

President's Message



Gloria Beverage

"Act boldly and unseen forces will come to your aid."

The message I recently found in a fortune cookie echoes in my head as I reflect on the accomplishments of 2025 while considering the goals the board has set for 2026 (and beyond).

We took a bold step in hosting our first Heritage Street Faire on Front Street in May. Our volunteers showed off historic pictures and artifacts, presented a granite splitting demonstration and offered a variety of children's activities. Non-profit organizations presented information about the cultures they represent, their connection to Rocklin's history and their services. Oh, and the entertainment! The music and dances of a variety of cultures, including a performance by the Chinese lion dancers, were performed throughout the day.

We will present our second street faire, a free, family-friendly event, on Saturday, May 2 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Front Street. We invite local businesses, non-profit organizations and residents (the "unseen forces") to support our event. For information on sponsorships, volunteer opportunities or booth space, send an email to Don Callahan at doncallahan10@yahoo.com.

Our greatest success last year was the completion of The Secret Garden, created in honor of Jennie Minkkinen, Rocklin's first county librarian and influential civic figure and her husband, Arvo, a Rocklin council member. Located behind the Rocklin Library, the garden also showcases the rare granite curbing that once graced the downtown Rocklin garden of Jennie's father, quarryman Victor Wickman. The curbing also pays tribute to Rocklin's once-thriving granite industry.

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Quarry Quarterly

ROCKLIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Visit our website:



Our History Our Heritage Our Community

February, 2026

Johnson Farm: A living legacy



The vision of the historical society and Gene Johnson is to learn, explore, and connect with the land that has nourished generations—from its first people to the community that became Rocklin.

By Gloria Beverage

The Rocklin Historical Society, in partnership with Gene Johnson, has developed a three-phase plan to create a farming museum on one of the few remaining residences built during the establishment of the city.

Located in the heart of Rocklin's historic quarry district, the farming museum would provide opportunities to teach students of all ages the history of agriculture and ranching. In addition, a host of exhibits and activities would showcase the history of the farmhouse, dairy and property, as well as the region's deeper pre-contact past.

A.O. Wickman acquired the Fifth Street property in 1919 from the estate of William Huff, who built the farmhouse in 1886. In addition to operating the dairy, Wickman, a Finnish immigrant operated a granite quarry on Ruhkala Road and served on the city council, including a term as mayor.

The property west of the farmhouse

was the seasonal home of the Nisenan Indians until the mid-19th Century. The Nisenan used grinding rocks in the area to crush acorns into grain and wash out the tannin in Huff's Spring, which also served as a source of fresh water for early Rocklin residents.

In 1936, Wickman sold the dairy to his daughter and son-in-law, Florence and Ray Johnson. The couple operated Spring View Dairy for many years, delivering dairy products throughout Rocklin and Loomis. The Johnsons were also active civic leaders. Florence served on the school board; Ray was a city council member and mayor.

In 1999, the Johnsons' son and daughter-in-law, Gene and Margaret Johnson, settled on the property, took over maintenance of the acreage, restored the farmhouse, added to the home and built other structures. A portion of the property was later sold to the city for development of what is now Johnson-Springview Park (to the south). Property on the north side

(See [JOHNSON FARM](#) on page 2)

(PRESIDENT, Cont. from page 1)

Among the forces that came together to support this project were the City of Rocklin, the Placer County Library, the Placer County Friends of the Library, the South Placer Rotary Club, Sally Huseby and Rocklin Elementary School third graders as well as donations from throughout the community.

Here's what we're tackling this year. Each represents a different aspect of Rocklin's legacy: rocks, rails and ranches.

- A kiosk illustrating the historical significance of the Rocklin Roundhouse and its role in the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad will be installed in Roundhouse Park at Front Street and Rocklin Road.
- The Quarry Office Building, originally located at the Big Gun Quarry site (now Quarry Adventures Park), will be placed on Front Street where it will undergo a complete renovation. Once finished, the building will serve as a museum dedicated to telling the story of Rocklin's granite industry.
- In partnership with Gene Johnson, we will develop the Johnson property on Fifth Street as an educational facility showcasing local farm and ranch history for students of all ages as well as the public.

Each of these projects will require hours of volunteer time as well as financial support. While the roundhouse kiosk will probably be installed this summer, the quarry office building and the development of Johnson Farm will be completed in phases over the next couple of years.

The Rocklin Historical Society is taking a bold approach to preserving local history. By acting boldly, we will be looking to the community for support. We welcome volunteers and donations – even “cheerleaders.” If you have any interest in working on one of these projects, send an email to rocklinhistorical@gmail.com. Donations are always welcome and can be made through our website: rocklinhistorical.org or mailing a check to Rocklin Historical Society, P.O. Box 1, Rocklin, CA 95677.

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(JOHNSON FARM, Cont. from page 1)

was sold to the school district to build Springview Middle School.

In 2021, the Johnsons decided to gift the Wickman-Johnson house, its surrounding structures and acreage to an organization that would preserve and maintain the property as the Johnson Farm.

While the agreement with the Placer Community Foundation was made four years ago, last summer Gene approached the Rocklin Historical Society asking the board of directors to consider accepting responsibility for developing the property into a living farm museum open to the public.

