

President's Message

Dan DeFoe

I often find that to write I need to find my muse, my inspiration. The coming of Autumn always stirs my consciousness—it is a time of harvest and a time of endings. Autumn's muse is one of reflection. As I reflect over the past two years, I am inspired by the generous people who make up the Rocklin Historical Society. The Tuesday morning "fixers" who keep St. Mary's Chapel and Heritage Park



Rocklin Historical Society President Dan DeFoe is a Sierra College history professor

the beautiful historical site it has become. The chapel team who's dedication and creativity have made St. Mary's into one of northern California's premier wedding destinations. The Heritage Park group who's hard work in conjunction with city leaders will make Rocklin's original firehouse and city council chambers the next addition to Heritage Park honoring Rocklin's history. And the excellent members of the RHS Board with whom I have had the honor of working these past two years. As my term as president comes to a

(Continued on page 2)

History housed in little house

Gloria Beverage

A little house on San Francisco Street and Rocklin Road houses a little slice of Rocklin's history.

Opened in 2002, the Rocklin History Museum was the brainchild of Roy Ruhkala, whose family owned and operated one of Rocklin's largest granite quarries.

Ruhkala was friends with the Moon family, who offered to donate the house to the Historical Society with the condition it was moved to another site, explained Gene Johnson, one of the founding members of the Rocklin Historical Society.

"I went looking for another location for the museum," Johnson said. "I went to then city manager (Carlos) Urrutia and asked about moving it behind the fire station — near the quarry."

Urrutia countered with the proposal that the city could use Redevelopment Funds to purchase the property from the Moons to develop additional parking for downtown businesses and lease the house to the Historical Society.

With the support of the Rocklin Lions Club, volunteers spent the next year renovating the building

and creating exhibits that reflect Rocklin's history, Johnson said.

Rocklin's heritage — rocks, rails and ranches — is reflected in the collection, he continued.

Many of the items were donated by pioneer families like the Ruhkals and the Johnsons. Longtime City Council member Marie Huson donated her collection of artifacts and documents relating to the city's history. More than

1,500 photographs donated to the museum and archived by the Placer County Museum, are available to researchers, said Museum Manager David Baker.

As far as Baker is concerned, the basement has the most interesting collection. That's where jack hammers, ranging from "monster", more compact sizes, are displayed, "Where smaller, more portable hammers reflect improvements in metallurgy and equipment tech-



Rocklin History Museum founder Roy Ruhkala guides a large granite stone for a quarry equipment display

nology," he said.

Upstairs is Johnson's favorite item in the museum collection. It's a model of the Big Gun Quarry, one of Rocklin's largest granite quarries. The replica was created by longtime Rocklin resident John Peterson.

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(Continued from page 1)
president

close I wish to thank you all for your generosity, support and hard work. You all have had a hand in helping to rebuild Rocklin's past and save our history so that all who come after may find inspiration in their heritage.

With sincere appreciation,
President, Dan DeFoe

Please send me your email address!

Christy Barros

Your historical society uses email for notifying members of upcoming events. If we don't have your correct email address you are not being so notified. We use email addresses only for RHS purposes. So if you want to ensure that we have a correct email address for you please send a message to me at: christy@inetinc.net

Also, RHS is expanding the email address file to include non-members who have an interest in Rocklin's history. If you know of such people please send their email addresses to me or ask them to send me a message and I'll add them to the list.

EBay assistance needed

The board of The Rocklin Historical Society is proposing to raise funds by continuously soliciting donations of used items and marketing them on EBay. The plan is to recruit a person to conduct this activity and possibly to compensate them with a percentage of the net proceeds. If you are interested in helping the society to raise funds in this way please contact Neil Davis at:

segmented-woodturner@gmail.com
cell: [916.616-0923](tel:916.616-0923)

chili, old cars and Rocklin history

Photos by Ronna Davis

On September 20, the 2014 version of The Rocklin Chamber of Commerce's Hot Chili and Cool Cars event drew good crowds of chili tasters and old car aficionados. Rocklin Historical Society members were on hand to talk history. Many people were interested in the society's myriad of programs that memorialize Rocklin's history and preserve Rocklin's historical artifacts. Wedding planners

were interested in the Society's old Saint Mary's wedding chapel. See page 5.



