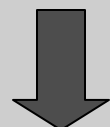


THE PLACER

A Voice of History

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Administrator's Notes

Melanie Barton

Because the 2009 theme for *The Placer* is still timely we have chosen to expand on it for another year. The theme is: *The Great Depression rolled across the landscape of the 1930s like a dust storm, yet people persevered by finding refuge in packed movie houses, sporting venues, and through various New Deal programs implemented by the government.* Topics this year are New Deal Art, Depression Gold Rush, Speakeasies and Bootleggers, Hobos and Tramps, World War II, and Christmas During the Depression.

2009 was a very eventful year for the Placer County Museums. The renovations to the historic Courthouse were completed including upgrades to the front parking area. Museum staff had a busy year developing new exhibits including two Pate case remodels at the Placer County Museum, the wedding exhibit, *Unveiled* at all three Auburn museums, and temporary exhibits, *Camping in Placer County* and *All Dolled Up*, at the Bernhard Museum Winery. The pole barn at the Forest Hill Divide Museum was completed by the Historical Society and the 1923 USA fire truck donated by the Foresthill Fire

Protection District was moved to its new home. The 2nd annual Heritage Trail was a bigger and better event enjoyed by twice as many participants. Attendance at monthly Community Education programs continued to grow. The Living History and Gold Rush programs provided a valued educational opportunity for Placer County school children. Our web presence expanded and included multiple blog posts and two entire online exhibits. With a part time staff member, the Archives & Research Center is busier than ever two days a week. Sixteen new volunteers were trained and are currently docents in our museums. Looking back makes the year seem like a whirl-wind of activity as indeed it was.

We are well into planning for 2010. Goals for the coming year include another successful year of The Heritage Trail event on August 7th & 8th, the Living History and Gold Rush programs and growing Community Education Programs; developing at least two temporary exhibits, finishing the Pate case remodels at the Placer County Museum and undertaking at least one new permanent exhibit at the historic courthouse; continuing the deaccessioning process at the Collections Management Facility; and maintaining

regular scheduled public access at the Archives & Research Center. Plans are also underway to electrify the Neff Fountain. It's an exciting time for Museum staff as we look toward 2010 and decide what can be accomplished.

Your continued support of all the county museums and programs is greatly appreciated. We will continue to look for ways to maximize every dollar in our mission to offer programs and exhibits of interest to residents and visitors alike.♠

New Deal Art

Ralph Gibson

Before the Great Depression, artists in the U.S. were being inspired by the Art Deco movement and a revitalization of the Italian Renaissance fresco style popularized by muralists Diego Rivera and Jose Clemente Orozco. Art was a significant part of American culture. Once the Great Depression hit, art became much less important and artists, like everyone else, struggled to survive. But President Roosevelt knew that art was more important than ever; it lifts people's spirits and awakens creativity. Thus, art was an essential part of his New Deal to the American people. Many artists found employment through various New Deal programs. The best known of these was the Federal Art Project (FAP)

which was a division of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The FAP employed over 5,000 artists who created more than 225,000 works of art for the American people. A lesser known program was the Treasury Section of Painting and Sculpture, which had several different names over the years but was always known simply as "The Section". Through this program, 1,116 murals and 301 sculptures were commissioned.

Another program was the Treasury Relief Art Project (TRAP). Through this program, 446 artists created 10,000 easel paintings, 43 sculptures, and 89 murals. These art projects were primarily installed in federal buildings that had no budget for decorations such as hospitals, housing projects and post offices. TRAP was administered by the U.S. Treasury Department with funds from the WPA.

In Placer County, one confirmed New Deal art piece hangs in the Roseville Post Office on Vernon Street. The New Deal art in the Roseville Post Office is a bas relief carved in wood by Zygmund Sazevich in 1936 entitled *The Letter*. This piece is one of over 1,000 New Deal art pieces that survive today in our nations Post Offices. The piece is 12 feet long and three feet wide and is divided into three panels (triptych). This piece was funded through TRAP.

Zygmund also carved a New Deal art piece for the Post Office in Kent, Washington.

Zygmund Sazevich was born in Russia in 1899. In 1917, he moved to Manchuria where he was an actor and a stage scenery painter. He immigrated to the U.S. in the early 1920s via Japan. He lived in San Francisco where he worked as a house painter to support his studies at the School of Architecture at UC Berkeley. He also took classes at the California School of Fine Arts in San Francisco. Sazevich was commissioned for several art projects under various New Deal programs in the 1930s. He taught art classes at both the California School of Fine Arts and at Mills College from the 1940s until his death in 1968. His work has been highlighted in several exhibitions since the 1940s, most recently in the *100 Years of California Sculpture* at the Oakland Museum in 1982.