After several months of meetings, a committee from the Rocklin Historical Society presented Gene with a three-phase plan for the estate. With his blessing, the proposal was then presented and approved by the Historical Society's board of directors in December.

With Gene's input and guidance, the society will now focus on the legal aspects of the project, including establishing the Rocklin Historical Society as owner of the property. An engineering firm will be commissioned to conduct a feasibility study based on what is envisioned for the property.

After those tasks are completed, engineering, architectural and landscaping

plans will be developed to meet the requirements for an application for a conditional use permit covering intended uses for the property.

In keeping with Gene's vision, the Rocklin Historical Society is committed to creating a living farm museum showcasing, educating and providing a community gathering place in an urban farm setting that pays tribute to Rocklin's agrarian roots as well as the culture and arts within the city.

The plan is to create areas for community events or wedding receptions, set up displays of farm antiques and equipment, host school field trips and interactive children's programs as well as monthly programs presented by Placer Nature Center.

Other ideas include ag-related art shows, a community garden, offering hands-on ag programs for local students and possibly a Farm to Fork café.

The Rocklin Historical Society is proud to be given the opportunity to serve as the stewards of this unique property. With the support of the city, the community and volunteers within our organization, we believe we can fulfill the wishes of Marg and Gene Johnson.

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Speaker Series News

EXCITING START TO THE NEW YEAR

What Wagon Train was the first to cross the Sierra?
Which Wagon Train finished their trek with 2 more people than they started out with?
It wasn't the Donner Party!

How was Joel Parker Whitney a visionary for Placer County agriculture?
What did the gold rush have to do with it?

SEE MORE ON PAGES 6 AND 7

Attend our speaker series on February 17 and March 17, 7pm at Old St. Mary's Chapel.
Light refreshments will be served



Anika Talluri: A Young Leader Building Rocklin's Future While Earning Scouting's Highest Rank

By Linda Wampler

Fourteen-year-old Rocklin High School freshman Anika Talluri is many things—a student who loves biology and math, a volleyball player, a musician, and a dedicated community volunteer. But this year, she is taking on one of the most demanding youth leadership challenges in the country: completing her Eagle Scout project.

“I really like learning new things,” she said. “After sixth grade I decided to join Scouts because I wanted to learn how to cook, tie knots, do first aid, and spend time with my friends. I love camping with my friends and creating memories.”

Anika is part of Troop 219, the sister troop to Troop 29, within the Golden Empire Council of California. Her troop includes 10–11 girls currently pursuing Eagle Scout—the highest rank in Scouts BSA and one that only a small percentage of scouts ever achieve. Girls were first allowed to join Scouts BSA in 2019, and since then, young women like Anika have been steadily reshaping the program with their energy, leadership, and service.

“I was in Girl Scouts for a couple of years,” she explained. “Then COVID hit, and after that I joined Scouts. I'm the first scout in my family, but my younger brother is a Cub Scout.”

A Chance Email Leads to an Historic Project

Anika's Eagle project began with an email to the Rocklin Historical Society. She reached out to multiple city departments—police, fire, and others—looking for a meaningful community project. The Rocklin Historical Society was there to respond.

“I contacted all the city departments,” she said. “The historical society got back to me, so I met with Kent Dazey and Gloria Beverage. They told me about the kiosk. It sounded really cool, so I started working with Kent on it.”

The project centers on creating an informational kiosk at the site of the Rocklin Roundhouse, which is designated as a California Historic Landmark, largely unknown in the community, having been dismantled and moved to Roseville in 1908. Although her academic interests

lean toward biology and math, the project has tapped into another passion. “I really like history a lot, too,” she said. “I like learning about it.”

Working with RHS member Kent Dazey, Anika's Eagle Scout proposal focuses on assembling and helping fund raising for the kiosk that is being developed by Rocklin Historical Society. According to Kent, “We, David Baker, myself and others in Rocklin Historical Society, are very happy to have Anika's support to handle the assembly and fundraising support for the kiosk. Having worked on this project for nearly a year to design the kiosk panels and working with the City of Rocklin to create momentum for the project, we welcome Anika's involvement and input.” Anika confirms that “There are different parts of the project,” she explained. “I'm going to be focusing on assembling the kiosk and fundraising.”

Her work on the kiosk is only one example of her leadership. She and her troop are also helping the Rocklin Fire Department by repainting fire hydrants—an essential maintenance task the department currently lacks the budget to complete.

“Right now it costs about a million dollars to maintain the hydrants,” she said. “They reached out to the community, and our troop responded.”

Projects like these help scouts develop the leadership, planning, and teamwork skills required to be an Eagle Scout.

A Well-Rounded Young Leader

Outside of scouting, Anika keeps a full schedule. She plays volleyball, violin, and piano, and she speaks warmly about her school. “I like Rocklin High School,” she said. “The teachers are nice, helpful, and teach very well, and the kids are nice.”

Her Eagle project may be rooted in Rocklin's past, but Anika herself is clearly part of the city's future, capable and committed to serving our community.



Eagle Scout-to-be Anika Talluri

As she moves closer to earning the Eagle rank, her work at the roundhouse site will represent what young leaders can accomplish when they take initiative, ask questions, and step forward to help their community.