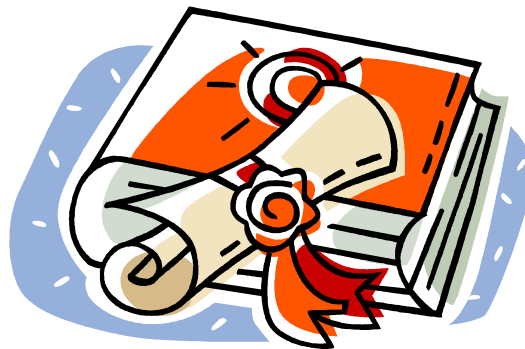
The Rocklin Historical Society mans a booth each year at The Rocklin Chamber of Commerce's annual Hot Chili and Cool cars event on Pacific street. Society members like to inform passers-by about the Society's programs, especially the Rocklin History Museum and the Old Saint Mary's wedding chapel



Marvin Hassenplug's 1934 Ford truck took Best Truck honors.

Roseville High Yearbooks wanted for 1912 to 1993

David Baker,
Rocklin History Museum Collections Manager



for the years 1912 to 1993. The collection already includes: 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954. We are looking for one copy for each year – act quickly to donate for other years.

The Rocklin School District was formed in 1866, however it was 127 years later, in 1993, that Rocklin High School opened. In the late 1800's and early 20th century, Rocklin students commuted by train to attend Placer High School in Auburn. When Roseville High School opened in 1912, that school was the obvious choice. The historical society is assembling a collection of Roseville High School yearbooks

Please respond to me at 624-3464.

a Christmas memory

Gay Morgan

Pictures courtesy of Leah Young

It was getting close to Christmas, but not close enough for me. I guess I must have been about seven or eight years old. My Dad was Chief of the Rocklin Volunteer Fire Department and he would take me with him to the old Fire House/City Hall building. (One side was sort of an office/meeting room and the other an open garage/like place where they kept the new fire truck) He and other volunteers cut open tin cans and flattened them. Then they cut shapes out of them, stars, bells, moons etc. Later they painted them bright colors and sprinkled them with some sparkly stuff. I got to do that too.

A couple of weeks before Christmas they brought a big tree down from the mountains. It was the biggest tree I had ever seen. They put it up on the corner of Rocklin Road and Pacific Street. They strung it with lights—the old-fashioned big bulb kind and hung the homemade ornaments.

The tree was so tall they had to use the ladder from the fire truck.

The next night they held a lighting ceremony, kids from the grammar school sang carols and one of the fireman played Santa (I thought he was too skinny) and passed out red and white striped candy canes to everyone. It was a magical evening in my memory, the night so clear and cold with the sparkle of colored lights.

The tree was lit every night until New Years Eve. I could see it from our front porch and it was especially beautiful on foggy nights when the lights seemed to have little halos around them.

I think this tradition continued for several years until World War II came along. I imagine the tin-can ornaments went to the frequent scrap-metal drives the grammar school kids had.

It is nice that Rocklin once again has a Christmas Tree Lighting Event. I hope Santa is nice and plump this time around and that some day today's



A tin can ornament from one of Rocklin's first Christmas trees



Rocklin's Christmas Tree ca. 1938.

kids will have a magical evening to remember.

And now the rest of the story: Leah Young, who was once Leah Alexson, (she is younger than I, and more organized too) came up with one of those tin can ornaments that she had painted and sprinkled with sparkles. She also had a couple of pictures of the tree I remember.

I love history with it's twists and turns.

It's back to school for the Rocklin History Museum docents.

Gay Morgan



The Rocklin History Museum's School Tour Crew is ready to go back to school after the long hot summer. The crew is composed of group of volunteers who love history, especially that of Rocklin. Many of them are retired teachers but not all. This year Antelope Creek is the first on the schedule, October 2nd.

The School bus delivers the third grade classes to the Museum after they have visited St. Mary's Chapel, where they get to ring the bell. The classes are then divided into small groups and taken through the museum where a different docent tells them about each area. The newest attraction is the Laundry Room and is a big hit. Last year ten of the eleven elementary schools in the district learned about "Rocks, Rails and Ranches". They participate in an essay contest and the winning essays are displayed at the Museum. The Third Grade Coin Drive has been a major contributor to the Rocklin Historical Society's project funding. The students are encouraged to come back and bring their parents and grandparents and to act as their tour guides. The School Tour Crew consists of: Susan Brooking, Nancy Lohse, Nancy Ustaszewski, Diane Wade, Pat Woessner, Kathy Reed, Patsy Pattison, Patrice Cardott, Russ McNeill, Leslie McNeill, Jerry Farren, Bob Mart, Angie Goebel and Gay Morgan.

The Rocklin History Series continues this fall with live presentations on two Sundays at the Old Saint Mary's Chapel, 5251 Front Street in Downtown Rocklin

On Sunday October 12, 2014 at 2 PM

Whitney Historian Bill Marble on

Joel Parker Whitney - Businessman and Entrepreneur Extraordinaire



Bill Marble is an authority on the life of Rocklin pioneer Joel Parker Whitney.

