

President's Message

Kathie Nippert

Happy New Year to all our members and newsletter readers.

Since completing the first year of



President Kathie Nippert

my two year term as president, I would like to take the time to reflect on the generosity and helpfulness of our

members. All of you members and volunteers are what make our organization great. You donate your treasures, talents and time to help us keep the Rocklin History Museum open and free of charge with beautiful landscape and displays; you helped create the Rocklin Hose Co No. 1 replica on Front Street; you greet prospective brides and make their special day magical; you provided entertainment and refreshments for our Speaker Series; you attended our membership meetings, Homecoming Reunion, Ice Cream Social, Pot Luck, Christmas Social, Board of Directors meetings and provided valuable input; you helped to make the Christmas Tree Lighting an enjoyable experience for hundreds of families and children, to name a few, and your financial generosity enabled all of those things to be possible.

But above all, your friendship has been invaluable. I am truly blessed to be able to volunteer with such wonderful people I call friends. I

City breathing new life into historic district

Gloria Beverage

Residents may have noticed sections of downtown Rocklin are getting a makeover, including new signage and landscaping. Karen L. Garner, director of the city's Office of Economic Development provided insight into what's happening and why.

What is the vision for the historic



Rocklin's outdoor amphitheater will be north of the Quinn Quarry and next to Rocklin's police headquarters building.

district (now being called the Quarry District)? Who is the moving force?

The vision for the Quarry District is to create a destination with a focus on arts, entertainment and dining. It includes both public and private investment with a mix of uses including housing, commercial, community public space, parks and recreation areas. It will capitalize on assets, such as the granite quarries

and the city's history, and leverage them to create a unique experience for our residents and visitors.

There are multiple partners involved in creating the Quarry District, including city staff and the private sector. However, the City Council is the driving force. They adopted goals and objectives for the district as part of the City's Strategic Plan and will ultimately approve and fund various projects.

Can you summarize the work being done?

- * Retrofit existing streetlights with more historic-themed style of lighting.
- * New street signs designating the Quarry District.
- * Refurbished landscaping in traffic medians
- * Roundabouts on Rocklin Road

* Expansion of Peter Hill Heritage Park, which includes Old St. Mary's Chapel, the Orchard, the Round House rose garden and replica of the historic Fire house. This area is a great example of the partnership with the Rocklin Historical Society and the private sector. The Historical Society manages Old St. Mary's Chapel and built the firehouse replica. The city will be cre-

(Continued on page 8)

thank you and look forward to 2016 and your continued support.

I would like to welcome two new members to our Board of Directors, David Baker and Patsy Pattison. David can be found most days working at the museum and you can find Patsy working hard at the Old St. Mary's Chapel. Our Board meets the second Monday of every month at 6:00 pm at the Old Saint Mary's Chapel annex. Everyone is welcome.

I am also very grateful to Dave Britton for taking over the Rocklin History Museum Docent scheduling. He loves Rocklin history and has been busy scheduling training and recruiting new docents, like Lisa Ward and Peggy Russi, welcome ladies.

Our volunteers are really the best. I enjoyed the Christmas tree light-



Rocklin Historical Society members Patsy Pattison (L) and Ronna Davis entertained Santa at the Old Saint Mary's Chapel during this year's Annual Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony. This year's event featured do-it-yourself photos with Santa and Rocklin magician Julio the Magnificent introducing The Snow Queen from Frozen. Everything at the event was free, provided by Rocklin's service clubs and local businesses.

This year's event was the sixth annual renewal of an early twentieth century event that went into a seventy-year hiatus at the outset of World War II.



ing on Front Street on December 5th and had the opportunity to join my fellow Suffragettes and Finnish Temperance Society ladies to march in the parade down Front Street. Keep an eye out for these ladies to make an impact on Rocklin in 2016!

The Johnsons are back

Gary Day

Gene Johnson and wife Margaret are back from their tour in the Carolinas and a trip through the Panama Canal in November and December. Gene is a former Rocklin Historical Society Board Member. With Margaret's help, Gene was the architect and project manager of the development of the Rocklin History museum on Rocklin Road and the restoration of the Old Saint Mary's Chapel on Front Street, the centerpiece of Heritage Park.



More scenes from Christmas tree lighting

David Baker Photos



Mrs. Santa soothed hundreds of visiting kids



Old Saint Mary's never looked better



Tom Kubicko's 1,000 hot dogs went early



Party time at Cante Au Vinho



The replica Leland Stanford drew lots of kids.