Update on the Rocklin Roundhouse Kent Dazey

Significant progress has occurred on the Rocklin Roundhouse project. The proposed educational kiosk, planned for installation in the 2nd to 3rd quarter of 2026, will interpret the site designated as a California Historical Landmark. Additional signage for the park is being considered and the lease of property that includes the Chinese Settlement is in discussion. Development of this historical site will be a significant enhancement to Rocklin.

Affordable housing complex being built on former school site

By Gloria Beverage

Groundbreaking for Pacific Street Apartments, an affordable housing complex being built by Community Housing Works of San Diego, started in January. Completion is expected by summer/fall of 2027.

The complex is being built on the site of Rocklin's first school at Pacific and Oak Streets — not to be confused with an earlier, short-lived school on 3rd Street that burned down in 1885. The new school, a wood-frame building for first and second graders, was then built on the Pacific Street site. A second two-story building was later added to house students in the upper grades. The Rocklin Historical Society is hoping the developer will agree to the placement of a plaque recognizing the site as the home of Rocklin's first schoolhouses.

The Rocklin School District abandoned the school buildings in 1952 when the elementary school on Meyers Street was

completed. One of the buildings was later turned into a pool hall and then an Army surplus store. The lot has stood empty for decades except for the last remaining steps of Rocklin's first grammar school.

The apartment complex will consist of 110 units plus a community room with kitchen, computer room, tot lot and on-site laundry area. There will be 126 parking spaces, including 10 handicapped accessible spaces and 13 EV charger stations. According to their website, the units will be available to working families with incomes ranging from \$27,000 to \$97,700. Monthly rents will be as low as \$690 for a one-bedroom to as high as \$2,992 for a three-bedroom unit.

The San Diego-based nonprofit organization was founded in 1989 and has devel-



oped, rehabilitated and preserved 53 communities across California and Texas.

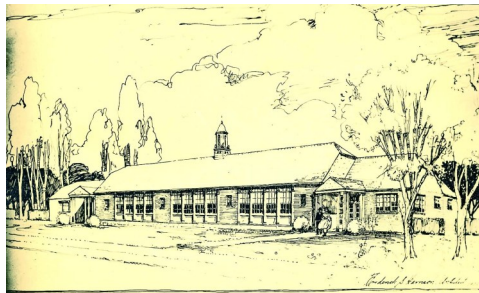
Community Housing Works offers programs on health and wellness, financial literacy and afterschool programs as well as scholarship opportunities to residents of their properties. With construction now underway, the removal of the old school steps closes a visible link to the past. A commemorative plaque would offer a meaningful reminder of what once stood here and help keep Rocklin's earliest schoolhouses present in the community's story.

Variations of the school site over the years

Read more about attending school on Pacific and Oak in the Quarry Quarterly from 2020: [Rocklin Grammar School](#)



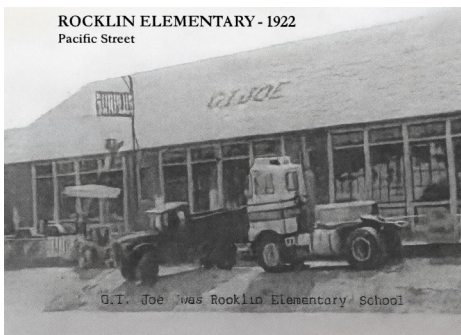
First school housed 1st—8th graders



Drawing by architect Frederick J. Sterner, capturing the look of Rocklin's early schoolhouse built in 1922 that once stood on Pacific St.



Two story school built in 1884, taken after 1922 (new school can be seen to the left)



Some of us at the museum think the apartments should be named with a nod to the history of schools, hoping "Pacific Street Apartments" is merely a working title. Here are some suggestions. What do you think?

- Old School Commons
- Heritage Schoolhouse Apartments
- Pioneer School Residences
- Schoolhouse Village



Last remaining evidence of the schoolhouse before being razed in 2026

From the pits of Rocklin to Millionaire's Row

A Granite Legacy Linking Rocklin to a Railroad Titan

By Sharalee Cartier

On April 20, 1886, on a beautiful 74-degree day in NYC, Charles Crocker, the Southern Pacific Railroad tycoon, went for an afternoon wagon ride harnessed with his two fast trotters from the West. On the road, he met Mr. D. O. Mills, who was also driving a team of trotters. The two millionaires challenged each other to a race, and Mr. Crocker's team proved the fastest. Upon the return, with Crocker in the lead, his wheel struck the raised railroad track at the 125th Street crossing, and he was thrown from his wagon. He was brought to a nearby hospital, where it was determined he suffered a concussion of the brain, a severe cut on the back of his head, contusions on his back, and numerous fractured ribs.

According to news sources at the time, Charles Crocker never recovered from this accident and died two years later, on August 14, 1888, in Monterey, California. He left an estate valued between \$20 and \$40 million. Twenty million dollars in 1888 is equivalent in purchasing power to about \$682 million in 2026.

Charles assigned his wife, Mary Ann Crocker, as the executor of his estate. To memorialize her husband, she hired well-known societal architect Arthur Page Brown from New York to design a monument for her husband at his final resting place of Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland, California.