Joel Parker Whitney was Rocklin's wealthiest and most socially prominent citizen of the 19th century. He made his fortune before his mid 30's, mainly from investments in Colorado mines and real estate. He acquired control of the Spring Valley Ranch (Whitney Ranch) from his father George in the early 1870's and expanded it to 27,000 acres by bringing water from the Bear River watershed and diversifying ranch activities. He befriended the native Nisenan and documented their life ways, built the Oaks mansion and the ranch's twelve bridges 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 Joel Parker Whitney's Ranch. Join Bill Marble as he explores the sources of Whitney's successes.

Bill Marble is Rocklin's expert on the life of Joel Parker Whitney. Bill will discuss the businesses that provided Whitney with the fortune which allowed him to live a life of luxury and travel the World.

Join us after the event across the street at Cante Ao Vinho for free refreshments and no-host wine tasting

On Sunday, November 16, 2014 at 2 PM

Julia Morgan Historian Karen McNeill Ph.D. on

Julia Morgan's Gold: An Architect's Legacy in California's Gold Country



Karen McNeill Ph.D. is an expert on the life and work of Julia Morgan.

Though most closely associated with Hearst Castle and a large body of work in the San Francisco Bay Area, California's first woman architect, Julia Morgan, had several ties to Sacramento and the Sierra Nevada gold country throughout her career. Join Dr. Karen McNeill as she explores Morgan's life, work, and legacy through the legendary architect's clients and buildings in Sacramento, Grass Valley, Marysville, and Tahoe.

Karen McNeill, Ph.D., has been researching and writing about Julia Morgan since 2000 and has published multiple articles on the subject, including most recently, *Women Who Build: Julia Morgan & Women's Institutions*, in the Summer 2012 issue of California History. Dr. McNeill is completing a biography of Julia Morgan.

Beyond her work on Julia Morgan, Dr. McNeill has taught history and architectural history at colleges and universities in the San Francisco Bay Area and has been involved in historic preservation, authoring several context statements for major surveys and successfully nominating a range of buildings to the National Register of Historic Places. She is currently Director of Family History at Ascent Private Capital Investment of U.S Bank and a director on the board of the Berkeley City Club Conservancy, Julia Morgan's "Little Castle".

Join us after the event across the street at Cante Ao Vinho for free refreshments and no-host wine tasting.

Make history at Old Saint Mary's Chapel

Nancy Lohse
Photo Martin Corona

Driving down Front Street in historic downtown Rocklin, it's hard to miss Old St. Mary's Chapel. The chapel is a stellar example of what can happen when a community pulls together to save an historic building. The chapel is Rocklin's oldest public building and was slated for demolition in 2005. But The Rocklin Historical Society took over and moved it to Heritage Park and after many vol-



unteer hours, completely restored it.

During restoration, the society discovered that the original framing included arched windows. To honor this feature various community members donated the funds to install the beautiful windows that we have today. Plaques inside the chapel, next to the windows tell who donated them. Please take time to read the plaques next time you are at the chapel.

The hard work of community volunteers has created the perfect place for weddings, vow renewals, memorial services and community events.

The chapel is now a source of revenue for the historical society. Funds not only keep Old St. Mary's pristine but they also keep open the doors to the Rocklin History Museum. The museum is free to the public including the 500 third graders who visit each year.

Old Saint Mary's Chapel is open for public tours on Wednesdays from 5 – 7. Feel free to stop by and visit. We'll even let you ring the bell!

Call to set up a private tour for your special day!

916-415-1150

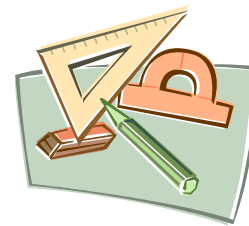
www.OldStMarysChapel.com

email: oldstmaryschapel@gmail.com

Do you want to join the Fixers?

Bob Mart

Cooling down a tiny bit in Rocklin!! But no worries about the heat. "The Fixers" don't work past noon! We don't get up early either, so I guess you could say we take it easy. You're



right. Again for Fall, easy & steady for about 3 hours on the second & fourth Tuesdays of each month. That's correct, we

changed our work-day-Tuesdays, to second and fourth of every month. Does that work better for you? We could use some help with plumbing, painting, power washing, irrigation, and weed control, to name a few of the soon-to-do jobs. If these might be some of your talents, or you simply wish to help, why not join us?

Contact me, Bob Mart at: 916-435-9360 or martsplace@sbcglobal.net. Even easier, just show up at the Chapel around 9:30 AM.

Hope to see you, and thanks to you volunteers who've already pitched in to help.

