



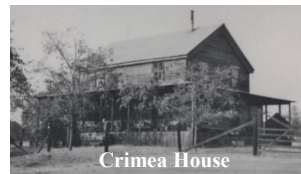
The many faces of  
Smokey Bassett

Page 10

A look at Porter's Hotel  
and Saloon



Page 2



Crimea House

Speaker Series ex-  
pands its reach with  
pioneering family

Page 5

## President's Message

Jim Hammes

Turn! Turn! Turn!

*To everything (Turn,  
Turn, Turn)*

*There is a season  
(Turn, Turn, Turn)*

*And a time to every purpose, under  
Heaven*



First, credit to the American Folk Rock Group for the partial lyrics from The Byrds who released the song title in 1965.

I find the initial stanza of the song to be quite relatable and applicable to the current time and change of the calendar to Fall.

Fall, (my favorite time of year) always reminds me of the most significant focus of transition from the three previous seasons to the eclipse of changes yet to come.

It sets the wheels in motion for some of our most noted Holidays and celebrations with the hope that we can share the times with Family and Friends.

With that, Fall starts the need for planning and prepping for those events along with realizing the year is winding down and the time to do so is precious and somewhat fleeting for many.

Fall, makes me feel the need to take stock of where we are and what we have accomplished to this point in the year.

[\*\(See PRESIDENT, pg. 5\)\*](#)



## What's new at the museum? Changes coming in phases

Our small museum is bursting at the seams. After twenty years of collecting donated display items, documents, photos and other ephemera — the items that provide a peek into our past and a tether to our town — curator David Baker and archivist Sharalee Cartier, along with museum committee chair Susan Brooking, have been working diligently to bring much needed changes to the museum. Everyone is pitching in, from the museum committee members to the fix-it team to bring our museum into the 21st century.

First and foremost, the need for a dedicated repository and research center is taking shape in the office. This research center has newly purchased equipment to streamline and modernize our archives for efficient research and study.

With the acquisition and implementation of Past Perfect, the leading museum software, along with public subscriptions to Newspapers.com and Ancestry.com, our research center is to be state-of-the-art.

Additional future plans call for

- reorganizing and modernizing the displays

- expanding and improving visitor experience to include interactive children's area and smart video displays
- continuing structural updates to the building, including new paint and HVAC system

Funding for these improvements comes from revenue provided by Old St. Mary's Chapel, grants, memberships and donations. Look forward to the coming changes that allows our community to look at, learn about, and enjoy our past.

# Quarry Quarterly

Our History Our Heritage Our Community

ROCKLIN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

Fall, 2023

## Rocklin's Ranches

*New exhibit on Rocklin's once  
flourishing Ag industry opens*

By Gloria Beverage

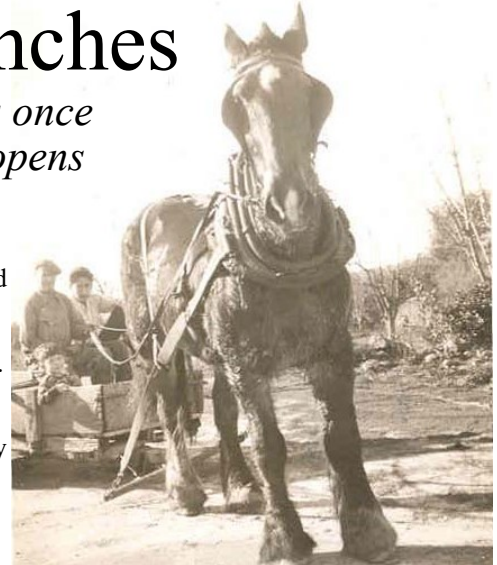
Rocklin's history is typically associated with the granite quarries and the Transcontinental Railroad. However, the agriculture industry has roots equally as deep.

"Rocklin's Ranches," an exhibit highlighting the stories of the first ranchers and farmers, will be open through January at the Rocklin History Museum.

Immigrants from Finland, Greece, Spain, Japan and Scotland cultivated a rich source of crops -- dairy products, fruit, sheep, turkeys, cattle, even pigs -- to sell to residents.

Through photos and memorabilia on loan from local families, the display reflects the lifestyle of immigrants in the era before electricity, running water, even Internet service. There's a selection of kitchen items, bottles from the dairies and farm tools, including different types of harnesses used on the plow horses.

Fruit packers are well represented. The unique tools of their trade feature strip-



Telesforo Alva with Nick Lopez and Peter Manno bringing fruit to the shed c 1944

pers (Hint: it's a tool!), the gauge used to measure the size of the plum, and the ledgers and tickets the packers used to track how many boxes they've filled.

Museum visitors will be able to visualize the locations of these ranches and farms on a large map prominently displayed.

[\*\(See EXHIBIT, pg. 9\)\*](#)

# DeWitt Porter and his hall



Porter Hall, left, and Burchard Hotel, circa 1905, nine years before a disastrous fire

By Doug Osella

Ever wonder about Rocklin in the Gay Nineties—especially its social life during that “carefree” decade remembered for early cars and bicycles, gas-lights, Vaudeville, and the Gibson girl.

