

President's Message

Dr. Jim Carlson

Opportunities. Opportunities. The Board has approved two recent policies that present opportunities to non-members:

First, all those who join our group after July 1 of this year will be entitled to membership through the end of 2011. This amounts to a year and one half for the \$25 price for one year. Please apply on-line or phone 624-2355 to join. Secondly, for those wishing to volunteer as a docent (guide) at the museum, they can now do so for a \$1 nominal membership fee. We need docents. We have so many talented students and retirees in our Rocklin area. Consider this for yourself and tell your neighbors.

As we enter summer many of us are ready to rest and recreate. We have had a busy and productive first half of the year. Our speakers have been excellent. May was very busy with Rocklin schools visiting the museum. These third-graders are so enthusiastic and make excellent docents when they bring their parents back to the museum. We had a wonderful dedication and gift bench presented to the Chapel by the Daughters of the American Revolution. We had a festive evening at Sunset Whitney Country Club with a 'dinner theatre' and presentation of The Return of J. Parker Whitney. A trip to Mare Island. Our Chapel has served for meetings, dedications, memorials, and, of course, wed-

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See encore showings of Rocklin granite industry documentary *Gold, Granite and Grit* on KVIE on July 28 at 7 pm and July 30 at 4 pm and August 1 at 6 pm.

Know your docents

Gay Morgan

The Rocklin History Museum is indeed fortunate to have "The Dynamic Duo" as docents. Laura and Bill Woods have been together for over fifty-nine years. During that time they have moved 28 times, four of those times in Rocklin. They even tried out retirement communities and decided they were not suitable for them.



Laura and Bill Woods

Now settled, we hope, in Rocklin they have become very vital members of the Rocklin Historical Society, serving in various capacities. Not only are they active docents, but they also have inventoried the contents of the Museum, ordered supplies for and run the gift shop, organized the Holiday Boutique, worked at fund raising yard sales, served on the Board of Directors, helped with the school tours, and even dusted and cleaned the Museum. They are indeed a charming team, outgoing, responsible, dependable and energetic.

Laura was born in Rocklin, and is descended from early Rocklin settlers, the Morys' and the Willard's. She grew up here and in Nevada City but she graduated from the eighth grade of Rocklin Grammar School just as her mother, father and older brother

and sisters did.

Bill was born in Piedmont, Ca. and is able to trace his ancestry back to the days of Abraham Lincoln. He attended the Universities of Alabama and West Virginia and earned a degree in electronics. During World War II he served in the Signal Corps in Radar Communications in the Black Forest in Germany.

After the War Bill moved to Auburn, CA. and took a position as Principal of Lincoln Elementary School. One day he was picking up textbooks at the Placer County Library and met Laura Willard who was working there. They were married on St. Patrick's Day in 1951. When Bill left the school job he invented a metal spinning process and went into that business. He later sold the business and became Sales Manager for a Trust Fund. Eventually he became the Vice President and Head of Sales for this very successful financial organization, having spent 35 years there.

Today they are the proud parents of three adult sons, and the doting grandparents of two beautiful young ladies.

They say they are here to stay this time, and the Rocklin Historical Society couldn't be more pleased.

The Rocklin Historical Society's 2010 Legacy Dinner wows Rocklin history buffs

Gary Day

The 2010 version of The Rocklin Historical Society's Legacy Dinner featured great food by Sunset Whitney Country Club Chef Joe O'Conner and a one act play about the life of Joel Parker Whitney written and directed by local playwright and Shakespearian thespian Dani Loebs.

Gene Johnson led the team which engineered and built the set, a replica of Whitney's often photographed pyramid mausoleum near the eleventh green of the Whitney oaks golf Course.

Ronna Davis worked with country club staff to provide an historically appropriate dinner setting.

The play featured scenes from Whitney's autobiographical tome, *Reminiscences of a sportsman*.

Plans are afoot for an encore performance at the Springfield Gables Clubhouse next spring.



In the picture, from the left:

*Nathan Dudley as young Whitney, Alex Giddings as the waiter, Laura Millar as Shannon, Jason Hughes as Mark Twain and Professor Dan Defoe as Joel Parker Whitney in a scene from **The return of Joel Parker Whitney—My Friends call me Parker**, a one act play by playwright and Shakespearian thespian Danielle Loebs at the Sunset Whitney Country Club on May 21, 2010.*

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president

dings which are exceeding our goals for the year. And there was the more mundane and equally important Work Day including improving the Chapel grounds and even sprucing up the museum curtains.

A blanket thank you is hereby issued to all who participated and made possible the events listed above.

The Rocklin Reunion brought old friends together but we also saw new faces this year, some from as far away as Truckee.