Bob Mart:

916-435-9360 or

martsplace@sbcglobal.net

docents needed

Jean Sippola

The museum needs docents. If you can volunteer to be a Rocklin History Museum docent please call me at

652-1034

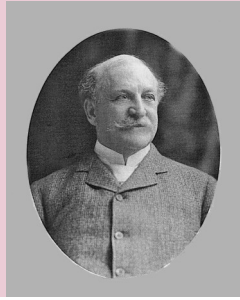


If you are not a member of the Rocklin Historical Society, please join.

Your Rocklin Historical Society is an all-volunteer organization which conducts projects to educate citizens concerning Rocklin's unique history and to preserve artifacts of that history.

The society needs your financial support. Please send your name, address, email address, and a check for the dues, only \$20 yearly for an individual or family.

Rocklin Historical Society, P.O. Box 1, Rocklin, 95677.



keeping up with Joel Parker Whitney (1835—1913)

a study of his personal diaries and writings

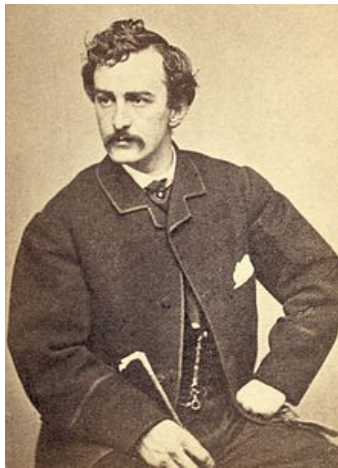
Whitney was one of Northern California's largest landowners. Western Rocklin is astride 12,000 acres of his 20,000 acre Spring Valley Ranch.

J. Parker Whitney, Abraham Lincoln, and John Wilkes Booth

Bill Marble

J. Parker Whitney interacted with many powerful, famous, and significant men. Two names that jump off the pages of his book *Reminiscences of a Sportsman* more than most are Abraham Lincoln and John Wilkes Booth.

While he apparently never met Abraham Lincoln, Whitney followed Lincoln's career as early as the days of the Lincoln/Douglas Debates in Illinois. "I was present at the first inaugural address of Abraham Lincoln, at Washington, of simple and heart-feeling words,



John Wilkes Booth

which proved of no avail, and in several political meetings in Illinois I heard the combating stump speeches of Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas." said Whitney.

In discussing his relationship with the Booth family, Whitney says, "In California, short as my stay was, I made some friends with whom for many years afterwards I sustained

pleasant relations, all of whom have now passed away. It was in San Francisco I met Edwin Booth, at the



Whitney attended Lincoln's inauguration.

rooms of a fencing master, where we were both receiving instructions, and formed a friendship with him which continued through his life. His father, Junius Brutus Booth, then near sixty years of age, was playing the last engagement of his life at the American Theatre, and died that year, soon after, on a Mississippi River steamer. Edwin at that time had not appeared on the stage, excepting in a few minor parts, and I accompanied him at his invitation several times to witness the performances of his father. The latter was then exhibiting the peculiarities of his disposition, bordering on insanity, and accentuated by his over-indulgence in spirituous liquors. One night while playing Richard III with his accustomed energy and fire, he left the stage and strode into a lower box adjoining, which was empty, and commenced singing a bacchanalian song to the boisterous admiration of the audience. Edwin, much chagrined, left my side for his father, whom he persuaded to retire, and after a while to go on with his part in the play."

"I did not see Edwin again until a number of years had passed, when

he had become famous, meeting him at the Tremont House in Boston, where I was residing, and there became acquainted with his wife, his mother, his sister Rosalie, and his brothers, John Wilkes and Joseph. John Wilkes Booth, who afterward became infamous as the assassin of our President Lincoln, appeared to me as very companionable and cheerful, and many pleasant smokes I had with him, little suspecting that he would achieve the infamous notoriety that he did. Though having some extravagant and peculiar ways, they were less conspicuous than those which Edwin evinced, or those seen in two others of the family. There was, however, a strain of peculiarity in the children, doubtless inherited from the father, which was quite evident. But if I had been asked to designate one of the children most free and sensible, I should have given John Wilkes, for despite his somewhat rollicking and moderately reckless way, he seemed very sensible. He was then playing an engagement, as was Edwin, in the city. Both were handsome and attractive, and received many missives from the gentler sex, who admired them"

Yes, J. Parker Whitney was larger than life and that brought him into contact with many famous men, not all of them honorable. It appears that the Booth family were a strange lot and that, perhaps, John Wilkes was the least strange. of all.