In February, 1893, the citizens of Rocklin voted “yes” for incorporation, and citizen DeWitt Porter served as one of the new city’s first elected trustees. This was two months before the second big fire hit Front Street, which destroyed his businesses as well as many others. Businessman Porter rebuilt his burned out hall, livery stable and saloon to be bigger and better than the old structures. His new hall boasted a good stage with a drop curtain and a dance floor praised to be the best in the county. Along with the

popular horse racing at Rocklin’s race-track on Sunday afternoons and the regular picnics and brass bands at Workman’s Grove, there was always something going on at Porter’s Hall. Dances, dramas, masquerade balls, music programs, and olios took place there on a regular basis. The seeker of fun things to do might attend a Bon Bon social (1893), view the decorated Christmas boat manned by six little boys in sailor suits (1893), attend the Fourth of July Ball (1897), the Leap Year Ball of 1896, or enjoy one act plays such as “Bubbles” put on by the Citrus Colony Magpies (1895). Miss Tinnie Nelson of Rocklin performed many melodramas at Porter’s Hall. The farewell funeral service (with refreshments) for the 42-year-old Rocklin Roundhouse was held at Porter’s Hall.

Also, in a practical sense, Porter’s Hall offered the community a meeting place for political rallies, conventions, and get-togethers for many organizations. The second story hall above the livery stable was like a flag, raised up, calling people from near and far to Rocklin’s social center.

Ever wonder about Porter’s Hall and Burchard’s Hotel doing business so close together on Front Street? Was it Athens versus Sparta? Not at all! Mr. Porter and Mr. Burchard worked in harmony

and complemented each other for the pleasure of their patrons as exemplified by the Ninth Annual Ball of Sacramento Lodge 58 of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen (B.O.L.F.)

As a modern day reader of history, wouldn’t you give your eye teeth to be a fly on the wall at that grand ball, deemed the social event of the season (1897)—just to get a peek at Victorian ladies and gentlemen having fun? It’s totally natural (for even a fly) to notice the people first, and from your vantage point (on the wall) to see clearly the many fashionably dressed spectators of the times encircling the floor with just the right number of dancers on the floor without crowding. Many of the gentlemen look so young and athletic, and the ladies dressed in beautiful costumes (a style of dress ala the Gibson girl) glitter in the electric lights and flickering lanterns. The grand march begins promptly at 9:00 P.M., and your attention is drawn from the captivating dancers to the good music of four members of the Folsom Orchestra. You sense the music is also pleasing to the dancers.

What is really extraordinary is how artistically the hall is decorated. The room is draped with red, white and blue bunting. Over the balcony stairs is



*(See PORTERS, pg. 4)*



# Model railroad finds a new home

By Gloria Beverage

The Roseville Roundhouse Model Railroad Association has found a new home. Based at the Placer County Fairgrounds from 2007 to 2019, the model railroad group recently settled into a 1,900 square foot facility at the former site of the Dry Creek School now under the management of the MC Church.

The new space allows for the assembly of newer and bigger layouts giving members an opportunity to be more creative, said President Keith Waddell.

"It is truly exciting to see entirely new layouts being designed and constructed," he explained.

Members are in the process of building an HO layout that covers a 50-foot by 20-foot area while the N gauge covers a 20-foot by 15-foot area of the building.

Both layouts are considered a work in progress as members fine tune the design of each – painting backdrops, building

tunnels and bridges as well as adding buildings and landscaping – using new techniques for decoders and controllers as well as animation.

The new location has also allowed for the installation of a state-of-the-art lightbox design that provides museum quality lighting throughout.

The HO layout features a backdrop of the Tiburon/San Francisco skyline, explained long time member Duncan McDonald. The new lighting system allows them to create the illusion of traveling through the day – from dawn to evening.

Spacing is another benefit to visitors, Waddell noted. Wider aisles make it easier for visitors to get up close and personal with the layouts without feeling crowded by others.

Dedicated to the advancement of the model railroading hobby, the non-profit group has a long history of building model

railroad displays for local organizations.

"In the mid-1980s, this group built a large 20-foot square model of Roseville for the Carnegie Museum," Waddell said. Their modular train layout featuring Rocklin's Roundhouse area (circa 1869) has been displayed at various Rocklin Historical Society events.

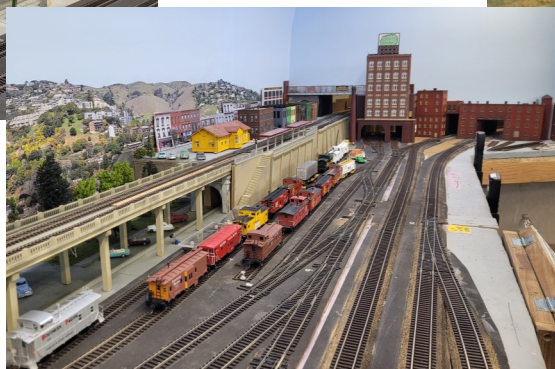
Not only is this group dedicated to sharing their love of model railroading, but they also show their support of the Shriner's Children's Hospital of Sacramento by giving 50 percent of proceeds from equipment donations.

Visitors are invited to check out the displays on Tuesdays and Saturdays (excluding holidays) from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The facility is located at 9707 Cook Riolo Road, Building 3 (at the back of the church site).

Membership is open to beginning and experienced modelers, age 16 and older. For a membership application or more information, visit [rosevillerroundhouse.org](http://rosevillerroundhouse.org).