David Baker and the Snow Queen from Frozen



The 1894 firehouse and the 1936 Dodge Van Pelt



All of the kids' rides were free

Fact or Fiction

Gay Morgan



Lt. -Rt. John Morys, Annie L. Morys, Rose Morys, Nora Morys, Mamie Morys, Alden Morys

For as long as I can remember our family has been relating this story.

Annie Lissi Morys became a widow with seven children when her husband, John, died of appendicitis. John Morys was the owner of Morys' Saloon on Railroad Avenue and had once been Rocklin's mayor. Being a strong determined woman, Annie decided to take over the operation of the business. However, public opinion was that a woman should not run a saloon. So Annie had to put the daily operations in the hands of a handsome young bartender named Anton Matson.

As with many bartenders he had a gift of gab and would often speak of his time in the Spanish American War and his connection to Theodore Roosevelt. Most thought he was embellishing his war record.

Then one day Theodore Roosevelt came to Rocklin campaigning in his private train. He stepped out on the rear platform and

called out, "Hello Matson. Are you here? Where is Matson?"

That is where the family tale ended. I always wondered if it was true. I don't even know if Anton responded. I have searched military records from that war and found no Matson. I could find no newspaper account of Roosevelt visiting Rocklin.

But just the other day I was looking through some personal reminiscences at the Rocklin History Museum and found this recollection from Marie Ojalla. She wrote, "It wasn't until about five years ago that I heard the story of President Ted Roosevelt's stop at Rocklin. I never questioned the greeting—"Hello, hello Matson" I always heard it and used it to greet friends. I never heard anyone say "Hello Fred, John, or Ned"—friends greeted friends with "Hello Matson. I thought it was the proper way to greet friends."

Now you know as much as I do—did it happen? Did Theodore Roosevelt know and call out to Matson? I like to think he did.

John Jefferson Morys and Annie Lissi Morys were my grandparents. A few years after John died, Annie Lissi married Anton Matson making him my step-grandfather. That marriage lasted only a few years until Anton died. Annie Lissi was

An obit the Roseville Tribune and Register, Wednesday, 8-3-1927

Nicolai Alexson Meets Instant Death by Falling to Bottom of Quarry

Well-Known Rocklin Man Killed Monday

Submitted by Kathie Marynik.

Submitted for the Rocklin Historical Society Quarry Quarterly in 2016 by David Baker



Alexson was a member of The Rocklin Echo Band

Nicolai Alexson, head of the Alexson Granite Company of Rocklin, was instantly killed Monday morning about 9:30. He was working at the edge of his quarry near Rocklin when he slipped and fell some 60 feet to the bottom. A long blast of the quarry whistle brought help, but life was extinct when loving hands reached him. Mr. Alexson was a native of Finland, aged 39 years. He came to Rocklin when about 5 years of age and received his education in the public schools there, after which he engaged in the granite business with his father, the late Gabriel Alexson. He leaves to mourn his loss, a wife; a daughter, Betty; a son Eugene; two brothers, H. J. and Alex Alexson; and two sisters, Mrs. Sanfried Wallen and Mrs. S. Pentila, both of Porterville. Mr. Alexson was a man of the highest type; a devoted husband and father, and a citizen whom the entire community will mourn. Funeral services for Mr. Alexson will be held on Thursday afternoon at 2 o'clock from his late residence in Rocklin.

What Do We Do?

Gay Morgan

A new member of the Rocklin Historic Society asked. "What do you do?" That's a very good question and here is my answer.

Back in the late '80's a small group of people became concerned that Rocklin history was slipping away and they sought to preserve it. LaVerne Splan, Roy Ruhkala and Jim Carlson were in that group and are still active members today.

They began to raise funds hoping to eventually have a Museum, even though none of them had ever done this before. They held dances, picnics, and barbecues. They did historic re-enactments. They wrote plays and acted in them. They

toured other museums and historic sites. Other people became intrigued by their quest and the membership grew.

Eventually the house at Rocklin Road and San Francisco Street, built for Rocklin's first doctor, Dr. Fletcher and last inhabited by the Moon family, became available due to the generosity of that family. At last, a Museum for Rocklin.

