

## President's message

Skip Gebel, President

Welcome! Now that summertime is here and because our next general meeting will be in September I thought that it would be a good time to highlight our accomplishments thus far. Membership continues to grow; we're now at 139 people. That's the highest number to date. New volunteer docents have been trained and they've begun their duties at the History Museum. Our website content continues to grow, attracting inquiries from more local area residents as well as people throughout Northern California. The Children's Tile Project was completed in May by Brent Clark, a Rocklin Boy Scout. Completion of this community service project enabled his advancement to the rank of Eagle Scout.

It's the highest position in the Boy Scouts organization. The tile panels were installed on the grounds of the History Museum. After the replica of Firehouse

Number 1 is built in Heritage Park they'll be moved to and permanently installed there.

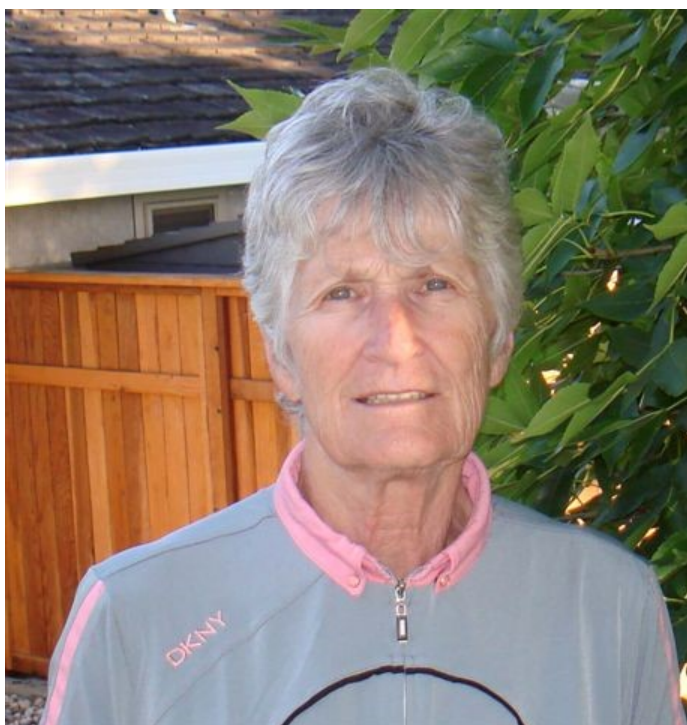
A committee was recently established to assist the City with its plans to develop the Big Gun quarry. The plans include an area within the existing property to construct an interpretive center. The center will house relevant and useful artifacts gathered from the site so that the story of Rocklin's granite rock quarrying industry can be accurately told. Committee members have recently been on-site, identifying those items so that they can be set aside and moved into the newly built structure.



## Know your docents

Gay Morgan

She will be the first to say, "But I'm not a docent." Actually she doesn't have a title but there aren't many things she can't do—painting, minor carpentry, cleaning, video-taping, filling in as docent, researching genealogy, hanging pictures, changing displays, working with volunteer students and Boy Scouts and of course keeping the computer up to date with historical information and pictures. She even knows who is buried in the Rocklin Cemetery and where the graves are located.



Jean Day

Jean Day has researched the Joel Parker Whitney family extensively, even traveling to meet some of the extended family as well as corresponding with others. As a result, the Museum has new pictures, documents and information about that pioneer family.

Before retiring she worked for Kaiser Permanente. She does a lot of other things too. She is an excellent golfer and often plays in tournaments. She gets up at 4:30 and goes to the gym. She recently ran the Bay to Breakers and finished in the top 10% of her age group. Various kinds of marvelous cookies are baked in her kitchen but she doesn't eat them. Quilting is another of her skills. She likes to read, loves music of all kinds and is also a dedicated shopper. Kind, thoughtful, helpful, funny, good neighbor,

great friend, wife, mother, and grandmother are all accurate descriptors of Jean.