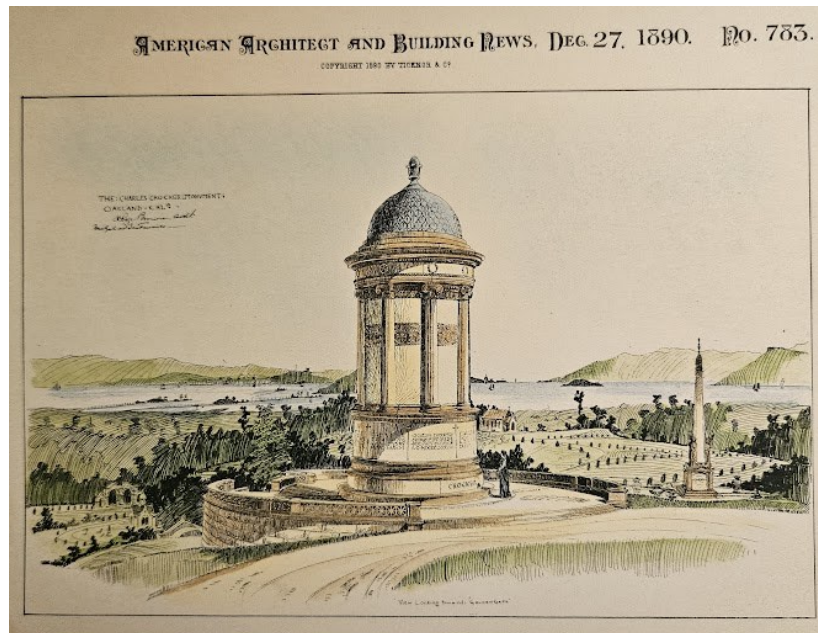
In addition to architect Arthur Page Brown, E. Pfister was hired as the superintendent and Rocklin quarryman Ira P. Allen as foreman. R. C. Fisher & Co. of New York were the contractors and, "after careful examination of the different quarries of this State, selected the John Nay Taylor Quarry in Rocklin on account of its suitability for monumental work."

The Placer Herald published the following on Dec. 21, 1889:

"The principal attraction to visitors is at the Taylor Quarry where the rock for the Crocker monument is being quarried and dressed. Forty men are employed in preparing the rock. The monument will be sixty feet square at the base and sixty feet in height. The shaft will be ornamented with eight fluted columns supporting capitals in the Ionic style of architecture. A carved band will encircle the shaft, which will terminate in an acanthus leaf. The pillars are circular and thirteen feet nine inches in length, and of a proportionate diameter. The work is about half finished (at time of article) and will require about six months to finish it. The workmen are skilled and it is a pleasure to see them chisel leaves and flowers out of hard rock. The granite is of fine grain and so hard and firm that it can be worked as smooth as marble."

The monument cost approximately \$1,000,000 to build in 1888–1889.

Renowned park planner Frederick Law Olmsted, who designed New York's Central Park, designed the grounds of the cemetery. Curiously, since the monument is solid granite, none of the Crockers are entombed inside. Newer cemetery records indicate that somewhere around the monument lie the remains of Charles Crocker, his wife Mary, their son George, and Emma, his wife.



Recent donation to the Rocklin Historical Society is the following: Charles Crocker Monument, Oakland, CA Arthur Page Brown, architect(s). From the *American Architect and Building News*, December 27, 1890. 9 by 6 inches. VG+ condition. Hand-colored Original Plan. This picture is extremely hard to find, as the magazine not only had a very small circulation during that time, but very few were actually preserved or colored as this has been. It measures 9 by 6 inches. The whole picture measures 11 by 9.75 inches (with border). Finely detailed and beautifully hand-colored.



The monument today, on Millionaire's Row in Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland.

The John Taylor Quarry opened about 1867 and continued to operate until 2005. It went from John Taylor through the names of J. Mantyla, A. Pernu, California Granite Company, Union Granite, and Big Gun Mining. It is currently the location of Quarry Park Adventures in Rocklin.

February Speaker Series Presents:

A Forgotten Journey: The First Wagon Train Over the Sierra

Join us on February 17 at 7 p.m. for an engaging and entertaining presentation by Bill Sullivan, who brings this remarkable story to life with insight, humor, and the perspective of a direct descendant.

Bill will explore the extraordinary journey of the Stephens–Townsend–Murphy Party of 1844–45—the very first group of emigrants to reach California by hauling their wagons and families over the Sierra Nevada. Much of their California trek unfolded right here in Placer County, and Bill will highlight nearby historic sites that you can still visit today.

A member of both the Oregon-California Trail Association and the Donner Pass Historical Society, Bill has spoken widely on the California Trail and has taught related courses through the Renaissance Society at Sacramento State. His presentations are known for being both informative and thoroughly enjoyable.

Come discover the trailblazing story that set the stage for every wagon party that followed.

Location: Old St. Mary's Chapel, 5251 Front St., Rocklin.

Light refreshments will be served.