San Francisco is the backdrop for the track above

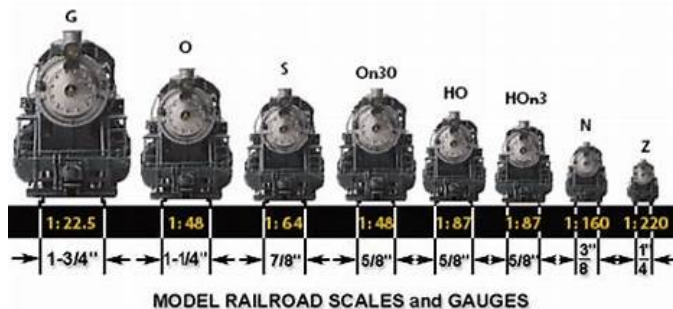


The photo, right, shows the inner workings of a multi-track layout in progress



Multiple tracks in the design, left, creates a realistic and interesting train yard.

## The difference between N and HO trains



By far the most popular size of model train is the HO scale. HO scale models are 1:87 proportioned, meaning one foot on the model represents 87 actual feet. An HO scale 40-foot boxcar is about six actual inches long.

The second most popular modeling scale is N scale. With a ratio of 1:160, it's a little more than half the size of HO scale. An N scale 40-foot boxcar measures just over three actual inches long and is popular with those who have limited space.

The term "HO" stands for "half O" while "N" stands for "nine," the width (9mm) of the track.

*(PORTER'S HALL Cont. from page 1)*

placed a locomotive headlight wreathed in laurel with "Lodge No. 58 B.O.L.F." printed on the glass. At the other end of the hall, the word "Welcome" circles over the lodge number. Over the stage where the musicians sit is painted a complete train: engine, tender, and four cars with inspiring words printed on each car. A locomotive bell hangs in front of the musicians to signal the close of each dance. Large wall mirrors and paintings as well as the stage floodlights are draped with twined ivy. Many colored lanterns hang from the chandeliers and in the windows, producing a dazzling effect.

Supper is announced at 11:00 P.M., and you follow the crowd next door to the Burchard Hotel for a big spread. Again you marvel at how artistically the dining room is decorated with evergreens and bunting. The tables are arranged and decorated to please the eye. You see a large portrait of President McKinley and another of Vice President Hobart wreathed with laurel and draped with the American flag. An unknown artist of obvious ability has created a large locomotive, totally made of evergreens. The name and number of the lodge is seen in several locations throughout the room.

A "bounteous" feast greets your eyes: plates loaded with slices of turkey, roast beef, pickled tongue, and sliced ham along with other delicious foods to satisfy the hungry guests. There are huge cakes with rich frosting, decorated with railroad symbols ready to be served. It is obvious that Mr. Burchard is a master caterer.

After supper, dancing resumes at the hall until 4:00 A.M. As the guests leave for home, you hear fading comments, declaring that this ninth ball to be the grandest of them all.

DeWitt Porter continued in business beyond the Gay Nineties and into the new century. In 1909 the "genial" Porter was found "as busy as ever" conducting businesses in two locations: Rocklin and in Roseville where his new Porter House had been recently built.

The disastrous fire of 1914 broke out in Porter's livery stable building where Chester Purdy, who lived in the granite house between Rocklin and Roseville, had stored 240 tons of hay. Was it someone's match or cigarette that set it off? No one knows the cause of the fire, but the large property loss was described by a reporter of the Roseville Register this way: "...the old town looks badly shot to pieces."

## Fall Potluck

By Susan Brooking

The food was delicious, the camaraderie evident and many prizes were awarded to the 40-plus attendees.

When and where did all this happen? The Annual Fall Potluck on Sept. 18 at Johnson-Springview Park. Don't miss it next year; mark your calendars for the third Monday evening in September. Plan to join in the fun.

The engines that keep Rocklin Historical Society moving forward were introduced and lauded for all they undertake to keep the society humming. They are the men on the Fix-it Team, the Church Ladies and the Museum Volunteers. Pick your passion and join one of these teams!

One highlight of the evening was Smokey Bassett's presentation of a painting done by his late wife, Jackie, to the Historical Society. The subject is the "old cutting shed" at Union Granite Company before it was demolished. It will be displayed at the museum soon.

Many thanks to all who prepared the tasty dishes we enjoyed. A special thanks to all those who made the evening sparkle with their helping hands before and after the event!

Fix-it Team present: David Baker, Don Callahan, Jim Hammes, Gene Johnson, Doug Osella and George Salgado

Church Ladies attending: Patrice Cardott, Linda Hammes

Museum Volunteers on hand: David Baker, Gloria Beverage, Susan Brooking, Royce Ann Burks, Shirley Espley, Cyndy Godfrey, Bonnie Neumann, Kathryn Ripley and Linda Wampler

At the welcome table: Karen Lokey and Gloria Beverage



**The Old Cutting Shed, by Jackie Bassett**



**The livery stable behind Porter's Hall is the epicenter of a disastrous fire in 1914**

Field trip docent and old St. Mary's chairperson Nancy Lohse has this to add to the Porter Hall story:

"About 5 years ago a person contacted the museum to tell another story. He was visiting with his elderly father-in-law who told him that when he was about 6, he and his

brother decided to go play in that 250 tons of hay. It was a hot windy day in May and, unfortunately, they also had matches. The rest, as they say, is history. The third graders love this story as it is about children their age. We also talk about the guilt the boys must have felt about burning down a town!"



[\(PRESIDENT, Cont. from pg. 1\)](#)

Fall taps me on the shoulder and says, we still have time to take care of business and goals that are outlined in our plans.

Fall, unlike spring, has a “winding down” feeling of the sense that shorter days and colder weather is ahead.