Donner Party member Lewis Keseberg recounts cannibalism to historian Charles McGlashan

From the Sierra College Press,
Snowy Range Reflections, winter 2008, Vol.1 no. 1

Edited by Gary Noy and Dan DeFoe

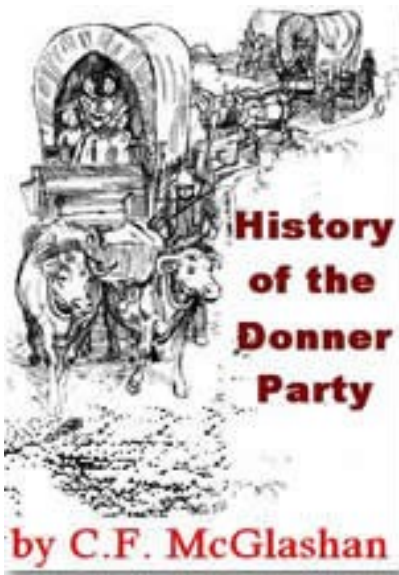
Note:

This article describes cannibalism and other ghastly events occurring among members of the Donner Party. Don't read this article if that will offend you.

My name is Lewis Keseberg. I was born in the city of Berleburg, Province of Westphalia, in the Kingdom of Prussia, on the twenty-second of May, 1814. I am therefore almost sixty-three years of age. I was married June 22, 1842, came to the United States May 21, 1844, and emigrated to California in 1846 with the Donner Party. I never have made a statement concerning my connection with that Party to any one connected with the press. It is with the utmost horror that I revert to the scenes of suffering and unutterable misery endured during that journey. I have always endeavored to put away from me all thoughts or recollections of those terrible events. Time is the best physician, and would, I trusted, heal the wounds produced by those days of torture; yet my mind today recoils, with undiminished horror as I endeavor to speak of this dreadful subject. Heretofore I have never attempted to refute the villainous slanders which have been circulated and published about me. I feel it my duty to make this statement, however, because I am convinced of your willingness to do justice to all who were concerned in that dreadful affair, and heretofore I have been treated with gross injustice

When Reed's relief party left the cabins, Mr. Reed left me a half teacupful of flour, and about half a pound of jerked beef. It was all he could give. Mrs. Murphy, who was left with me, because too weak and emaciated to walk, had no larger portion. Reed had no animosity toward me. He found me too weak

to move. He washed me, combed my hair, and treated me kindly. Indeed, he had no cause to do otherwise. Some of my portion of the flour brought by Stanton from Sutter's Fort I gave to Reed's children, and thus saved their lives. When he left me, he promised to return in two weeks and carry me



over the mountains. When this party left, I was not able to stand, much less to walk.

A heavy storm came on in a few days after the last relief party left. Mrs. George Donner had remained with her sick husband in their camp, six or seven miles away. Mrs. Murphy lived about a week after we were left alone. When my provisions gave out, I remained four days before I could taste human flesh. There was no other resort—it was that or death. My wife and child had gone on with the first relief party. I knew not whether they were living or dead. They were penniless and friendless in a strange land. For their sakes I must live, if not for my

own. Mrs. Murphy was too weak to revive. The flesh of starved beings contains little nutriment. It is like feeding straw to horses. I can not describe the unutterable repugnance with which I tasted the first mouthful of flesh. There is an instinct in our nature that revolts at the thought of touching, much less eating, a corpse. It makes my blood curdle to think of it! It has been told that I boasted of my shame -- said that I enjoyed this horrid food, and that I remarked that human flesh was more palatable than California beef. This is a falsehood. It is a horrible, revolting falsehood. This food was never otherwise than loathsome, insipid, and disgusting. For nearly two months I was alone in that dismal cabin. No one knows what occurred but myself—no living being ever before was told of the occurrences. Life was a burden. The horrors of one day succeeded those of the preceding. Five of my companions had died in my cabin, and their stark and ghastly bodies lay there day and night, seemingly gazing at me with their glazed and staring eyes. I was too weak to move them had I tried. The relief parties had not removed them. These parties had been too hurried, too horror-stricken at the sight, too fearful lest an hour's delay might cause them to share the same fate. I endured a thousand deaths. To have one's suffering prolonged inch by inch, to be deserted, forsaken, hopeless; to see that loathsome food ever before my eyes, was almost too much for human endurance. I am conversant with four different languages. I speak and write them with equal fluency; yet in all four I do not find words enough to express the horror I experienced during those two months, or what I still feel when memory reverts to the scene. Sui-

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)
keseberg

cide would have been a relief, a happiness, a godsend! Many a time I had the muzzle of my pistol in my mouth and my finger on the trigger, but the faces of my helpless, dependent wife and child would rise up before me, and my hand would fall powerless. I was not the cause of my misfortunes, and God Almighty had provided only this one horrible way for me to subsist."

Interviewer Charles McGlashen asks: Did you boil the flesh?