Jean is the fourth in a family of nine kids, three sisters and five brothers. They were raised in Pontiac and Waterford, Michigan. She met Gary, her husband, at a dance. They came to California in 1968. Later Gary thought it would be nice to live on a golf course so they came to Rocklin. They are parents of three and grandparents of seven.

Because of their interest in history they became very active members of the Rocklin Historical Society. Gary currently is the editor of the Quarry Quarterly and chairman of the Museum Committee.

Perhaps we could give a title. "Jean of All Things Museum". What would we do without her?

(Continued on page 6)



## Ronna's Rocklin Review

Scenes from Rocklin Historical Society activities of the past quarter

Photos by Ronna Davis



On March 12, 2011, a horse and carriage awaited *Real Weddings Magazine's* Wedding of a Lifetime contest winners Lindsay Sasaki, and Trevor Longman at the Rocklin Historical Society's Old Saint Mary's Chapel on Front Street.



On June 18, 2011 Rocklin Historical Society members and Rocklin City staff toured the grounds of Rocklin's Big Gun Quarry as they prepared to plan for the quarry's future. During the 1860s and 1870s Big Gun provided the granite for construction of California's State Capital building. From 1933 until 1977 it was the largest quarry operated by the Ruhkala family's Union Granite Company. The society hopes to save for posterity some of the granite processing artifacts on the quarry's rim. The society is also participating with ideas on how to exploit the beauty of the 90 foot deep quarry pit.



On April 1, 2011 the Rocklin Historical Society honored Rocklin Unified School District History Coordinator and Valley View School third grade teacher Nancy Lohse (far right in yellow) for her love of Rocklin history and for her advocacy in funding the spinning ball fountain on the north patio of Old Saint Mary's Chapel. A plaque near the fountain recognizes that from 2006 through 2010 Rocklin's third graders donated more than \$3,000 toward purchase of the fountain. Rocklin History is included in the curriculum for third grade students. Nancy retired at the end of the 2010/2011 school year.



The Rocklin Historical Society is a regular participant in Rocklin's Front Street Fridays, encouraging society membership and displaying plans for restoration of Rocklin's Front Street corridor and the Big Gun Quarry. The event features professional musicians and boutique vendors with a variety of food and drink. The Front Street Fridays Trade & Music Fair is a community-focused festival celebrating the arts and culture from around Placer County. Festivities start at 6 pm most Fridays and continue until well after dark.



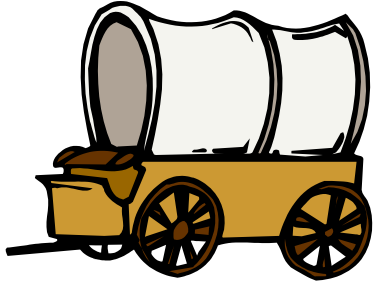
## Docent Update

### Heritage Trail Days are coming

Barbara Chapman

You are all needed to welcome visitors to our history museum between 9 AM and 4 PM on Saturday and Sunday, August 6th and 7th. Roy Ruhkala has volunteered his expertise again this year to demonstrate cutting granite. The bus tour is scheduled to be at Rocklin on Sunday, August 7th, at 10 AM. We also have our new video to be able to share with visitors throughout the day showing Roy working with granite.

The Heritage Trail Bus Tours are again happening on Saturday and Sunday. Reservations are required. You can purchase tickets for a bus trip by



telephone at any time by calling Placer County Museums Division in Auburn at (530) 889-6500...the trips fill up fast! The cost is \$10 per person departing the Gold Country Fairgrounds at 8:45 or 9:30 AM and returning at approximately 4:15 PM. Hurry or you may be too late! Box lunches are also available.

The Heritage Trail event is our time to show off our Rocklin Museum and to allow visitors to better understand our history and what we represent from going back in time to the present. Free "Get Up & Go" cards will be available at each museum just like last year. After visiting four different museums and getting the card stamped at each one, visitors will be eligible to enter a grand-prize drawing for one of three regional deluxe picnic baskets full of gifts.

New this year is an on-line store available in late June. I will be sending you an email when it becomes available to purchase T-shirts, caps, bumper stickers, etc.