Fall, like the other seasons, creates “to do” lists that are relative to the time of year we embark on and exit from when the pages of the calendar ... **Turn!**

**Turn! Turn! ...**

Fall, creates a purpose for us to reflect what is happening around us.

Fall, starts the process of closing up from the cold ahead but also promotes the sense of warmth the season brings.

Fall, sets the palette on the easel of history as well.

Fall, is recognized for changing the course of our government and being the catalyst for what will be recorded as history every four years when we elect a new President.

History represents the time for “every purpose”.

History is Fall as well.

The falling leaves are the history of the year’s foliage that entertain us with the colors of what was and what will

**... Turn! Turn! Turn!**

**So ... to everything ...**

**Turn! Turn! Turn!**

**There is a season ...**

**Turn! Turn! Turn!**

**... And a time to every purpose,  
under Heaven.**

reemerge in the next spring season and start the cycle over again

It is my wish that we all find that everything we historically accomplished so far this year is rewarding during this Fall season and that we all had a purpose, under Heaven.

If you need more time ... it is still available ...

Just ... **Turn! Turn! Turn!**

... until we gather again.

**HAVE A  
MINUTE?  
VOLUNTEER!**

## Speaker Series making an appearance on October 23

Patsy Pattison, Speaker Series Coordinator



### Crimea House circa early 1940s

RHS Speaker Series is pleased to announce the upcoming presentation on the history of the Stockel family, pioneers in early California, by 5th generation Californian, Gary Stockel. Going back to 1852 when John and Cynthia Stockel Immigrated from Hanover, Germany, to the United States in 1852, the Stockels operated the Crimea House, a Freight/Stage stop and boarding house for travelers to and from the Stockton area into the southern gold mines and Yosemite area.

Presenter Gary Stockel, cousin of RHS member Jeff Stockel, was born and raised in Hayward, California. He graduated from UC Berkeley with a BS degree in

Forestry and found a career working within California’s Agricultural Commissioner’s System. In 2018, after 34 years of service across three counties, Alameda, San Joaquin, and Tuolumne, Gary retired as Tuolumne County’s Agricultural Commissioner, Sealer of Weights and Measures, Director of Animal Control, and Air Pollution Control Officer. During and after Gary’s Tuolumne County employment, he has researched his Stockel Family’s Pioneer History within Tuolumne County.

The presentation will be held on October 23, 6:30 - 7:30 at Old St. Mary’s Chapel., 5251 Front Street, Rocklin.

## Speaker Series continues in November with scenes from Ghosts of Placer County

A slightly later time than we are used to, but exciting just the same, our November Speaker features not just a speaker, but actors as well!

On November 20th, from 7:00-8:00pm, the audience will be treated to scenes from the Placer Repertory Theater’s “Ghosts of Placer County”, with speaker Tess Forsyth. Tess, a member of RHS, is Board President and Producing Artistic Director for Placer Repertory Theater.

“Ghosts of Placer County,” a play written by Tess Forsyth, covers nearly 200 years of history in Placer County and the region.

The story revolves around Dr. Dessa Dagmar and her daughter Aubrey, and their experiences over 30 years, while also sharing moments from Placer County’s history.



# “The Sacrifice”

*A ranch story to go with our new exhibit*

By Jeff Stockel

I remember years ago at the Vuletich ranch something that happened that I will never forget. I met Steve when I was five years old. He was the first friend that I made moving from the San Leandro California to Rocklin. His father, Matt, ran a local herd of reddish brown and white-faced cattle called Hereford cattle. I used to help Steve feed the cattle and change out irrigation pipes to water the grass. I was always taught to keep my eye out for the bull, because he could be unpredictable and dangerous.

Every year the cows would have their calves, usually in late winter or early spring. It seemed to be the most stressful time for Mr. Vuletich, especially if some of the cows were having calving issues. I received a call from Steve that there was trouble with some of the cows and to come over and observe more than help with the problem. I asked my mom if I could go help and she said yes. I put on my 501 jeans, put on my cowboy boots, jumped on my stingray bike, and peddled off for the Vuletich ranch.

As I got closer, I could hear a loud baying of a new born calf. The bull calf sounded like he was looking for his mother. When I looked towards the direction of

the baying, I could see that the calf had something like a blanket tied to his back. As I came closer, I could see that it was a fresh hide from another calf that was tied to him.

I asked Steve what is happening and why was this hide tied to his back. Steve said that the calf had lost his mother when she gave birth to him and the hide that was tied to him was from a calf that died during birth.

I asked why does he have the dead calf's hide tied to his back, Steve said that they wanted to take him to its mother to see if she would take him in. They had heard of this before but this was their first attempt to try this. The theory was that the mother cow that had lost her baby calf would smell the hide on the orphan calf and she would then be tricked into believing that it was her live calf.

Mr. Vuletich and his brother Ed were warming up the old Ford tractor to go and help the troubled mother cow. They hooked up the flatbed trailer to the tractor and loaded up some sweet alfalfa hay to use to entice the cattle. Mr. Ed picked up the orphaned calf and placed him on the flatbed trailer and asked Steve and me to hold on to him. Mr. Vuletich got into the driver's seat, put it in gear and headed out toward open pastures. Mr. Vuletich was not the best of drivers and you learned quickly to hold on for your dear life.