Yes! But to go into details-to relate the minutiae is too agonizing! I can not do it! Imagination can supply these. The necessary mutilation of the bodies of those who had been my friends, rendered the ghastliness of my situation more frightful. When I could crawl about and my lame foot was partially recovered, I was chopping some wood one day and the ax glanced and cut off my heel. The piece of flesh grew back in time, but not in its former position, and my foot is maimed to this day. ...One night I was awakened by a scratching sound over my head. ... It was the wolves trying to get into the cabin to eat me and the dead bodies.

...
 A man, before he judges me, should be placed in a similar situation; but if he were, it is a thousand to one he would perish. A constitution of steel alone could endure the deprivation and misery. At this time I was living

in the log-cabin with the fireplace. One night I was awakened by a scratching sound over my head. I started up in terror, and listened intently for the noise to be repeated. It came again. It was the wolves trying to get into the cabin to eat me and the dead bodies.

At midnight, one cold, bitter night, Mrs. George Donner came to my door. It was about two weeks after Reed had gone, and my loneliness was beginning to be unendurable. I was most happy to hear the sound of a human voice. Her coming was like that of an angel from heaven. But she had not come to bear me company. Her husband had died in her arms. She had remained by his side until death came, and then had laid him out and hurried away. He died at nightfall, and she had traveled over the snow alone to my cabin. She was going, alone, across the mountains. She was going to start without food or guide. She kept saying, 'My children! I must see my children!' She feared she would not survive, and told me she had some money in her tent. It was too heavy for her to carry. She said, 'Mr. Keseberg, I confide this to your care.' She made me promise sacredly that I would get the money and take it to her children in case she perished and I survived. She declared she would start over the mountains in the morning. She said, 'I am bound to go to my children.' She seemed very cold, and her

clothes were like ice. I think she had got in the creek in coming. She said she was very hungry, but refused the only food I could offer. She had never eaten the loathsome flesh. She finally lay down, and I spread a featherbed and some blankets over her. In the morning she was dead. I think the hunger, the mental suffering, and the icy chill of the preceding night, caused her death. I have often been accused of taking her life. Before my God, I swear this is untrue! Do you think a man would be such a miscreant, such a damnable fiend, such a caricature on humanity, as to kill this lone woman? There were plenty of corpses lying around. He would only add one more corpse to the many!

■

Firehouse Project update

The project is on schedule to build a replica of Rocklin's original firehouse.

Chris Gerard, Project Manager



Sep 28, 2014

This is the site in Heritage Park chosen for the replica of Rocklin's original firehouse.

The project to build a replica of Rocklin's original firehouse, the building that housed the hose cart for Rocklin Hose Company Number One, is moving ahead with good momentum.

The site has been determined; it is next to the Old Saint Mary's Chapel in Heritage park. A sign posted there shows a conceptual design and the building's perimeter is marked there on the ground. Williams and Patton architects have completed the construction drawings of the interior and exterior, so the next step is to hire a contractor to build it.

One notable feature of the replica firehouse will be a cupola-enclosed bell on the roof, a duplicate of the bell that citizens would toll with a rope to summon the firemen to a fire. Buildings on the east side of town sometimes burned to the ground waiting for someone to run or ride horseback to the firehouse to ring the bell.

Stay tuned, the bell will be ringing again before you know it.

Rocklin's first golf course

Gary Day

Note:

In light of the controversy brewing over the fate of property at the Rocklin Golf Club, formerly Sunset Whitney Country Club, we thought that a few short articles, in this and upcoming newsletters, about the history of Rocklin's golf courses would be appropriate. This article is revised and updated from an article published about 5 years ago.

Gary Day

Very early in the twentieth Century, or possibly earlier, Rocklin was home to one of California's first golf courses, a six-hole circuit below Joel Parker (J.P.) Whitney's Oaks mansion in the middle of the Spring Valley Ranch, 3 miles from Downtown Rocklin.

J. P. 's father, George Whitney, established the Ranch in 1857 on rangeland west of Rocklin where he ran a special crossbreed of Australian and California sheep.

J. P. gained control of the ranch in the early 1870s, diversified its activities and operated it at about 20,000 acres for the next 35 years. By the early 1880s J.P. was wealthy from his Colorado mining investments and other pursuits. 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, by improving and extending the ranch's decomposed granite roads.

He had met Lucy while traveling in England and the couple was enamored of English Society. J.P. built most of the twelve granite bridges on his roads in the style of stone bridges of the English countryside.

In the late 1880s J. P. 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 and early 1900s, golf was a favored sport among Englishmen. English golf professionals

vide recreation for ranch visitors and his family by building a golf course on the slope of the knoll below the Oaks mansion and on the surrounding lower terrain.