There may be other examples of New Deal art in Placer County, but they have not yet been confirmed. If you know of an art piece that might be an example of New Deal art, please contact me at: 530-889-6502.





The Letter
Zygmund Szevich 1936

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The Letter
Zygmund Szevich 1936

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Center Panel of *The Letter*

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Left Panel of *The Letter*

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Right Panel of *The Letter*

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Museums Intelligence

Placer County Museums News

Ralph Gibson

A new year and decade is upon us and the museums look to be busier than ever. Besides our regular programs and events, we'll work on several exhibits. A new exhibit will replace *Unveiled* in the Placer County Museum gallery this spring, we plan to install updated exhibits in two Pate cases, we'll exhibit the vintage bottles discovered beneath the courthouse parking lot, and we will install another temporary exhibit in the Bernhard Winery for next year's Victorian Christmas. It looks to be another fast year!

But as we welcome a new decade, we have to take a moment and look back. Reflection is a part of history. I often wonder what our local history would have been like if those who lived over one hundred years ago had the networking tools we currently use today. What would Mr. Bernhard blog about? His fruit crops? Wine production?

Was Joe Armes doomed the moment he responded to Anna Bell's profile on Match.com? Should he have Googled her first?

Of all the evidence against him, nothing condemned Adolf Weber more than his tweets the night of the tragedy. Of

course, anyone who saw his MySpace page knew he was up to no good.

Rattlesnake Dick used Google Maps to find gold shipment routes, but was finally done in when Deputy Tax Collector George W. Martin received an anonymous text message about Dick's location.

Lotta Crabtree's popularity swelled nationwide when a YouTube video of one of her performances got over three million hits.

How do you calculate the size and number of granite blocks needed for a major construction project while at the site with an iPhone? Griffith Griffith discovered there's an app for that.

Historians comb through pages and pages of documents, letters, journals, newspapers and photographs to better understand our past. Today, with our reliance on so many tools and applications that produce no tangible document, I wonder what methods historians of the future might use. Will they be able to recover important information about our lives? Or are we deleting our history each time we empty the recycle bin on our desktop? ♦

Community Education Program: *Identifying and Dating Vintage Bottles*

Have you ever wondered how old that bottle is in your basement? Do you know what it was used for? To learn these interesting facts, please join us in the Bernhard

Museum Winery on Saturday, Jan. 30th at 1:00 pm for *Identifying and Dating Vintage Bottles*. Placer County Museums docent Cliff Kennedy will enlighten you about the types of bottles used in this area from the Gold Rush up through the turn of the 20th century. For more information, please call: 530-889-6500.

Community Education Program: *Pleistocene Fossils of Hawver Cave*

What animals sipped water from the American River 10,000 years ago? What predators lurked in the predawn hours near Auburn Ravine, waiting for prey to wander out? Fossils of extinct animals that once lived in this region of California were discovered by Dr. Hawver in a cave near Cool, California just after the turn of the 20th century. If you would like to see examples of some of these fossils and learn more about the Pleistocene life they represent, please come to the Bernhard Museum Winery on Saturday, February 20th at 1:00 pm. Gene Lorange, who has done extensive research in the Hawver Cave, will present a slideshow on the Hawver Cave and the fossils found inside. Space is limited, so reservations are required. Many seats are already taken by those who were on a waiting list after last year's program, so act now!

Please call 530-889-6500 for more information.♥

Placer County Historical Society News

President's Message

*Michael Otten,
President*

Happy New Year! Out with the so-called decade of Oh and Woe, the ought-oughties, and into the second decade of the 21st Century.

The year 2010 dawns with the realization we may be older than we think. I'm referring to the Placer County Historical Society. Up until just a few days ago I had been under the impression that the Society would be celebrating its 90th anniversary this year. This was based on the assumption that we were officially incorporated as a non-profit corporation in August 1920 in Auburn. Our official seal embosser notes we were incorporated on Aug. 30, 1920. That was the date of filing with the Secretary of State.

But when we first began is another story. We may have been around for at least a century.

While taking a look at some of the events of 1910 I came across an article in November of that year. It noted that early copies of the Placer Herald had been donated to the Placer County Historical Society. The article was about the Herald--first published in Auburn on Sept. 11, 1852--being the

oldest newspaper in the state and that it had been printed for 50 years on the first press brought to California (By Mormon leader Sam Brannan).

