and eventually retired with over thirty years of service.

Jean and Tom Sippola were married on a large granite rock on the Sippola Ranch in 1977. The ranch has been in the Sippola family for over one hundred years. They live in a solar house that Tom designed. It is on the site of the original farmhouse. They raise beef cattle.

Besides working with Tom on the ranch, they both volunteered as ushers for the Sacramento Music Circus and the Sacramento Theater Company for over thirty years. Jean was a volunteer at the Granite Bay Sheriff Center for ten years. She edited the Finlandia Club newsletter, and worked tirelessly during the restoration of St. Mary's Chapel. During this time she was the Vice President of the Rocklin Historical Society and arranged for speakers and programs for the meetings as well as signing up other volunteers to provide refreshments. She served on the Board of Directors and volunteers as a docent at the museum at least one day a month. She and her husband Tom are also members of the Loomis Historical Society. (Tom is 100% Finnish) She and Tom love to travel and take cruises and trips to many interesting places. Jean has three sons, two stepsons, seven grandsons, one granddaughter, two great grandsons and one great granddaughter.

Jean does all these things in spite of suffering from severe arthritis, being hospitalized after being bitten by a rattlesnake, having heart problems, and again after a bad fall that resulted in various broken bones.

The Finnish have a word to describe people with character traits of loyalty, perseverance and determination. That word is "sisu". Jean definitely has it and she is not even Finnish.

If you are an Iraq or Afghanistan vet or know of one who will speak about their service experiences at the Rocklin Historical Society's monthly meeting on May 17 please notify Jean at 652-1034.

Consider gifting a membership in the Rocklin Historical Society

You can support the Rocklin Historical Society and the Rocklin History Museum by gifting a membership. Call Gay Morgan at 624-2355 or download a membership form from Rocklinhistory.org.

Here is an opportunity to volunteer

Your Rocklin History Museum needs a coordinator to work about 4 hours per week, preferably on Mondays:

- Maintaining the museum's artifact inventory
- Identifying maintenance and repair needs and
- Identifying enhancements to the museum's displays.

Call Gay Morgan at 624-2355 for more information

It is not who you know. It is whom you know.

April 10
8 am
Museum and Chapel Maintenance Day
 Call Gene Johnson at 624-2378 or Sally Huseby at 315-8401

April 12, 2010
4 pm
RHS board meeting
 Sunset Whitney Country Club

April 19, 2010
7 pm
RHS monthly meeting
 Old Saint Mary's Chapel
 5251 Front Street
 The Early Spanish Settlers of Rocklin

May 10, 2010
4 pm
RHS board meeting
 Sunset Whitney Country Club
May 17, 2010
7 pm
RHS monthly meeting



Rocklin Historical Society

Board of Directors

James Carlson, President
Sally Huseby, Vice President
Gene Johnson, Secretary
Kathy Nippert, Treasurer
Ronna Davis, Events
Gary Noy, Board member
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Jean Sippola, Board member
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Carol Powell, Board member
Roger Lokey, Past President
Roy Ruhkala, Past President

Newsletter proofreading by **Allan and Marie Stone**

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Garden Chatter

Sally Huseby
 Garden chairperson

In walking through the chapel donation garden today I counted over two dozen irises rising up from their Winter Snooze.

At the beginning of spring the garden is off to a sprightly start but the dreaded weeds are also rising up. We will need help at our April 10 workday at both the museum and the chapel gardens.

Please join us in helping the Historical Society maintain our increasingly beautiful gardens.

We need your help on April 10

Gene Johnson

Many hands make light work. On Saturday, April 10 we will be doing Spring Museum and Chapel maintenance. Sally Huseby and Jim Carlson will be heading the bill for garden maintenance at the Chapel. Gene Johnson will spearhead the effort at the Museum and the museum landscaping. Museum building maintenance will include touch-up painting and, weather permitting, another coat of paint on the front porch and steps. Landscaping tasks will include pruning, clipping, weeding & spreading bark. Please contact Sally (315-8401) or Gene (624-2378) if you can volunteer - and to ensure that we have enough donuts. Start time for early birds is 8am; 9am for others. End time is targeted for noon.

Mark Your Calendar

Old Saint Mary's Chapel
 5251 Front Street
 RHS Honors its Veterans
 Vets will talk about their experiences in the Military. (WWII, Korean, Vietnam, Gulf, Iraq, and Afghanistan).
 If you are an Iraq or Afghanistan vet or know of one who will speak please notify Jean at 652-1034

May 21, 2010
Rocklin Historical Society annual Legacy dinner
 6:30 pm
 Sunset Whitney Country Club
 Return of Joel Parker Whitney, written and directed by Dani Loebs

June 14, 2010
4 pm
RHS board meeting
 Sunset Whitney Country Club

Rocklin Reunion at Finn Hall
 Call Gay Morgan at 624-2355 for information

June 21, 2010
7 pm
RHS monthly meeting
 Old Saint Mary's Chapel
 5251 Front Street
 "The Illuminated Landscape. The Literature of the Sierra Nevada". Professors Gary Noy & Rick Heide, Sierra College. ☺
 Books available for sale and signing.