However the house had been vacant for years and was badly in need of tender loving care. That's when we found out that there is always someone in Rocklin who can do what needed to be done—not always an expert but willing to learn. We became demolitionists, construction workers, painters, plumbers, electricians. You name it and we did it. We became gardeners. fundraisers, writers, decorators, and computer experts. We did have an onsite expert quarry man, Roy Ruhkala, who is also quite the historian. Then we suddenly realized we had to be docents too.

In 2002 we opened the Rocklin History Museum. We proudly showed the public the results of our efforts. We agreed to be open three days a week, Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday from 1-4. We began to give tours to the third grade children in the district and to other community groups.

Later we did it all over again. We moved the oldest building in town, St. Mary's Church, down Front Street to a new lot and restored it to and beyond its former glory. All of this was due mostly to willing volunteers willing to do what needed to be done. Now it sits in Peter Hill Heritage Park ready to host weddings funerals, memorials, historic presentations and musical events.

The answer to the question "What do you do?" is "What don't we do?" "If you aren't a member, why don't you join us now. I'm sure we will find something for you to do."



The City of Rocklin leased the Fletcher/ Moon house (top) to the historical society in 2001 and volunteers like Leon Vicencio (middle) converted it to the Rocklin History Museum in 2002. The museum is open on Wednesdays and Saturdays and Sundays from 1 to 4 pm.



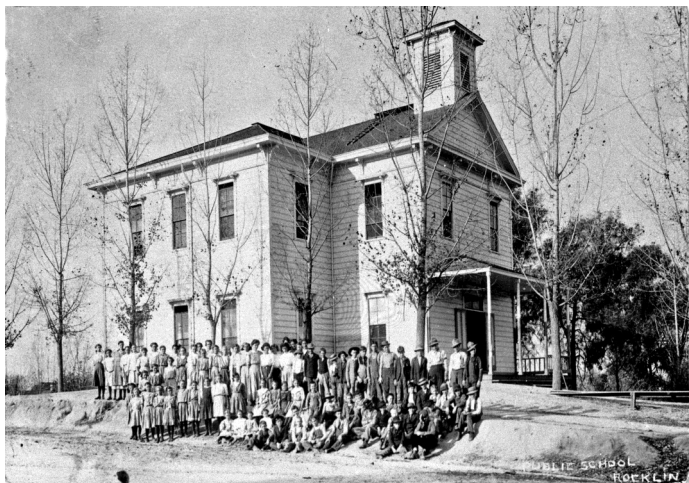
The owners of the Saint Mary's of the Assumption Catholic Church donated the building (top) to the historical society in 2005. The society moved it a thousand feet south, to a lot across the street from the granite Barudoni Building, where volunteers like Leon Vicencio (middle) restored it to become a non-denominational wedding chapel, the centerpiece of Peter Hill Heritage Park.

A new look at an historic building

David Baker

Here are two views of a Rocklin schoolhouse that was at the corner of Pine and Pacific. It was one of Rocklin's original schoolhouses. Traditionally it opened in 1885 and was probably demolished in the early 1920s when a new schoolhouse opened next door.

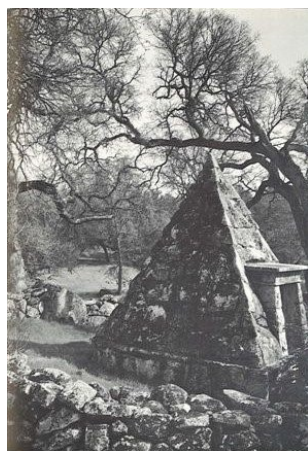
I recently discovered the photo at right in Rocklin Historical Society archives. It shows building modifications and a telephone pole and therefore is probably from the early twentieth century. The photo at left could from as early as the 1880s



From Facebook November 13, 2010

Gary Day

In 1962 Sunset International Petroleum



Corp. commissioned naturalist Ansel Adams to produce promotional photos of scenes of the southern 12,000 acres of Joel Parker Whitney's

Spring Valley Ranch on which they intended to build a metropolis of 100,000 residents called Sunset City. The project failed in the mid 1960s. The photos are in storage at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento. This is Adams' picture of Joel Parker Whitney's pyramid tomb.

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.

Another historic year for historic Old Saint Mary's Chapel

Nancy Lohse
Old Saint Mary's Chapel Chairperson

Old St. Mary's was once again the centerpiece for Heritage Park during this holiday season. This year the near completed firehouse was decorated, too. I would imagine that in 1883, when the church was first built, it was also one of the centerpieces for the holiday season in Rocklin. A big thanks to all who helped decorate the chapel – inside and out – for the tree lighting!