Our sponsors again this year are SureWest, BOS, Cap Radio, and NSGW. The Placer County State Fair exhibit will also feature something from each of our museum areas and advertise the Heritage Trail Day event. Thanks for contributing to our Heritage Trail weekend for 2011 by signing up to be present to greet the many visitors we will be receiving over these two days. Please contact me at 415-0153 or by e-mail to commit to being at our museum on Saturday or Sunday for a 2-3 hour period.

## GARDEN REPORT

Sally Huseby  
Garden Chairperson

The winter rains caused the museum and chapel gardens to spurt with new growth. We will have to trim the small hedges soon. They were supposed to be mini but have grown very fast.

The Capital Arborist Company replaced a chapel pepper tree that had root problems. They will replace two trees at the rear of the chapel in the autumn.

We planted new pink-flowering plants called Rhodohypoxis at the front of the chapel.



They have a uniform appearance and will perform well.

We are still tweaking some of the plants as our chapel garden matures and adjusts to the less-than perfect soil in areas. We have had

many compliments about the garden from attendees at the Front Street Friday get-togethers.

I will call volunteers for clean-up days soon.

## To the Editor:

At our June 13 Board meeting we did a couple of significant things to bring RHS into the 21st century. We gave approval to Dani Loeb to give us a presence on Twitter. As silly as its name sounds it is an increasingly well-used vehicle for the information technology era we live in. Also after long study and research by our task committee the Board approved our association with the Placer Community Foundation with a Rocklin Heritage Fund. We now have a fund to carry on our mission to preserve Rocklin's legacy and bring it to forthcoming generations.

This sets the stage for RHS to mature and guarantee our stated purpose.

Jim Carlson, Past President

## MILESTONES

Gay Morgan

Barbara Corral recently celebrated her 94<sup>th</sup> birthday with family and friends. She is recovering well from her recent illness. Another birthday celebration with friends and family was held in Roseville for Margie Younger who is 90 years old.

Roy Ruhkala is convalescing at home after recent knee surgery. He is walking without a cane. Incidentally he too has a birthday coming up in July and will be 92.

## Big Gun Quarry Update

Gene Johnson  
Big Gun Committee Chairman

The City of Rocklin and RHS are working together to preserve Rocklin's granite mining heritage at the city's largest granite pit mine – the Big Gun quarry. In May, RHS established a Big Gun Committee, chaired by Gene Johnson. The committee's goal is to assist in defining and developing a Quarry Heritage Interpretation area dedicated to 150 years of Granite mining at 61 Rocklin locations. Rick Forstall, recently promoted to the position of Director of Public Services, and Scot St. Dennis are directing activities for the City of Rocklin.

The committee viewed the video "Gold, Granite and Grit", by Professor Dan DeFoe, and slides of public uses of quarries as amphitheaters, gardens, art gallery, opera/symphonic stage. At a second meeting, Bob Habian of Zalgud Company, presented a vision of central Rocklin residential/commercial development in the Big Gun area. Jim Williams of Williams and Paddon Architects plans to participate in the committee's 3rd meeting, July 5, 6-8 pm at Gene Johnson's home.

Saturdays June 18 and June 25 volunteers met at Granite Rock Grill to fuel up and then did "hands-on" work at the quarry moving



**Karen Lokey (L) and Ronna Davis finding treasure at Big Gun Quarry**

artifacts from tumbledown buildings and surrounding property to the City designated "safe area". Building footprints were measured for historical record. Saturday July 9, volunteers plan disassembly and salvage of the Blacksmith shop and general cleanup of the surrounding area.

Members of the community are invited to participate in the Big Gun committee and the cleanup work at the Big Gun site. Membership in RHS is not required, however there are restrictions related to working at the quarry site - for information contact Gene Johnson at 916-624-2378.