Heritage Trail Days is coming up August 7 - 8. And we will kick off the new season of activities with our potluck on September 20 and will have a special choral presentation on that occasion. Plan to join us. Finally, there is word that holiday festivities with the arrival of Santa, children's choral presentations, and a Christmas tree lighting at the Chapel are already being planned. Until then, enjoy our summer.

Shakespeare in the Park heats up for mid-summer fun

Dani Loebs

This summer's 'Shakespeare in the Park' offering is the bard's classic comedy 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' adapted for picnic blankets and lawn chairs at the Community Center stage in Johnson Springview Park.



Join Lysander, Hermia, and Helena as they navigate their own Midsummer Madness' in a forest of meddlesome fairies! Great fun for the whole family, Shakespeare in

the Park is a Rocklin tradition not to be missed. Fill your cooler and bring your friends.

Admission is free!

Thursday, July 29, 8:00 p.m.

Friday, July 30, 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, Aug. 1, 8:00 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 13, 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 14, 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, Aug. 15, 8:00 p.m.

Heritage Trail Days are coming

Barbara Chapman

You are all needed to welcome visitors to our history museum between 10 am and 4 pm on August 7th and August 8th. Roy Ruhkala has volunteered his expertise again this year to demonstrate cutting granite. Bus tours will again visit our museum at approximately 10:30 am or 2:30 pm. We want to be ready!

We are working with fewer docents to cover the "Open Days" at our museum – and we need you to volunteer your time on these Heritage Trail days especially. Please contact me with when you can help out...a phone call or e-mail will be appreciated. This is a chance to take a trip back in time and for visitors to better understand the history of Rocklin and all the other museums in Placer County. Free "Get Up & Go" cards will be available at each museum. Just like last year, after visiting four different museums and getting the card stamped at each one, visitors will be eligible to enter a grand-prize drawing for one of three regional deluxe picnic baskets. In addition, each individual museum will have its own gift basket to raffle and these funds will remain at that museum.

Rocklin offers an outdoor picnic site, restroom facilities and free bottles of water to our visitors. Some individual museums throughout the tour areas will offer various activities or entertainment.

Thanks for contributing to our Heritage Trail weekend in 2010.

Call me at 415-0153

This is why there is not much downtown in downtown Rocklin.

Gene Johnson

Rocklin's downtown of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a compact commercial district which grew up when the Central Pacific Railroad built Rocklin's roundhouse at the corner of Granite Street, now Rocklin Road, and Front Street in 1867.

About 30 buildings straddled the transcontinental rail tracks a hundred yards or so to the south of Granite on both Railroad Avenue and Front Street. Another dozen buildings were north of Granite on Railroad Avenue facing the roundhouse.

See the map of old downtown Rocklin at rocklinhistory.org/map.asp.

The main businesses then were hotels, rooming houses, and saloons, lots of saloons. The town's only furniture store operator doubled as an undertaker. Rocklin's City Hall, main fire station and Marshall's Office, all in one building, backed up to the tracks on the east side of Front Street near Rocklin's train Station. Businesses thrived in Rocklin in the 19th century except during slow times in the granite quarries, mainly in the early 1880s and possibly during the Depression caused by the Panic of 1893 and 1894.

But today only two of the district's original commercial structures remain: the granite building at 5250 Front Street erected in 1905 by meat broker Joseph Barudoni, and the Old Saint Mary's Chapel across the street from the Barudoni building at 5251. Rocklin's Catholics erected the Chapel in 1883 on an oak-framed lot, 2000 feet South at 5420 Front Street, but the Rocklin Historical Society moved and restored it in 2005. There are a few other buildings in the area, including a few historic homes on Front Street and a new train station, but much of the yesterday's Downtown Rocklin is

weedy and derelict open space on Rocklin's rail corridor.

What happened to all those early downtown buildings?

The answer of course is fires, and a gradual loss of will to rebuild as Rocklin's economy faltered in the early twentieth century. Block long conflagrations in 1887 and 1893 flattened almost all commercial buildings on Front Street. An 1894 fire wiped out seven businesses across the tracks on Railroad Avenue. But Rocklin formed a volunteer fire department in 1894 and by the late 1890s, as Rocklin's quarries hummed with new business, a rebuilt downtown entered a ten year period of unprecedented growth. But good times ended suddenly in 1906



This fire in 1914 flattened all Front Street buildings between the granite Barudoni building, just out of the picture to the left, and Granite Drive, now Rocklin Road, to the far right. Today an insurance office and a church occupy two buildings to the far right. The rest of the area is still open space.

when the Southern Pacific Railroad announced the impending closure of Rocklin's roundhouse in favor of more spacious facilities in Roseville. By 1908, when the roundhouse closed, Rocklin had lost 300 workers with a monthly payroll of \$25-30,000.