Photo: David Baker

This year our chapel was the site of 47 happy weddings! It would be interesting to know the grand total of couples that have walked down the aisle at historic Old St. Mary's Chapel! The ringing of the steeple bell has now become a tradition for our

couples as they leave the chapel as partners for life.

Our little chapel was also the site of four memorial services. The quiet beauty and serenity of the chapel lends itself well to these celebrations of life.

All the monies collected for these events goes to the Rocklin Historical Society to continue their work of preserving our city's history. The work done at the chapel is in the hands of dedicated volunteers. Our 'church ladies' meet with the couples, write out a contract with them, and make sure that their day at OSM is perfect! The 'fix-it team' keeps the building in pristine condition and is always on call for last minute fixes.

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

916-415-1150

www.OldStMarysChapel.com

email: oldstmaryschapel@gmail.com

The Fixers need your help

Bob Mart

Drive down Front Street and compare what you see to what you saw a year ago. Unbelievable, amazing, beautiful all come to mind! Our dedicated group of historical society volunteers can be proud.

The RHS and the City upgraded the landscape, built a new kiosk and built a replica of Rocklin's original firehouse, and many Fixers were there, often daily, all day, day after day, to help and to ensure that the improvements were in line with the society's vision. My thanks to each of you!

Often the Fixers' tasks seem miniscule and unimportant in the grand scheme of the Quarry District. But if not the Fixers, who? I assure you, that your Museum, Old St. Mary's Chapel, & Firehouse properties exist because of historical society volunteers. We do countless maintenance and repair tasks, ensuring that society facilities are in top shape.

Some of us can't help as much as we have previously, so we are asking others to step up and volunteer. I'll continue to use this article to appeal for new volunteers, historical society members and non-members alike.

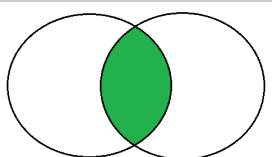
So please get involved.

If you're not sure how you can help, call me. We can keep you busy for as little as one hour or maybe dozens of hours per month. Any amount of your time will make a difference. As we jump into 2016, I'm asking you, to think how more effective we could be with your help!

Bob Mart

916-261-4021, marts-place@sbcglobal.net

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, to:

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

ating an outdoor area next to the Barudoni Building, which currently houses Cante Ao Vinho's tasting room, and will work with the winery owners to bring music and entertainment to this space.

* Phase 1 of Quarry Park (behind City Hall) includes an amphitheater and walking trails around Quinn Quarry. Future phases include a plaza area and shade structures to accommodate a Farmers' Market and other outdoor activities as well as additional trails and picnic areas.

You mentioned the Orchard and the Round House Rose Garden. Tell me more.

Front Street was Rocklin's original center of commerce. While most of the parcels have been vacant for years, these two areas are great examples of ways to honor Rocklin's past while creating a useful space for residents and visitors.

The Orchard honors the city's past and the various types of fruit that have been grown in and around the area. As the trees mature and bear fruit, the city may provide the harvested fruit to food closets or other nonprofit organizations. The Rose Garden is located at the site of the railroad round house, which was built in Rocklin on 1867 for the Transcontinental Railroad. Rail tracks, which delineate planter beds for the roses, are laid on the original concrete floor of the roundhouse. At the backside of the planter area is a section of wall from the original round house building, which remained in operation until 1908. Themed shade structures and seating provide a nice, relaxing picnic area.

Why dedicate a park to former Councilman Peter Hill?

Peter Hill has served the city, county and region for many years. He was first elected to the Rocklin City Council in 1980 and served until 1993. He was re-elected in 1996 and served until 2012.

He represented the city on various

boards, commissions and committees during his 29-year, 8-month tenure on the council. In addition, he served on the committee that established Rocklin's extensive park system.

The Front Street park is a fitting tribute to someone who has done so much for the city of Rocklin.

What else is planned for the Quarry District, including the Big Gun Quarry?

We have published an RFP (Request for Proposal) to find someone interested in developing the Big Gun property, which includes the Quarry

Private investment is critical to the success of the Quarry District. Home builders and developers provide the residences and commercial businesses that complement and enhance the public spaces the city is developing.