The articles of incorporation indicate it was supposedly only good for 50 years. It appears, on the surface at least from Secretary of State records, the incorporation is still valid but never amended. Ah, another research project. If you have information or would like to help out, please let me know.

Taking a century look back reminds you of the adage of what goes around, comes around. The Auburn City Trustees (precursor to today's City Council) proposed a get tough ordinance to muzzle all bull dogs in the city with a penalty of a \$50 fine or a 30-day jail sentence. It appears the proposal was shelved much like the 2009 effort to get tough with pit bulls.

Mayor J. W. Morgan hung up his gavel in 1910 after 16 years in office. He was succeeded by John T. Walsh. Morgan's administration was credited with paving many of the principal streets with accompanying electric lights and concrete sidewalks. Today, the city is engaged in a major streetscape project along Lincoln Way.

The worry then as now was that we would run out of petroleum and needed to

look at hydrogen-powered vehicles and ethyl alcohol as a fuel. Henry Ford suggested we use potatoes rather than corn to distill the fuel because of greater yields per acre.

In 1910 Hiram W. Johnson kicked off his historic campaign for governor in Auburn. Johnson's use of an automobile driven by his son for campaigning was credited in his victory.

Auburn resident Frank C. Jordan began his first of eight successful campaigns for California Secretary of State and held that office until his death in 1940. His son, Frank M. Jordan, was elected two years later and held the office until his death in 1970. They were the two longest serving Secretaries of State.



Frank C. Jordan

Auburn dentist J. C. Hawver continued to make discoveries of ancient human remains in an El Dorado County cave, failed in an effort to use the basement of the new Carnegie Free Library for a natural history museum (the City Trustees moved city government there instead) and lost his wife to

burns in a fire caused by a grandchild lighting candles. Hawver, whose house was torn down last year to make room for an expanded parking lot, said 100 years ago "It is certainly time that the people of Placer County begin to care for the relics of the Indians and early pioneers of the county."

The Auburn Aero Club was formed with J. F. Irwin as president. Champion walker John Ennis stopped in Auburn in August 1910 en route from New York to San Francisco (could he count as Auburn's first endurance athlete?).

Clark Ashton Smith, dubbed the "Bard of Auburn," had his first work published at age 17. The U.S. government gave back the Maidu the Rancheria Land in South Auburn, Placer High adopted the colors olive and orange as school colors to honor locally grown olives and oranges. There are Olive and Orange Streets near the school.

The Auburn Savings Bank was organized by E. T. Robie from Placer Loan Co.

It was the first year for Lincoln's Birthday to be honored here as a legal holiday on Feb. 12. One could buy a pound of butter for 5 cents and two quarts of ice cream for 75 cents. The Grand Jury recommended that a speed limit be put on automobiles, that county supervisors get a boost in pay, that a new jail be built

and a new bridge be built over the north fork of the American River between Auburn and Foresthill. Vaccinations were mandatory to prevent smallpox. That was the year the sheriff's office became trained in the use of the fingerprint system.

The Hotel Placer advertised a telephone and hot and cold running water in every room in its annex.

In 1910, Auburn's population was placed at 2,376; Placer County, 18,237; California, nearly 2.4 million, and the U.S., 92 million. Today Auburn is about 13,400 population; Placer County, 345,000; California, 38.5 million and the U.S., 308 million. Who would have guessed the changes that would occur a century later in 1910. What's your guess for 2110?

In 1910, California held only eight seats in the House of Representatives, all held by Republicans who lost one of the seats to a Democrat that year. Today, California holds 53 of 435 seats with Democrats dominating.

In 1910, a 17-minute silent movie, *In Old California*, a melodrama about the Mexican era directed by D. W. Griffith, became the first film shot in Hollywood.

During the second decade of the 20th century the life expectancy in this country was 48.4 years for males,

51.8 for females. The average salary was \$750 a year, the national debt was \$1.15 billion, one could go on a 12-day cruise for \$60 and the divorce rate was one in 1,000.

And 1910 was the year American humorist Samuel L. Clemens died. So I will close with a few Mark Twain quotes: "We have the best government money can buy...It could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly native criminal class except Congress...The human race has only one really effective weapon and that is laughter...Against the assault of laughter nothing can stand."

May you have a lot of laughs in the coming year and decade.

--Michael Otten, otten@ssctv.net

Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting

Addah Owens, Vice President

When: Feb. 7, 2009

Time: 6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Program

Where: Veteran's Memorial Hall, 100 East St., Auburn, CA

Cost: \$14 per person

Menu: Chinese Dinner in Celebration of the Chinese New Year

Mail Check to: PCHS, c/o Betty Samson, 8780 Baxter Grade Road, Auburn, CA 95603.