Disassembled wagon on the STM wagon train, painted by noted artist Harold Von Schmidt



Harold von Schmidt — the artist behind the journey

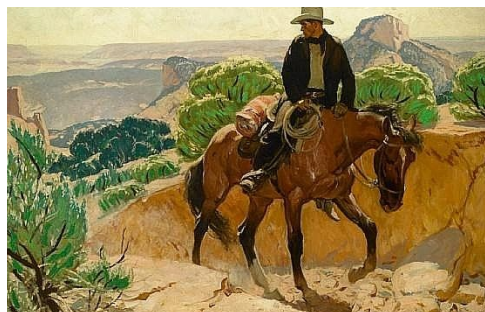
Harold von Schmidt (1893–1982) was one of the most influential illustrators of the American West, known for paintings that combined dramatic storytelling with meticulous historical research. Born in Alameda, Schmidt developed a lifelong fascination with the people and landscapes that shaped early California. His work appeared in major national magazines and books about the west. Von Schmidt earned national recognition, including the first gold medal ever awarded by the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in 1968.

Von Schmidt's paintings stand out for their authenticity. He had worked as a cowhand in his youth, giving him firsthand

knowledge of frontier life. He studied journals, maps, and artifacts to ensure accuracy in his subjects and environment. His artistic style made him a natural choice for illustrating the Wild West.

Von Schmidt's paintings reflect his commitment to capturing pivotal but often overlooked moments in Western history. And for Bill Sullivan's presentation, his artwork offers more than a dramatic scene. It provides a visual complement to the story of the first wagon train to successfully bring families and wagons over the Sierra into California. His painting of the Stephens–Townsend–Murphy Party helps viewers imagine the physical challenges the party faced and underscores the significance of their achievement long before the more widely known Donner Party attempted the same crossing.

Von Schmidt's broader body of work includes illustrations of the Gold Rush, early California settlements, and westward migration. Twelve of his Western paintings hang in the California Governor's Office, a testament to his lasting influence on how the state's early history is remembered.



Illustrations, including these, appeared in magazines such as *Collier's*, *Liberty*, and *The Saturday Evening Post*.

March Speaker Series Presents:

Just Add Water... The Story of Irrigation Development on the Spring Valley Ranch

The Rocklin Historical Society invites you to a fascinating evening exploring how Joel Parker Whitney transformed the dry foothills of Placer County into one of the most productive agricultural operations in the region. On Tuesday, March 17 at 7 p.m., local historian Joel Trumbo will present *Just Add Water... The Story of Irrigation Development on the Spring Valley Ranch* at Old Saint Mary's Chapel.

Whitney's 21,000-acre Spring Valley Ranch once stretched across what is now Rocklin, Lincoln, and Roseville. To make his ambitious plantings of grapevines and citrus orchards possible, he repurposed ditches originally used for gold mining and turned them into an innovative irrigation network. His success drew on a landmark federal lawsuit, a skilled and readily available Chinese workforce, and some clever 19th-century engineering.

Attendees will learn not only how Whitney pulled this off, but also where traces of his irrigation system—and even a few surviving orange trees—can still be found on the former ranch, wedged between the growing suburbs of Lincoln and Rocklin. It's a reminder that history remains all around us, if you know where to look.

The evening's presenter, Joel Trumbo, is a long-time Rocklin resident and retired environmental scientist who spent more than 30 years with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. He now serves as Executive Director of H2O4ALL, a nonprofit that builds water projects in Africa. Though not technically a Rocklin native, he moved here early enough in childhood that he remembers nowhere else as home.

Join us for an engaging look at the ingenuity that shaped Spring Valley



Traces of a once-thriving orange orchard still remain

Ranch—and the hidden remnants that still tell its story today. Old St. Mary's Chapel, 5251 Front St., Rocklin.

Light refreshments will be served.

Old St. Mary's: A Remarkable Year in the Heart of Rocklin



By Nancy Lohse

What a year 2025 was at the chapel! Old St. Mary's was alive with activity from the first week of January to the final days of December. Sixty weddings were conducted along with seven memorials, two funerals, and even a baby shower. The "Church Ladies" were BUSY, and the building never stopped buzzing with life.

More than 700 Rocklin third graders visited as part of their California Social Studies curriculum, learning about Old St. Mary's role in the city's early history and how the building was saved. Our dedicated field-trip docents guided them through the chapel, firehouse and the roundhouse site, bringing Front Street's past to life. The Rocklin Chamber of Commerce leadership class also toured the site, and a Sierra College OLLI class spent a morning learning about the history of the chapel, Front Street and the old roundhouse area. After heading to the museum and Quarry park, they returned to the chapel for lunch on the patio.

The chapel continued to serve as a gathering place for community organizations. Students from William Jessup University used the building as a filming location. The Historical Organizations Committee held its meeting here, and the Daughters of the American Revolution presented their student awards beneath its rafters. AAUW (American Association of University Women) hosted a program, and professional photographer Kimberly

Olker taught a class on capturing wedding photos at our beautiful chapel

As always, the Rocklin Historical Society relied on Old St. Mary's for its monthly board meetings, held on the second Tuesday of each month. The chapel also welcomed five speakers as part of our ongoing Historical Speaker Series. And although it is no longer part of Rocklin's annual tree-lighting festivities, volunteers still decorated the chapel—inside and out—for the community to enjoy during the holiday season.