We headed out from the old tin barn and out to the gate to the open pasture. As we headed through the gate there was a short drop of a hill where you could pick up a lot of speed. I held on for dear life. Once we came down the hill, off in the distance were the working corrals made out of old Douglas fir timbers that if you rubbed up against you were sure to get a splinter or two. As we passed the corrals, the pasture sloped up steeply towards the top of the hill. Mr. Vuletich put the tractor in low gear and headed up the hill. Once we were almost to the top, we had to cross the crackly old bridge that crossed over the



ditch. Once we came across the bridge, we climbed a hundred more feet through the thick oak studded forest to reach the top of the hill.

Now that we were on top of the hill, Mr. Vuletich got his binoculars out and started scanning the vast fields looking for the cattle. He saw something in the distance and gassed the Ford tractor toward that direction. Once we got to where the young mother cow was baying, I could see that spot where she had given birth to her dead calf. The yellow hay grass was matted down and stained with the reddish-brown fluid from her afterbirth.

As Mr. Ed approached her the more agitated she became. Mr. Ed quickly grabbed some of the fresh green alfalfa hay and threw some on the ground near the afterbirth. The mother looked at him, looked at the ground where the hay was deposited and she quickly buried her head into the fresh hay. She quickly ate up the hay and Mr. Ed put another pile closer to the direction of the flatbed trailer that the young orphaned calf was on. Slowly but surely, she came closer to the flatbed trailer where a larger bale of hay was and the crying calf was.

Then all of a sudden, she snorted into the direction of the orphan calf, took in a deep breath and came ever so closely to the calf. She started sniffing the calf, the young bull calf turned towards her and then she began licking him and letting out motherly grunts.

Mr. Vuletich said, “I think it's working! Let's head to the home barn and see if she follows.

So, Mr. Ed jumped back on the to the trailer and Mr. Vuletich pointed the tractor back and slowly made our way back to the barn with momma cow in hot pursuit. We went back through the open fields, through the woods, over the crackly bridge, down the steep hill, past the corral and finally to the old tin barn.



Jeff and his friend Steve about the time period this story took place

*(See SACRIFICE, pg. 8)*



# Behind the Scenes

## Behind the Scenes

**Editor's Note:** This is the first in an ongoing feature highlighting members of Rocklin Historical Society's four teams (Old St. Mary's, History Museum, Fix-It Team and School Field Trips). These dedicated volunteers work tirelessly behind the scenes supporting programs that preserve our local history.

### Nancy Lohse Old St. Mary's Chapel

#### Q: When and why did you join Rocklin Historical Society?

**A:** In 2004, while teaching Rocklin history to a group of enthusiastic third graders, I became involved in saving historic St. Mary's of the Assumption Church. The church was saved and restored by a dedicated group of volunteers. Rodger Lokey talked me into helping with weddings when they first started in 2007 and I've been blessed to be working with a great group of church ladies since then.

#### Q: What do you enjoy most about volunteering with Rocklin Historical Society?

**A:** I love telling touring third graders about the acorns and honeycombs found in the walls of the chapel thanks to the woodpeckers and honeybees. I love the feeling of being a part of the ongoing history of the chapel and sharing the history with others. It is an honor to be a caretaker of such a historic building.

#### Q: Interesting story to share?

**A:** A favorite wedding story is the one where the groom was wearing a kilt for the ceremony. Unfortunately, as the bride was ready to walk down the aisle, one of the church ladies was still clipping the pleats of the new kilt.

Then there was the time that the bride went to get dressed and realized that the security tag was still in place. She couldn't

unzip the dress. Once again a church lady came to the rescue with a quick call to Nordstroms who sent over an associate to remove the tag. Being a church lady is always an adventure!

### Linda Wampler Third Grade Field Trips

#### Q: When and why did you join Rocklin Historical Society?

**A:** I think it was 2018. Nancy Lohse was probably the one who got me interested. We both taught in Rocklin. She is very persuasive!

#### Q: What did you do in your previous life (before retirement)?

**A:** I taught elementary school for 28 years.

#### Q: Why did you decide to volunteer as a school field trip leader?

**A:** Leading a bunch of third graders on a field trip is the best of both worlds. This age is so curious and engaging. It's fun to talk to them as if I am their teacher! I miss that. Also, I have all the fun without the responsibility of filling out report cards, standardized testing or staff meetings!

#### Q: What do you enjoy most about volunteering with Rocklin Historical Society?

**A:** Being retired, I found it hard to say I *was* a teacher - it is so much a part of who I am. Now I feel I still *am* a teacher! I also enjoy the social aspect of it. I've made new friends and renewed older ones - teachers I hadn't seen in many years.

#### Q: Funny or interesting story to share?

**A:** I had a group of students sitting around the table in the parlor. I was describing life for children before electricity. I was showing them the lamp that sits on the table, saying if they lived in the old days they would have to do their homework using it as their light, and probably would have

had the chore of filling up the reservoir with kerosene, cleaning the soot off the glass, and trimming the wick. One student said, "How do you know so much about all this stuff?" and before I could reply, someone else piped up and said "Duh, that's what she used when she was a kid!"

### Susan Brooking Rocklin History Museum

#### Q: When and why did you join Rocklin Historical Society?

**A:** In early 2000 I was a lucky attendee at a performance of Dr. Jim Carlson portraying Joel

Parker Whitney in a one-man show. He was fabulous and made me consider many questions about my new hometown. The fellow sitting next to me at that performance had answers to all my questions. It was none other than Roy Ruhkala. I was hooked. The deal was clinched when I was invited to be a docent-trainee at the soon-to-open Rocklin History Museum. I met my mentor, and soon-to-be dear friend, Gay Morgan. The deal was sealed!