## Dani's Journal

Danielle Loeb

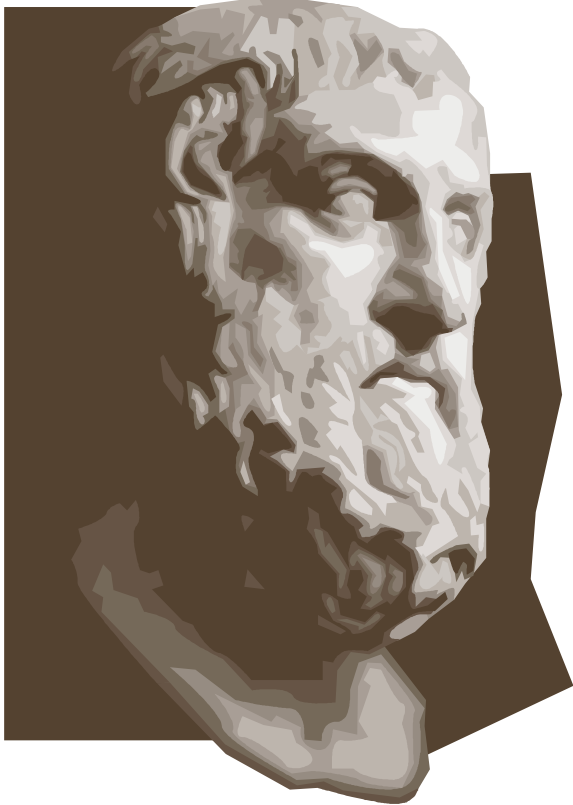


## Publicity Report

Danielle Loeb  
Publicity Chairperson

### Why Study History?

As citizens and members of the human race, what makes the study of history so important? Over a decade ago, Peter N. Stearns of the American Historical Association worked to evaluate this very question at length. From his article, I found some excellent points.



- **History Helps us Understand People and Societies.** By evaluating similar situations of the past, we are able to compose educated predictions about how people or societies will behave under specific circumstances. Stearns labels history as an imperfect laboratory where data from the past serves as the most vital evidence used to figure out why humans behave the way they do. People need to have some sense of this in order to run their own lives.

- **History Helps Us Understand Change and How the Society We Live in Came to Be.** In the age of the internet where the world's digital information doubles every eleven hours, change is becoming as common and as rapid as our very heartbeats. While living in a culture of change may make anyone feel a little off balance, history can anchor our understanding of the world. Only through history may we grasp how things change, begin to comprehend the factors that cause change,

and understand what elements of an institution or society persist despite change.

These two reasons for studying history also explain the importance of history in our daily lives. Well told, history is beautiful---both aesthetically and on the level of human understanding. The stories that stick with us are those revealing how people and societies actually functioned and those prompting thoughts about the human experience in other times and places. With the contributions of broadly talented citizens, I am grateful Rocklin has the Historical Society to preserve our history and serve as the curators of a vital and beautiful treasure trove of knowledge.

RHS has garnered a fair amount of publicity lately! With recent articles in the Placer Herald covering Big Gun Quarry, the Old St. Mary's Fountain Dedication as well as the notices about our monthly meetings, we've been in the news quite a bit!

Recently RHS started a Twitter page, located at <https://twitter.com/#!/RocklinHistory> and a special shout out is due to Dr. Carlson who was the first follower! If you have a Twitter yourself, be sure to follow us at @RocklinHistory. Our facebook page is still seeing increases in membership, with a total headcount of 207 people! Gary Day's topics on the page in recent



months have ranged from the history of Old St. Mary's to the origin of the city's name. Members especially loved his series on the Rocklin fire-fighters of old. I added the beginnings of a Press Kit on the RHS blog page located at rock-

linhistory.blogspot.com (or through the "Dani's Blogs" tab on the main RHS website). The Press Kit includes an overview of all the materials to prepare for future publicity work, and has linked a template for creating an RHS Press Release. Think of the Press Kit as a work in progress open to editing suggestions from anyone. Specifically, I'm certain I will need help from members on fleshing out a resource list that would detail who to call for information or services regarding the different topics in Rocklin history. To suggest changes, please send me an e-mail at [Danielle.loeb@gmail.com](mailto:Danielle.loeb@gmail.com). I will update the page periodically.