The firehouse next door served as the planning hub for The Rocklin Heritage Street Faire, and every Wednesday evening from 5–7 p.m., chapel volunteers opened the doors for tours, greeting visitors and sharing the stories that make this place so special.

After a year like this, it's hard to imagine Rocklin without Old St. Mary's. It truly is the gem of our community. If you haven't stopped by lately, please visit us some Wednesday. We love showing off our chapel.



The Secret Garden is open. Visit often as Mother nature begins her quiet work of growth.



Our new Secret Garden, located behind the library

The Secret Garden

A User's Guide, by Douglas Osella

THE SECRET GARDEN WILL HELP SECURE HARMONY IN YOUR LIFE. BRING A CHILD AND A BOOK TO READ TOGETHER. BRING A FRIEND OR SPOUSE, OR COME ALONE WITH YOUR IMAGINATION. WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO VISIT THE GARDEN? (SOME THOUGHTS GLEANED FROM SOME OLD POETS)

THE BEST TIME FOR A VISIT IS...

WHEN LIFE BECOMES HUMDRUM AND YOU'RE ON A QUEST.

WHEN TIME IS NEEDED TO LOOK AT BOTH SIDES OF AN ISSUE.

WHEN YOU ARE FAINT WITH LOVE.

WHEN YOUR BAREFOOT DAYS COME TO MIND.

WHEN NOVEMBER WEARS A PAISLEY SHAWL AND LEAVES ARE FALLING FROM THE TREES.

WHEN JACK FROST COMES AND YOU CAN TRACE HIS FOOTSTEPS TO THE GARDEN (BRING WARM GEAR)

WHEN THE GREEN GETS BACK IN THE TREES.

WHEN ABOUT KNEE-DEEP IN JUNE YOU CAN SORT OF SPRAWL OUT LENGTHWISE ON THE GRASS (OR ON THE BENCH) AND JUST TRY TO SEE HOW LAZY YOU CAN BE.

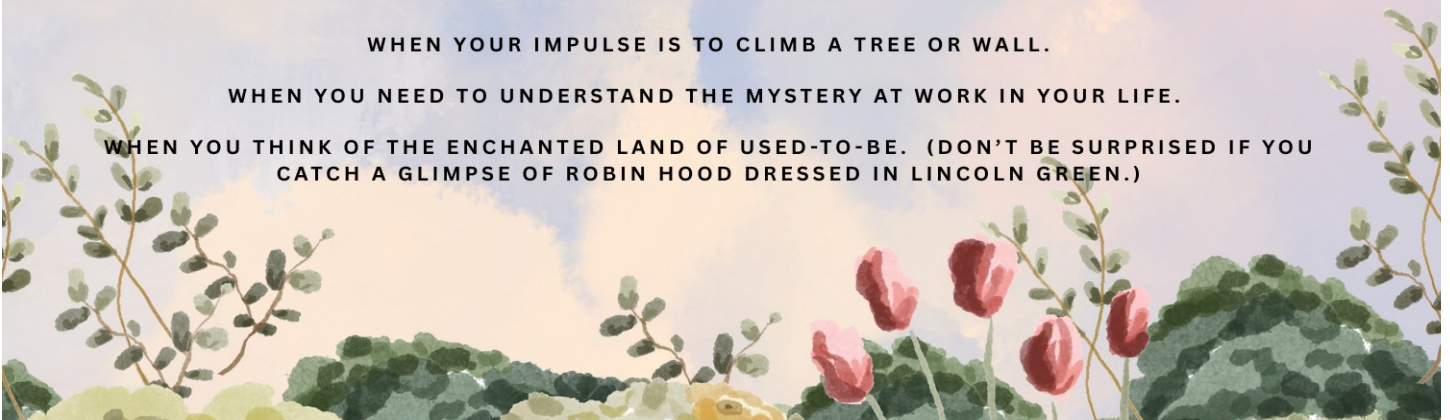
WHEN IN AUGUST THE SUN GLARES LIKE AN EVIL EYE (VISIT EARLY).

WHEN THE MORNING-TIME IS BRIGHT WITH SUN.

WHEN YOUR IMPULSE IS TO CLIMB A TREE OR WALL.

WHEN YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE MYSTERY AT WORK IN YOUR LIFE.

WHEN YOU THINK OF THE ENCHANTED LAND OF USED-TO-BE. (DON'T BE SURPRISED IF YOU CATCH A GLIMPSE OF ROBIN HOOD DRESSED IN LINCOLN GREEN.)



Placer County Historical Foundation names Nancy Lohse to service registry

When museum manager Susan Brook- ing learned that the Placer County Histori- cal Foundation was seeking nominations for its new Service to History Registry, one name rose immediately to the top: Nancy Lohse. Few have contributed more to preserving Rocklin’s heritage. For more than 20 years, Nancy has inspired stu- dents, protected historic places, and strengthened community understanding of local history.

Nancy has been the guiding force be- hind Old St. Mary’s Chapel since it reo- pened in 2007. As chair of the volunteer Church Ladies, she helps manage wed- dings, memorials, school ceremonies, community events, and the day-to-day care of the building—a true “labor of love.”