Program: Sheila Toner, a retired Army Colonel with a B.A. and M.A. in history from Hunter College of the City University of New York will present a program on Donner Summit – a National Treasure. This small geographic area has had a huge impact on the history and development of California from the earliest times to present. Learn about this often overlooked geographic area and its impact on California. After this program, you will look at this area differently the next time you drive over the summit.

Shiela taught American history for seven years before joining the service. She is co-author of *American River Canyon Hikes*, a trail guide written for the Auburn State Recreation Area as a member of the Canyon Keepers, a local docent group. She is a former Board Member of the

American River Conservancy, a local land conservation and environmental educational organization. She enjoys being outdoors and sharing her love of local history and nature with others.♣



Agriculture and Industries of Ventura
Gordon K. Grant 1938

Mural in the Ventura, California Post Office

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Placer County Historical Organizations

Colfax Area Historical Society
Ed & Nilda Duffek
(530) 305-3209
www.colfaxhistory.org

Donner Summit Historical Society
Margie Powell, (530) 432-4015
www.donnersummithistoricalociety.org

Foresthill Divide Historical Society
Sandy Simester,
(530) 367-3535
www.foresthillhistory.org

Fruitvale School Hall Community Association
Lyndell Grey,
(916) 645-3517

Golden Drift Historical Society
Jim Ricker, (530) 389-8344

Historical Advisory Board
Tracy Falk, (530) 889-6500

Joss House Museum and Chinese History Center
Richard Yue (530) 346-7121

Lincoln Archives Museum
Shirley Russell, (916) 645-3470

Lincoln Highway Association
Norman Root, (916) 483-8669
www.lincolnhwy.org

Loomis Basin Historical Society
Dot Shiro, (916) 663-3892
www.ppgn.com

Newcastle Portuguese Hall Association
Aileen Gage, (530) 885-9113

Old Town Auburn Preservation Society
Donna Howell, (530) 885-2891

Placer County Genealogical Society
Alice Bothello, (530) 885-2216
www.pcgenes.com

Placer County Historical Society
Michael Otten, (530) 888-7837
www.placercountyhistoricalsociety.org

Placer County Museums Docent Guild
Sandi Tribe, (530) 887-9143

Rocklin Historical Society
Barbara Chapman,
(916) 415-0153
www.rocklinhistory.org

Roseville Historical Society
Phoebe Astill, (916) 786-2338
www.rosevillehistorical.org



People of Burbank
Barse Miller 1940

Mural in the Burbank, California Post Office

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Calendar of Events

January

- Jan. 11th, 10:30 am** Placer County Museums Docent Guild Meeting at the Bernhard Winery.
Contact: 530-823-3553.
- Jan.18th, 6:00 pm** Foresthill Divide Historical Society Business meeting at the Foresthill Divide Museum.
Contact: 530-367-3535.
- Jan. 18th, 7:00 pm** Rocklin Historical Society meeting at the Old St. Mary's Chapel at 5152 Front Street.
Contact: 916-624-3464.
- Jan. 20th, 6:30 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis Library.
Contact: 916-652-7844.
- Jan. 28th, 7:00 pm** Placer County Genealogy Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library. Contact 530-885-2216.
- Jan. 30th, 1:00 pm** Community Education program: *Identifying and Dating Vintage Bottles* presented by Cliff Kennedy in the Bernhard Museum Winery. Contact: 530-889-6500.

February

- Feb. 7th, 6:30 pm** Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting at the Veteran's Memorial Hall.
Contact: 530-885-5074.
- Feb. 15th, 6:30 pm** Foresthill Divide Historical Society Potluck meeting at the Foresthill Memorial Hall.
Contact: 530-367-3535.
- Feb. 15th, 7:00 pm** Rocklin Historical Society meeting at the Old St. Mary's Chapel at 5152 Front Street.
Contact: 916-624-3464.
- Feb. 17th, 6:30 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis Library.
Contact: 916-652-7844.
- Feb. 17th, 5:30 pm** Historical Advisory Board meeting at the Bernhard Winery.
Contact: 530-889-6500.
- Feb. 20th, 1:00 pm** Community Education program: *Pleistocene Fossils of Hawver Cave* presented by Gene Lorange in the Bernhard Museum Winery. Contact: 530-889-6500.
- Feb. 25th, 7:00 pm** Placer County Genealogy Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library. Contact 530-885-2216.