I also hope to make another page available on the blog site that includes a "how to" guide for using RHS' other social media sites. More to look for in the future!

### It's July and the Forty Niners are missing from their Rocklin training camp for the fourteenth straight year.

The San Francisco Forty Niners trained in Rocklin during the summers of 1981 through 1997. They won 73% of their games during those years including sixteen National Football League playoff games and five Super Bowls. While training here they had a winning record every year except the 1982 cancelled season. Their Rocklin years brought them from obscurity to greatness and they have returned to obscurity since leaving. Rocklin fans still root for the Niners and hope that they will return to Rocklin and get back to their winning ways.



## History of Sunset Whitney, part two

### Paul Harney settles in at Sunset Oaks

Gary Day

Sunset International Petroleum Corporation opened Sunset Oaks as a private country club in June 1963. It was the centerpiece of their Sunset City, an upscale community of 100,000 which they intended to build on the southern 12,000 acres of Joel Parker Whitney's 20,000 acre Spring Valley ranch of the nineteenth century.

Four time top-ten PGA tour money winner Paul Harney started as the club's head pro that month after finishing one stroke short of a three-way playoff for the US Open title in Massachusetts, his home state,

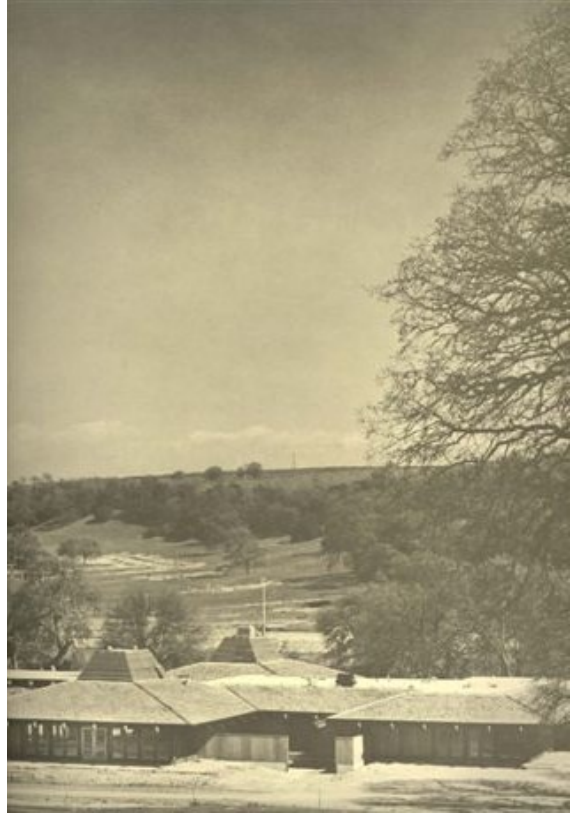
Harney was a popular family man. His stint at Sunset Oaks kept a promise to his wife Patti that he would cut his touring schedule and take a club job when his children started to reach school age. His contract with Sunset permitted him to play in PGA tour events only eight times each year. Harney moved his family, including the first four of an eventual six children, into a new home at 4010 Clover Valley Road. The home backed up to the site of Sunset's executive golf course which was soon to be built on the west side of Clover Valley.

Harney was a good fit at Sunset Oaks. The Sacramento media paid close attention to his

community activities and his infrequent competition in PGA events. Home sales at Sunset City were slow, at least partially because Rocklin was outside easy commuting distance to Sacramento, but Harney's reputation gave the area's image a boost as a top notch community for business owners and managerial and professional workers. Sunset's plans for 1964 included a celebrity pro-am for January 21 to benefit the Porky Oliver Cancer Research Fund and a possible PGA tour event for the fall to be named the *Sunset Camellia Open at Sunset Oaks*. Prospects for good turnouts at these events soared when, in early January 1964, Harney excited Sacramento area golf fans by going south and holding off Bobby Nichols and Arnold Palmer down the stretch to win the prestigious Los Angeles Open.