Her connection to the chapel began long before its restoration. As a third-grade teacher, she brought her stu- dents to visit St. Mary’s in its original Front Street location. When she learned in 2004 that the deteriorating building faced

demolition, she and her class launched the “Give Your Change to Change Rocklin” coin drive and alerted the Rocklin Histori- cal Society, sparking the effort that saved the chapel. Moved in 2005, it was restored through a major community campaign.

The students’ drive raised \$850 and began a tradition that continues today. Rocklin third graders have since funded installations including the granite ball wa- ter feature on the chapel patio, the plaque at the Whitney Family Mausoleum, and the plaque honoring Gene and Marg Johnson at Johnson-Springview Park.

After retiring, Nancy helped ensure every Rocklin third grader could experi- ence the city’s historic district and muse- um. The field trip program she shaped now serves more than 700 students each year. She also established the practice of setting aside a portion of chapel revenue to fund an annual scholarship for high school seniors pursuing history or public service.

Nancy’s decades of leadership, educa-



Nancy with Johnson Farm mascot, Popeye

tion, and preservation work exemplify the purpose of the Service to History Registry. Her efforts have safeguarded Rocklin’s oldest building and inspired thousands of students to care about the place they call home.

How much do you know about Old St. Mary’s Chapel?

Take our quiz; answers on [page 12](#).

- In what year was Old St. Mary’s Chapel originally built?
 - 1861
 - 1883
 - 1873
 - 1890
- What material formed the chapel’s foundation?
 - Brick
 - Granite
 - Timber
 - Concrete
- Which immigrant community played a major role in the early congregation?
 - Irish
 - Portuguese
 - Finnish
 - Italian
- What denomination is the chapel to- day?
 - Catholic
 - Baptist
 - No denomination
 - Presbyterian
- How far was the chapel moved to reach its current location?
 - 100 feet

- ¼ mile
- 1 mile
- 2 miles

- Which organization led the restoration of Old St. Mary’s in the early 2000s?
 - Rocklin Women’s Club
 - Rocklin Historical Society
 - Placer County Heritage Council
 - California Preservation Trust
- What is the most common modern use of Old St. Mary’s Chapel?
 - Concerts
 - Weddings
 - Art exhibits
 - Historical reenactments
- More than 700 Rocklin third-graders visit the chapel each year as part of which subject?
 - Science
 - Local history
 - Art
 - Literature
- What historic building sits next to the chapel and is included in student tours?
 - The Firehouse
 - The Roundhouse
 - The Old Schoolhouse
 - The Train Depot
- What interior feature is most often mentioned by visitors as especially charm- ing?
 - The stained-glass windows
 - The “Church Ladies”
 - The bell rope
 - The wood-beam ceiling



What’s so special about this rock that was saved in an Open Space/Wetland Preserve on Kali and Hanover Place? [Answer on page 12.](#)



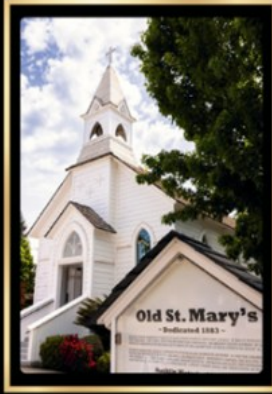
All aboard for the Rocklin Heritage Street Faire!



EST. 1893

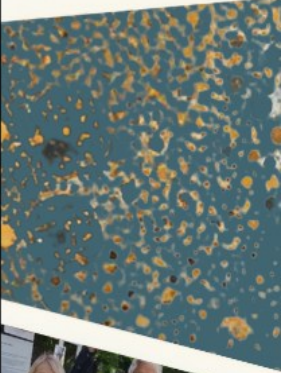
THE ROCKLIN Heritage

STREET FAIRE



MAY 2, 2026
10 A.M. - 3 P.M.

Front Street
(Peter Hill
Heritage Park)
5251 Front Street





SWIMMING IN ALPHABET SOUP

If you've spent any time around the Rocklin Historical Society, you've probably

seen our name shortened to **RHS** in emails and meeting notes. But RHS isn't the only set of initials floating around the world of local history. Two others — **HOC** and **HAB**—play important roles in shaping how Placer County preserves, protects, and interprets its past.

This year, RHS board member Susan Brooking will step into both of those countywide positions, following in the footsteps of Dr. Jim Carlsen, who has represented our organization with dedication and distinction for many years.

What Is HAB?

HAB stands for the Historical Advisory Board, a seven-member body that serves as the official advisory group to the Placer County Board of Supervisors and the Department of Museums Director. The HAB is structured to represent the full breadth of the county:

- Five members appointed by each Supervisorial District
- One member recommended by the Placer County Historical Society
- One member recommended by the Historical Organizations Committee (HOC).

The HAB's purpose is broad and essential. It reviews and advises on matters related to:

- Historic and prehistoric resources
- Archival collections
- Museum planning
- Preservation policies
- Long-range cultural stewardship

The board meets bi-monthly, providing steady guidance on issues that shape how our county protects its heritage.

What Is HOC?

HOC stands for the Historical Organizations Committee, a countywide coalition of representatives from each non-profit historical organization in Placer County.