To be successful, we need more people living and working in the Quarry District and creating that "critical mass" that energizes the area. We also look to the private sector to partner in areas where the city doesn't necessarily have the expertise to make it a success. For example, the city might have some financial stake in the Public Market envisioned as part of the Big Gun Site, but will partner with someone to operate and manage it.

In the future, Quarry Park may include rock climbing and zip lining at the Big Gun Quarry, but the city will likely contract with a group or organization that has expertise in those areas.

The city has used existing funds budgeted for specific purposes, such as parks and landscaping, to pay for much of the work. Quarry Park was funded with a mix of existing park funds, grants and some remaining redevelopment funds. The city has taken a "baby steps" approach over the

past several years. The small changes have now added up to a big impact that people are noticing. We will continue this approach and use funds as they are available (to continue with this project).



Phase 1 of Quarry Park (behind City Hall) includes an amphitheater and walking trails around Quinn Quarry.

Shed. Since the parcel is designated as mixed use, the city is asking that a portion of the site be developed with a public market.

The city is also looking to repurpose some city-owned buildings, including the existing Fire Station on Rocklin Road. Plans are underway to build a new station off Pacific Street, so the city is considering new uses for the station, including an art center or food-related business.

Plans for music and entertainment programs for the Quarry Park amphitheater in 2016 are underway. Other projects include enhancing pedestrian connections between Quarry Park, Front Street and Johnson-Springview Park.

Who is funding these projects?

Firehouse Project update

A replica of Rocklin's 1894 firehouse is ready for flooring and some finishing touches

Gary Day



Ca. 1894

Rocklin's first firehouse was on railroad property at the site of today's Old Saint Mary's Chapel, on Front Street. It accommodated the hose cart for Rocklin Hose Company Number One, Rocklin's first fire department. Citizens spotting a fire ran to the firehouse, or rode horseback, to pull the bell rope to summon the firemen. The left-rear of the building was the meeting place of the Rocklin City Council. The left-front was the office of Rocklin's sheriff. The city built at least one other firehouse during the ensuing 50 years and, according to Rocklin old timers, demolished this one in the early 1940s.

The latest

Williams and Paddon, a Roseville architectural firm, donated conceptual plans for a replica firehouse.

Those plans and a funding commitment by the Rocklin Historical Society sparked a project to contract for construction of a replica to function as a museum of Rocklin's fire-fighting history. The contractor finished the building shell in September. Rocklin firefighters applied the paint and historical society members made structural modifications, having the building ready for display at Rocklin's Annual Christmas Tree Lighting celebration on December 5. The interior is left for the historical society, Rocklin firefighters and others in the community to finish.

The building needs flooring. The society is looking for a donation of flooring labor valued at about \$5,000.



RANDY PETERS
CATERING & EVENTS
PLAN . PARTY . REPEAT .

Mark your calendar

January 16, 2016
Light lunch and Docent Training, 11 am.
Rocklin History Museum,
3895 Rocklin Rd. corner of San Francisco Street in Downtown Rocklin

January 25, 2016
Exploring Words and Wisdom 1 pm
Irma Lundquist
Springfield Gables

February 22, 2016
All About Going to the Moon, 1 pm
Bill Marble
Springfield Gables

March 21, 2016
General Membership Meeting and Ice Cream Social, 7 pm
Old Saint Mary's Chapel, 5251 Front Street in historic Downtown Rocklin.

March 28, 2016
French and Indian War , 1 pm
Quentin Grady
Springfield Gables

Note:

For access to the Springfield Gables dial 631 at the Springfield gate then hit the "Call" key and the gate will open.

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 7:15 am in the cafeteria at Oracle, corner of West Stanford Ranch Road and Sunset.



Rocklin Historical Society Board of Directors

Kathie Nippert, President
Henry Lohse III, Vice President
Patrice Cardott, Secretary
Russ McNeill, Treasurer
Ronna Davis, Board member
Sally Huseby, Board member
Nancy Lohse, Board member
Jeff Foltz, Board member
David Baker, Board member
Patsy Pattison, Board member
Dr. Jim Carlson, Past President
Roy Ruhkala, President Emeritus

Putting in a plug for the Rocklin Historical Society

Ronna Davis



Rocklin Historical Society museum docent Jack Schwab recently negotiated a public service spot to promote the society's venues on radio station KAHl 950. Station Show Host Casey Freelove interviewed society board members Ronna Davis and Dr. Jim Carlson in a live broadcast on November 23 at the station's studio in Auburn.