Six holes of a modern course would occupy less than 50 acres but history does not record the exact layout of J.P.'s course. A photo from the very early 20th century shows the tee for the third 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'.

J.P.'s diary indicates that his son Vincent oversaw course construction and completed the course prior to 1903. It must have been well maintained until at least 1910 because J.P. touted it as a ranch feature when he tried, but failed, to sell his ranch that year.

When J.P. 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 remembered that only vestiges of the course were visible then. J.P.'s golf course is now covered by residential neighborhoods near Mansion Oaks Park.



Helen Beryl Whitney, Joel Parker Whitney, and Lucy Chadwick Whitney tee off c.1903 near a rock in today's Claremont neighborhood of Rocklin

were popularizing golf on America's east coast and J.P. decided to please his English friends and pro-

RANDY PETERS
CATERING & EVENTS
PLAN . PARTY . REPEAT .

(Continued from page 1)
Marble

Other exhibits tell the story of Rocklin's role in railroad history and the early ranching days.

"One area is devoted to the Whitney ranch," said Johnson. "Another area is a Native American exhibit with mortars and things in this area (behind the Johnson residence)."

One of the newest exhibits is the wash room – complete with a wash tub, a large iron and even an early model vacuum cleaner-- set up in the shed at the back of the museum building.

What: Rocklin History Museum

Where: At the corner of San Francisco St. and Rocklin Road

When: Open Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

"Docents sometimes hang up a rug on the clothesline outside to let young visitors use tools to beat the dust out of them," Johnson said.

The yard, which is lovingly maintained by Historical Society members, features handmade horse troughs.

It may be a little house, but it's filled with the history of how Rocklin got its start.

Rocklin school kids' entertainment

as told by the late Ruben Ruhkala

Westbound trains bypassed Rocklin after the Rocklin roundhouse closed in 1908 in favor of more spacious facilities in Roseville. But hoboes continued to disembark here as trains with mail cars slowed to snatch Rocklin's outgoing mailbag from the hook at the Rocklin Train Station. School children trekking home from Rocklin School near the corner of Oak and Railroad Avenues waited for the westbound 3 pm freighter to see hoboes jump from the train and stumble and tumble and sprawl in the gravelly rail bed.

passing of Pearl Willard

Gay Morgan



Gay Morgan (L) with Pearl Willard

91 year old Pearl Willard, long-time member of the Rocklin Historical Society, passed away peacefully at her home in Rocklin in August.

Pearl Strach was married to George Willard, member of an early Rocklin family, in 1941. After WWII, Pearl and George made their home in Vallejo but eventually returned to Rocklin.

After her husband died, she loved to travel with her daughter. She was an avid reader and belonged to the Rocklin Friends of the Library where she

often served as cashier for the Used Book Sales. When the Rocklin History Museum first opened she was a docent. Gardening was another favorite pastime and she loved her two dogs.

Pearl was pre-deceased by her husband, son Michael, daughter-in-law Carol, and daughter Paula. She is survived by a grandson, Christopher Willard. This lovely, soft-spoken lady will be missed by all who knew her.

Help preserve Rocklin's history and support history-related arts projects.



The Rocklin Heritage Fund at the Placer Community Foundation supports the Rocklin Historical Society

Now it is possible to make tax-deductible gifts and perpetual endowments that will support Rocklin Historical Society programs including both visual and performing arts related to Rocklin's heritage.

Please contact Veronica Blake at 530-885-4920 to learn how you can contribute, or go to www.placercf.org.

ROCKLIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Placer
Community
FOUNDATION

Local giving. Lasting value.

about Old Town Rocklin

The Rocklin History Museum's Collections Manager, David Baker, was reviewing artifact donation documents recently and found that some of the museum's artifacts were on loan for periods far longer than the periods agreed by the loaner. The museum's railroad collection is one of those. It includes a number of tools used by track maintenance laborers (Gandy Dancers.) For example there is a spike maul, spike pullers and tie tongs. David asked me to find the owner, listed as George Schwartz, and offer to return the items if Mr. Schwartz wanted them returned.

While preparing to visit Mr. Schwartz I found published material in the museum that accompanied the artifacts. A 1984 Southern Pacific RR magazine featured a project to replace miles of Sierra wooden snow sheds with low maintenance concrete structures. George Schwartz's picture was on the front cover. In an accompanying photo George is riding atop a huge concrete panel aligning the panel as it is being lowered into place in the shed replacement structure.

In the 1870's there were 37 miles of wooden sheds in the roughly 53 miles between Colfax and Truckee. Fire plagued the sheds and the sheds smothered train crews with engine exhaust. Cab-forward engines were developed to place the crew forward of the engine's smoke. Ultimately improvements in snow removal equipment enabled the removal of most of the sheds. Less than 3 miles of sheds remained in the 1980's.