The HOC's role is to:

- Discuss issues of shared historical importance
- Coordinate communication among organizations
- Provide recommendations directly to the HAB
- Strengthen collaboration across the county's many historical groups

To participate, an organization must have a disclosed membership and be actively engaged in historic activities as a core part of its mission. The committee meets quarterly, offering a space where local history advocates can share concerns, ideas, and opportunities.

We are pleased that Susan, RHS board member and museum manager, will now serve as our representative on both the HOC and HAB. Susan has already attended several meetings alongside Dr. Carlsen and has met many of the committee members. Jim is expected to introduce her formally at the upcoming HOC meeting at Old St. Mary's (OSM) on February 6.

Susan has big shoes to fill with the retirement of Dr. Carlsen from these committees. For as long as many of us can remember, Jim has served as RHS's representative on both the HOC and HAB. His knowledge, leadership, and commitment to local history have made him a respected voice at the county level as well as with RHS.

Susan brings to these roles her thoughtful approach, her commitment to community history, and her ability to connect local stories to the larger picture—qualities that will serve both committees well. With Susan at the table, even this bowl of HOC-HAB-RHS-OSM alphabet soup feels easy to savor.

Rocklin Honors Dr. King at Johnson-Springview Park Celebration

By Linda Wampler

Johnson-Springview Park was alive with community spirit on January 19 as families, students, civic groups, and local organizations gathered for the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Family March and Celebration. The event—organized by Twiana Armstrong, a deeply respected community advocate and founder of SeeMYChild—brought together residents from across Placer County to honor Dr. King's legacy of justice and unity to the "beloved community."

The celebration featured a morning march, inspiring speakers, musical performances, food trucks, children's activities, and a wide array of community booths.

The Rocklin Historical Society was proud to be among the participating organizations. Our booth welcomed visitors

of all ages, offering a chance to learn about Rocklin's past, what is happening in the present, and for the future, including our ambitious projects—the Heritage Street Faire, the Secret Garden, the Quarry Office Project, and the Johnson Farm Project.

A feature of the day was the ongoing Perseverance Quilt Project, which invited families to create quilt squares representing their heritage, values, and hopes. These squares will be stitched together into a community quilt—a lasting symbol of unity that Twiana has suggested could be presented to the Rocklin Historical Society.

The celebration was more than an event; it was a reminder of the power of community to honor the past while working together toward a bright future.



Our Jubilee Train was a big hit as always, while visitors enjoyed putting together our puzzles of historic Rocklin sites and learning about our organization



(from Page 9) Granite Rock on Whitney's golf course



In the late 19th century, Joel Parker Whitney established one of California's first golf courses on his Whitney Spring Valley Ranch in Rocklin. This nine-hole course, built on a knoll below the Oaks, served as a recreational space for Whitney's family and visitors. The course was completed in the late 1890s and remained playable until around 1910, after which it deteriorated and the land returned to its natural state. Today, the area where the course once stood is covered by residential neighborhoods near Mansion Oaks Park, but the boulder is preserved in an open wetlands designated area on Kali Place.

THE QUARRY OFFICE

Saving a Piece of History

THE QUARRY OFFICE BUILDING ORIGINATED AT THE CAPITOL QUARRY ON PACIFIC STREET. IT IS THE LAST REMNANT OF THE GRANITE QUARRY HISTORY THAT STARTED IN 1864.

THE ROCKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY HAS DESIGNATED FRONT STREET AS THE FUTURE SITE, AND THE BOARD HAS APPROVED INITIAL FUNDING FOR RELOCATION AND RENOVATION.

ONCE RESTORED, THE QUARRY OFFICE WILL HELP COMPLETE THE MUSEUM'S "ROCKS, RAILS, AND RANCHES" THEME - BRINGING ROCKLIN'S GRANITE LEGACY TO LIFE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

THE MUSEUM PLANS TO SHOW PHOTOS OF QUARRIES, WORKERS, WORKERS' DESIGNS, AND EQUIPMENT. ONCE THE QUARRY OFFICE IS COMPLETED, THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY PLANS TO OPEN IT FOR 3RD GRADE SCHOOL TOURS, TOURS FOR THE PUBLIC, AND MUSEUM MEETINGS. THE ROCKLIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS PLANNING TO USE THIS BUILDING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

HELP US PRESERVE HISTORY!
DONATIONS ARE CRUCIAL TO FUND THE RESTORATION OF THE QUARRY OFFICE. SCAN THE QR CODE TO MAKE A DONATION!

Answers for quiz on [page 9](#)



1. B. 1883
2. B. Granite
3. A. Irish
4. C. No denomination
5. B. 1/4 mile
6. B. Rocklin Historical Society
7. B. Weddings
8. B. Local history
9. A. The firehouse (replica)
10. B. The Church Ladies of course!

2026 Board of Directors

- President: Gloria Beverage
- Vice President: Bonnie Ruhkala Neumann
- Secretary: Natalie Bickford
- Treasurer: Kathryn Ripley
- Immediate Past President: Jim Hammes
- Founding Member: Roy Ruhkala

Members at Large:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| David Baker | Sally Huseby |
| Susan Brooking | Hank Lohse |
| RoyceAnn Ruhkala Burks | Nancy Lohse |
| George Salgado | Patsy Pattison |
| Ronna Davis | Linda Wampler |

Rocklin Historical Society

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