Harney next headed for the Monterey Peninsula to play in Bing Crosby's Celebrity/Pro-am where his fresh notoriety would help him recruit big name pros and entertainment stars for Sunset's Porky Oliver event.

Next Time: **Snowballs at Sunset.**



**Ansel Adams snapped this from the hill to the left of Sunset Oaks Country Club's tenth tee in 1962. Vegetation, especially one large eucalyptus, now blocks much of this scene**



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(Continued from page 1)  
president

The Rocklin Chamber of Commerce has recently completed a "Welcome to Rocklin" DVD. It includes a brief introduction by me and a short segment by Roy Ruhkala talking about our granite quarry heritage. We'll show it at one of our upcoming meetings. Thanks to everyone for all your efforts and contributions for our successes thus far. Have a great time this summer and see you at the pot luck dinner in September.

## Rocklin History Museum

The Rocklin History Museum is located at 3895 Rocklin Road at the corner of San Francisco Street. The museum is open from 1 to 4 pm on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. Docents are available to escort you and answer questions.

Group tours are available for 10 or more people by calling Gay Morgan on 624-2355.

## When Rocklin went to the races

In 1895, horse doctor Mansfield Delano and his wealthy brother Ira Delano, owner of Rocklin's largest and most financially successful granite quarry, formed the Rocklin Driving Park Association and built Rocklin's first and only race track. The track was a one half mile oval located immediately northeast of today's Rocklin Grade School. The grandstands faced northeast, but they burned down before 1920.



### Rocklin Historical Society Board of Directors

**Skip Gebel, President**  
**Sally Huseby, Vice President**  
**Gene Johnson, Secretary**  
**Kathy Nippert, Treasurer**  
**Ronna Davis, Events**  
**Gary Noy, Board member**  
**Karen Lokey, Board member**  
**Jean Sippola, Board member**  
**Dr. James Carlson, Im. Past President**  
**Carol Powell, Board member**  
**Roger Lokey, Board Member**  
**Roy Ruhkala, President Emeritus**

Newsletter proofreading by **Allan and Marie Stone**

## Mark your calendar

**August 6 and 7**

**Heritage Trail Days at the Rocklin History Museum**

**9 am until 4 pm both days**

See Roy Ruhkala demonstrate granite cutting on August 7 at 10 am.

**September 19**

**Annual pot luck**

**7 pm**

**At the Community Center in Johnson Springview park**

More information will be mailed in September.

## Other activities:

**Rocklin Historical Society Board meetings** are held on the second Monday of every month at 6 pm in the annex of the Old Saint Mary's Chapel on Front Street.

**Gene Johnson is holding meetings and work sessions** in connection with his leadership of a combined City of Rocklin and RHS effort to save and enhance the Big Gun Quarry site. Call Gene at 624-2378 if you want to participate.

Tentatively the Rocklin Historical Society has scheduled a **Front Street Gala Party** for October 7, 2011. The plan is to close Front Street between Rocklin Road and B street and feature a variety of music, with vendor booths and dancing. If you would like to participate in the planning for this event please call President Skip Gebel on 320-5195

## Rocklin's Old Saint Mary's Chapel is available for your event.

Rocklin's Old Saint Mary's Chapel began life in 1883 as Saint Mary's of the Assumption Catholic Church on a knoll at 5240 Front street. The Catholic parish abandoned the building in 1983 in favor of more modern facilities on Granite Drive but the Rocklin Historical Society saved it from demolition in 2005, moved it to its present location and restored it to pristine condition. The chapel is Rocklin's oldest public building and the centerpiece of Heritage Park at Front Street and Rocklin Road. It is a key landmark in the restoration of downtown Rocklin. Heritage Park is a joint City of Rocklin and RHS project to beautify Rocklin's railroad corridor with building restorations and new landscaping.

RHS rents the old Saint Mary's Chapel for weddings, memorials and other public events.

If you would like to book an event at Saint Mary's, or if you would like more information please contact :

Roger Lokey

Phone: (916)- 415-1150

E-mail: [info@oldstmaryschapel.com](mailto:info@oldstmaryschapel.com)