#### Q: What do you enjoy most about volunteering with Rocklin Historical Society?

**A:** The people - both folks touring the museum and all the wonderful people I get to meet and work with at the museum. And then there are the third-grade field trips - the students, teachers and parents - it's always a treat to introduce them to Rocklin's many stories.

#### Q: Interesting story to share?

**A:** While telling Rocklin's stories to third-grader students, you always question whether you're making an impact. Then one weekend a family comes into the museum with parents, grandparents and kids. Suddenly you hear one of the kids retelling Rocklin's stories almost in the exact words he'd heard on the tour. Makes it all worthwhile!

*(See BEHIND THE SCENES, pg. 8)*



*(SACRIFICE con't from pg. 6)*

Once Mr. Vuletich stopped his tractor, Mr. Ed turned to Steve and me and said, "Hold on dearly to that calf!" as he jumped off the flatbed trailer. Then Mr. Ed grabbed the baby bull calf from Steve and me while Mr. Vuletich was opening a gate to a nursing pen inside the barn.

As Mr. Ed headed for the pen, momma cow was in hot pursuit, pushing him from behind. Once we got the baby calf and momma cow inside the pen, we sat back to watch the bonding show begin. Both Mamma cow and baby bull calf were very vocal, bellowing momma grunts and baby cries back and forth.

As this was going on, Momma cow was licking baby bull calf from head to toe. We noticed the baby bull calf sniffing and holding his head up in the air, looking for something that was so vital to his survival, especially during the first 24 hours after birth, colostrum only to be found in momma's milk.

Momma cow was so ready to allow baby bull calf feed because her udders were so full and ready to explode from not being able to nurse her stillborn calf. Once he finally nudged his mouth over her swollen udder, the tap of life-saving nutrients were being loudly sucked down as momma cow sighed for relief!

After a few weeks of momma cow and baby bull calf nursing in the old tin barn nursing pen, it was time for them to rejoin the main herd out in open pastures. As we opened the gate and open up the main pasture gate, momma cow headed back towards open pasture with baby bull calf in hot pursuit. After a couple of weeks, the dead calf's hide had fallen off and the mother cow still did not reject the calf. She had imprinted to the new calf's scent and bond could not be broken!

Every time that I rode by the Vuletich ranch, I would look for momma cow and baby bull calf and every time I found them it would bring a wonderful smile to my face!



*Yes, the Holiday Season is approaching!*



*Yes, Rocklin Historical Society is hosting the  
Annual Holiday Social!*

*Save this date for festivities at the*

*Rocklin Community Center - Springview Hall*

*Monday Evening - 6 to 8:30 p.m. - December 18th!*

*(BEHIND THE SCENES con't from pg. 7)*

**George Salgado**  
**Fix-It Team/RHS vice president**

**Q: When and why did you join Rocklin Historical Society?**

**A:** I joined RHS in 1999 primarily because I moved across the street from Gene Johnson.

**Q: What did you do in your "other" life (career)?**

**A:** Well, I worked in the grocery business. I worked as a combo manager for 34 years. My wife and I have owned a business, Kim Kaplan Productions, for the last 22 years.

**Q: Why did you decide to volunteer for the Fix-It Team?**

**A:** Gene (Johnson) asked me to come to breakfast with him and he roped me in. I started running the Fix-it Team because I thought Jim Hammes (who was in charge of the Fix-It Team) would

make a great president. I told him if he became president I would take over the Fix-it-Team.

**Q: What do you enjoy most about volunteering with Rocklin Historical Society?**

**A:** Hmmm...love knowing that we are saving our history for our kids' kids. I do enjoy working with all the members.

**Q: Funny or interesting story to share?**

**A:** My first encounter with the RHS was when St. Mary's Chapel was being moved down Front Street. Our business (Kim Kaplan Productions) has a connection with Good Day Sacramento. Marc S Allen was riding in my convertible doing a live feed of the chapel while it was being moved down Front Street. I remember Good Day's cameraman walking next to my convertible while Marc was standing on the front seat filming a live segment about the chapel and the volunteers pulling on the rope to move the chapel to its new location.





(EXHIBIT, con't from, pg. 1)

Stories of growing up on these ranches and farms will be shared throughout the exhibit.

Among the ranchers featured is George Mavrias, who emigrated from Greece in 1914. He was an active sheep and cattle rancher until his death in 1973, recalls his daughter, Stephanie Mavrias Wessels. Her father owned 360 acres on Taylor Road, including the Cooper Ranch which extended to what is now Roseville landfill and a portion of Whitney Ranch as well as rental properties.

"In the early days of managing his ranch, Dad had at least 1,000 sheep in his flock and 250 beef cattle," she said. "After one crossed the railroad tracks and drove on the dirt road toward our house, on the right was an almond orchard and a small vineyard."

One of Ed Corral's favorite childhood memories was the annual pig slaughter on his grandfather Alva's ranch in November or early December. That memory is sprinkled with thoughts of the elders preparing traditional Spanish food – chorizo, morcilla (blood sausage), chicharrones (deep fried pork rinds).

Frances Corral Aguilar remembers going to the Aguilar Ranch for pig roasts.

"When they got electricity on the ranch," she said, "they got an electric stove. That stove stayed shiny and clean because Grandma Aguilar preferred cooking on her woodstove."