A report from the time asserts that, from 1906 through 1908, Rocklin's population declined by 80% as roundhouse workers abandoned their homes or moved them to Roseville. This might have been an exaggeration since Rocklin's quarries were flush with orders for granite curbing and other

granite building materials to rebuild San Francisco after the earthquake of April 1906.

In August 1909, the year after the roundhouse closed, fire wiped out seven commercial buildings and two residences on Railroad Avenue north of Granite, directly across the tracks from the abandoned roundhouse site.

In 1913 the Lincoln Highway Association developed plans for a transcontinental highway that eventually routed Rocklin's through traffic onto Pacific Street, away from the Railroad Avenue and Front Street corridor. A year later, in 1914, a block long fire wiped out all businesses on Front Street north of the granite Barudoni Building.

In 1915, as builders increasingly preferred cement-based concrete over granite, quarry workers struck for higher wages and closed half of Rocklin's quarries permanently.

In 1920 Rocklin's California Granite Company brought a gasp of new life to Rocklin's businesses by contracting to provide building stone for San Francisco's Bank of Italy building. This was Rocklin's last significant shipment of granite.

Work on the contract finished by 1922. Two fires on railroad Avenue that year completed the destruction of historic downtown Rocklin.

Help fill the scrapbook!

Mary Etta Holland is keeping a scrapbook of published information about Rocklin's history and The Rocklin Historical Society. If you spot an item in your reading please clip it with the publication date showing and drop it off at the Rocklin History Museum tagged for Mary Etta or call Mary Etta at 435-9043.

Join us

Join the Rocklin Historical Society attending Shakespeare in the Park on August 1, 2010 at 8 pm at the Community Center Stage in Johnson Springview Park.

Consider gifting a membership in the Rocklin Historical Society

You can support the Rocklin Historical Society and the Rocklin History Museum by gifting a membership.

Call Gay Morgan at 624-2355 or download a membership form from Rocklinhistory.org.

Here is an opportunity to volunteer

Your Rocklin History Museum needs a coordinator to work about 4 hours per week, preferably on Mondays:

- Maintaining the museum's artifact inventory
- Identifying maintenance and repair needs and
- Identifying enhancements to the museum's displays.

Save your stuff

The Rocklin Historical Society will be scheduling a garage sale later this year. Please save your unwanted items and donate them when the date is announced. The society has 501 (c) (3) status. Donations are usually tax deductible.

The Illuminated Landscape is available now!

This book was made possible by a generous donation from the Rocklin Historical Society. *The Illuminated Landscape: A Sierra Nevada Anthology* is a sweeping consideration of the remarkable Sierra Nevada region. This book includes literary descriptions of what the famous naturalist John Muir called the "Range of Light" from the earliest native origin myths to contemporary accounts of those who have recently been inspired by the Sierra experience. *The Illuminated Landscape: A Sierra Nevada Anthology* provides fiction and nonfiction selections from over 75 authors including influential Sierra Nevada Native American authors and poets, path finding explorers, perceptive scientists and historians, Pulitzer Prize winners, best-selling novelists, award-winning artists, ground-breaking literary mavericks, giants of American literature, environmental leaders and thought-provoking natural historians. The anthology is available in bookstores and online. It is a publication of the Sierra College Press. The anthology is co-published by Heyday Books of Berkeley and Santa Clara University. The anthology is part of Santa Clara's prestigious *California Legacy* series.

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Rocklin Historical Society

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Mark Your Calendar

July 10, 2010

9 am to 4 pm

Heritage Trek through Iowa Hill

\$35 including a box lunch.

Maximum attendees: 25

For information: 530.798.5955

or penelcurtis@gmail.com

July 12, 2010

4 pm

RHS board meeting

Sunset Whitney Country Club

July 28, 2010

7 pm

Gold, Granite and Grit

KVIE

July 30, 2010

7 pm

Gold, Granite and Grit

KVIE

August 1, 2010

6 pm

Gold, Granite and Grit

KVIE

August 1, 2010

8 pm

Historical Society at Shakespeare in the Park

Johnson Springview Park

Community Center Stage

August 7 and 8, 2010

10 am to 4 pm

Heritage Trail Days

Rocklin History Museum

See the article on page 2.

August 9, 2010

4 pm

RHS board meeting

Sunset Whitney Country Club

September 13, 2010

4 pm

RHS board meeting

Sunset Whitney Country Club

September 20

6 pm

Annual RHS Pot Luck

Community Center in Springview Park

Call Gay Morgan at 624-2355

Something New

Here's the website that shows all of the upcoming performing arts events in Roseville, Rocklin, Lincoln, Auburn, and Folsom, www.placerperformancecalendar.com