Finding George and his wife Brigitte was no problem as they still live on High Street, a mere 3 blocks from the museum. They welcomed me into their well-kept home and were quick to inform me that their home was built in 1902 by quarryman Matt Ruhkala. And, there on the wall was a photo of Matt and his wife Eva standing proudly in



The Ruhkala/Schwartz home in the early twentieth century

front of the house with a wicker baby carriage, presumably containing one of the couple's eleven children. Matt and Eva and their children and their grandchildren have been involved with Rocklin's granite industry since the early 1890s. We had a good visit with the



1984 Southern Pacific RR magazine photo showing George Schwartz working on construction of concrete snow sheds to replace wooden sheds.

Schwartz and his wife live in the Ruhkala/Schwartz home

Schwartzes discussing old times. George and Brigitte formally donated their museum artifacts permanently then gave us a short tour of their garden which features, as you might expect, more railroad artifacts.

Recently opened Deer Creek

Farm occupies the former Deer Creek Lumber Co. site on Pacific St. across from the Hathaway Quarry. The store is a boutique, not a farm. It is operated by Compassion Planet, a non-profit. The store's offerings range from

bric-a-brac to attractively decorated recycled furniture. The enthusiastic volunteer I spoke with explained that Compassion Planet is the brainchild of several ex-Hewlett-Packard employees, organized to assist young people as they transition from foster homes to life on their own. The program's focus is on teaching life skills including socialization, manners, work, ethics, how to use basic tools and complete simple repairs, how to garden (the reason for the next-door garden plot), budgeting and paying bills. The boutique joins two other thrift stores that are part of the Compassion Planet program. One of the thrift stores is located at the corner of Sunset Blvd and Whitney. Some funding is provided by government grants. The program fills an important niche that seems to be overlooked by mainstream non-profits. For this, it seems clear that Compassion Planet deserves the support of the community.

■



Rocklin Historical Society

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Newsletter proofing, Gay Morgan

special collections wanted

Gay Morgan

If you have a special collection you are willing to share, we would be happy to put it on display in the Rocklin History Museum for a limited time.

We have the display cases and lighting to highlight and enhance the look of your items.

It doesn't necessarily have to be of a historic nature.

In the past members have displayed Elephants, Fountain pens and writing



materials, China tea cups and linens, old mining era artifacts, clocks, personal grooming items and more. Some visitors come to the Museum just to see the special collections. All of our visitors seemed to enjoy them.

Call me at 624-2355 and I will help you set up your display.

Mark your calendar

October 12, 2014, 2 PM

Old Saint Mary's Chapel

2 pm

5251 Front Street in historic Downtown Rocklin.

Joel Parker Whitney - Businessman and Entrepreneur Extraordinaire

By Whitney Historian Bill Marble

Join us after the event across the street at Cante Ao Vinho for free refreshments and no-host wine tasting

November 16, 2014

Old Saint Mary's Chapel

2 pm

5251 Front Street in historic Downtown Rocklin

Julia Morgan's Gold: An Architect's Legacy in California Gold Country

By Julia Morgan Historian Karen McNeill Ph.D.

Join us after the event across the street at Cante Ao Vinho for free refreshments and no-host wine tasting

December 6, 2014

Heritage Park in historic Downtown Rocklin next to Old Saint Mary's Chapel

4:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Christmas tree lighting

Come celebrate the Christmas Season with *The Annual Rocklin Tree Lighting*.



There will be a parade, children activities and of course Santa. There will be food, hot chocolate and cookies, crafts for the kids, horse drawn wagon rides, small train rides, local school and church choirs, jazz bands... and it's all free. Parking will be available at the Rocklin Train Station parking lot and elsewhere

Also:

Rocklin Historical Society board meetings are held on the second Monday of every month at 6 pm in the Old Saint

Mary's Chapel annex. If you have comments or questions for the board of your historical society this is your chance.

And Rocklin Historical Society planning meetings are held every Tuesday at 7:30 am in the cafeteria at Oracle, corner of West Stanford Ranch Road and Sunset.

Dues for 2015 are due before January 1, 2015.

If the label on this newsletter's envelop shows 2014 or earlier, your dues for 2015 are due before January 1, 2015. Your dues support the Rocklin History museum and programs to entertain and educate Rocklin's citizens about Rocklin's history. Please mail your \$20.00 dues for 2015 to:

Rocklin Historical Society

P.O. Box 1

Rocklin California 95677

A new membership in the historical society would add to the reach of this newsletter and make a great gift. Google the society's website for a membership application.

The society is a 501-c3 non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible in many cases. Check with your tax advisor.