In addition to the fruit and livestock ranches, there were several dairy farms: the Aitken Dairy and the Spring View Dairy, which was operated on land (now part of Johnson-Springview Park) purchased by Gene Johnson's grandfather, A.O. Wickman, as well as the Boisa Dairy.

"My dad's (Joe Boisa) dairy was formerly a fruit ranch of plums," recalled Clifford J. Boisa. "He built a Grade A milking parlor and converted most of the 80 acres to irrigated pasture. We had 20-25 milk cows."

Clifford said he was given the job of herding the cows to the barn for milking, then washing out the milking area of "their usual droppings after milking."

The rich history of Rocklin's ag industry is also represented in the stories of the Sasaki, the Corrals, Victor Wickman's family and Joel



The Sasaki home is surrounded by the thriving fruit trees of their North Star Ranch



Whitney's ranch with the orange groves in the background. This photo was taken off Park near McCormick Park. It is believed the pipe, seen in the background brought the water to Rocklin after hydraulic mining was banned. The flumes and water systems used for mining were utilized for bringing water to area.

Parker Whitney's sprawling estate.

Check out the ag industry exhibit at the Rocklin History Museum, located at the corner of San Francisco Street and Rocklin

Road. See if you can figure out what a stripper is! The museum is open from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Admission is free.



Where would you find these sticks of dynamite?  
Answer on page 12



# In the Spotlight

## Smokey Bassett: Man with many personas

By Gloria Beverge

A third generation Californian, Ron “Smokey” Bassett has a passion for history, particularly local history.

A family historian and genealogist for nearly 45 years, Smokey noted that his California roots are deep. His great-grandmother married into one of the founding families of Pasadena.

Born on VJ Day in 1945, Smokey was raised in Anaheim and Grass Valley after his parents divorced. His father owned the meat department in a Grass Valley store as well as the Colfax Market.

He served with the U.S. Air Force for 23 years -- two year-long remote duty assignments in Alaska, two assignments in West Germany and the last two years as the Public Affairs Superintendent at Andrews AFB, retiring as a Master Sergeant in 1988. As part of his duties, Smokey was manager of the base White House Media Center for the final three years of President Reagan’s term.

In 1989, he was named the Sacramento Air Logistics Center’s Public Affairs Chief of Community Relations and retired (again) when the base closed in 2001.

Throughout his Air Force career, Smokey oversaw the multiple Scouting units within the military community as well as the Scouting units sponsored by the three servicemen stakes of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

During his 55 years in Scouting, Smokey was a key trainer for adult leader training programs, the first Golden Empire Council’s International Representative and course director for the council’s Wood Badge advance adult leadership training course.

His interest in living history portrayals was piqued while collaborating with Scout leaders as a way to demonstrate how to have fun teaching history to youth.

“I have always been involved in family history research and after being retired, I became active in a local living history group that portrayed the early Latter-day Saints in Alta,” he explained.

A resident of Rocklin since 1989, Smokey is an active member of the official California Living History Service Mission of the Latter-day Saints. More than 150 re-enactors participate in living history events throughout the state, including Sutter’s Fort State Park, the Marshall Gold Discovery State Park and other historic programs throughout Northern California.

Locally, he portrayed J. Parker Whitney during the move of St. Mary’s down Front Street and at the “funeral portrayal” marking the move of the roundhouse from Rocklin to Roseville.

“Portraying Whitney was an easy way to give back to the community we’ve enjoyed for 36 years since I already had the period correct outfits. I saw a need to help the Rocklin Historical Society at various events,” he said.

Although many people have no idea who Whitney was, Smokey finds a kinship with the man whose legacy has impacted the city.

“He is an interesting man,” he said. “He traveled a great deal – as I have – 26 countries.”

Extensive research into the lives of the personas he portrays allows him to stay in character when making appearances at public events.

In addition to Whitney, Smokey has appeared as William Brown Ide, the first



Joel Parker Whitney

known Latter-day Saint in Alta California. Ide was the leader of the Bear Flag Revolt and president of the California Republic.

“His efforts resulted in today’s California flag,” he added.

Smokey also portrays Thomas Rhodes, whose family discovered gold in the Spring of 1847. Rhodes quietly mined around what is now the Elk Grove area and took more than \$26,000 in gold to the Latter-day Saints community near the Great Salt Lake. The coins that were struck provided financial support to residents of that new settlement.

Another of his personas is a soldier in the U.S. Army of the West, Mormon



**Bassett portrays William Brown Ide, the Bear Flag Revolt leader and elected president of the California Republic. He had the Bear Flag designed and made, which is now the state flag.**

*(See BASSETT, pg. 11)*



*BASSETT, con't from pg.10)*

Battalion. After the war, Smokey explained, many of the male members of the Latter-day Saints traveled to Northern California and were hired to build Sutter's now famous sawmill in Coloma.

"Those of us who participate in historic presentations never refer to our outfits with the 'C' word," he cautioned. "Clowns wear costumes. Our outfits are as 'period correct' as we can make them."

He does admit he has made public appearances in costume. In the late 1970s, Smokey joined a Sacramento clown group for a number of parades and public events.

Smokey has also played the role of Santa at church events and at home visits in the American military community in West Germany.

He admits that the living history appearances give him an oppor-

tunity to meet and greet.

Sadly, the pandemic followed by the loss of his wife in late January meant Smokey had to temporarily put his personas "on hold."

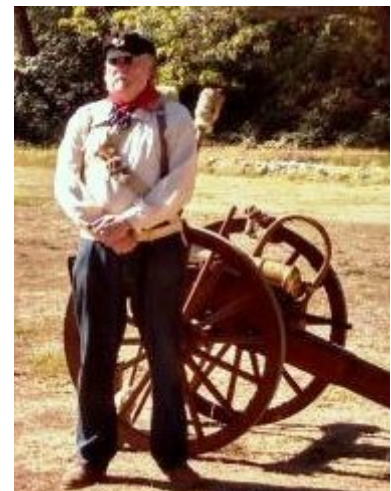
"In late January my dear bride, Jackie, lost her 1-1/2 year battle with cancer," he said, adding that she was an artist and quilter. "For more than 12 years, she sewed 10 baby quilts each month for Sutter Medical Center's NICU."

During the Fall potluck dinner, he presented her painting of the Big Gun Quarry workshop building to the Historical Society.

Smokey is happy to once again be back on the road with the Living History Service mission. In September he portrayed an individual from the 1849 Gold Rush era during Foresthill's Harvest Day and Colfax's Railroad Days and will be participating in Coloma's annual event.



**For parades with a Mormon Battalion marching unit Smokey portrays a sergeant in the Dragoons, the unit that recruited men for the US Army of the West - Mormon Battalion for the Mexican-American War.**



**To the right, Bassett portrays a soldier of the US Army of the West next to the reproduction of the late 1700's black powder cannon that Capt. John Sutter sold to the departing former members of the Mormon Battalion "They worked for Sutter after the war and amongst various jobs constructed the now famous saw mill at Coloma where gold was discovered in January 1848," said Bassett. "The reproduction is made of modern metals and the living history group fires it whenever it is allowed."**

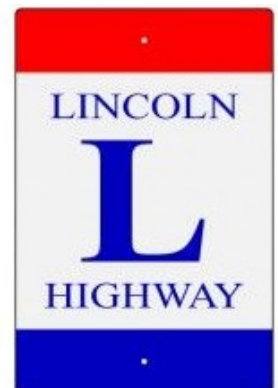


## Where is this historic road?

Along Pacific Street next to the train tracks and the fuel tanks near the corner of Pacific and Sunset, there is a bit of road that has historical significance. Some of you may say, that's the old Highway 40, and you'd be right, but it's history goes back further than that to 1919, when the first transcontinental road was pieced together.

The Lincoln Highway is a historic transcontinental highway that runs from New York City to San Francisco, passing through 14 states, including California. The highway entered California from the east along two different routes: the northern or Donner route, which came through Rocklin, and the southern or Pioneer branch that followed U.S. 50 west from Carson City, Nevada, around the south shore of Lake Tahoe to Placerville, and on to Sacramento, where the two routes joined.

The highway was gradually replaced with numbered designations after the establishment of the U.S. Numbered Highway System in 1926. After the Interstate Highway System was formed in the 1950s, the former alignments of the Lincoln Highway were largely superseded by Interstate 80 as the primary coast-to-coast route from the New York City area to San Francisco.





# It's serendipity—Impromptu visit yields a welcome surprise

By Susan Brooking

RHS hosted the first school tour of the new school year on a perfect October day. The tour was completed just in time for students to head to Quarry Park for their lunch break. The “field trip” docents were discussing the successes of the day, when we heard a voice asking to tour the museum. It was explained that the museum wasn't open to the public that day; however, the gentleman proceeded to explain that the child in the photo displayed in our entry hall was him in his grandfather's arms!

The excitement generated by his presence was palatable. He introduced himself as Ron Basque, son of Ann Marie Moon Basque and Nicholas Basque. His mother grew up in the house we call the Rocklin History Museum, and Ron spent many hours at this house with his grandparents, Anna & Chung Ah Moon.

Ron guided us through the house giving us a new view of our museum from the perspective of a child enthralled by his loving grandparents' lives. The “little house” was actually used as the laundry room. The “docent” kitchen was used basically as it is now, though the stove was a combination butane and wood stove across the room from the current stove

placement. The bathroom, too, was a step back in time for Ron. And the ‘basement’ was Grandfather Moon's cool retreat and “office”. There was a chest of drawers in front of the basement's secret ‘hideaway’, and Ron had not known of its existence, though it did not surprise him.

Ron has been invited back to give RHS a more formal interview and continue to tell us his stories of our museum's previous life as a family home. We can barely wait!



Ron, left, was not a happy camper while being held by his grandfather, Chung Ah Moon, but is much happier posing with Susan above!

## Mystery Place



The mystery place this time is outside at the museum.

The box of “dynamite” is stored in the metal-clad powder shed.

The shed was used to keep the “powder dry”, of course the powder being the blasting power used to blast the granite.

It was stationed well away from buildings and equipment - just in case.

### Rocklin Historical Society Board of Directors

2023 Board of Directors:  
President: Jim Hammes  
Vice President: George Salgado  
Secretary: Allegra Hakim  
Treasurer: Kathryn Ripley

#### Members at Large:

Gloria Beverage	Sally Huseby
Susan Brooking	Patsy Pattison
Don Callahan	Hank Lohse
Ronna Davis	Nancy Lohse
Kent Dazey	Jeff Stockel
Dan Defoe	Linda Wampler

Immediate Past President: Hank Lohse  
Founding Member: Roy Ruhkala

Quarry Quarterly contact:  
[quarryquarterly@gmail.com](mailto:quarryquarterly@gmail.com)  
Editor: Linda Wampler