

THE PLACER

A Voice of History

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Administrator's Notes

Melanie Barton

I've spent several hours reading oral histories and firsthand accounts of Christmas during the Depression. There are several recurring themes other than the obvious accounts of very difficult economic times. First and foremost, is the importance of being with family. Everything I read described in some detail the holiday food preparation and the meals shared. Another common account was that stockings were filled with an orange or tangerine, an apple, nuts, and hard candy. These items were looked forward to each year and were prized and enjoyed slice by slice or bite by bite. It appears that a gift other than fruit was usually something needed such as a pair of socks or hat and gloves. Rarely did a child receive a toy. I think there is something to be said for a holiday that focuses on being with loved ones and less on giving and receiving gifts. With that in mind, I invite you to attend the holiday activities at the Placer County Museums and take a stroll back in time.

On December 2nd our newest exhibit at the Placer County Museum, *A Leap of Imagination*, will open. It

showcases a private carousel collection that includes 24 pieces. You won't want to miss seeing the tiger, giraffe, rabbit, dog, bears and horses of various shapes, sizes and colors. If you ever rode on a carousel, you will delight in the variety of animals on display and will enjoy reminiscing about your experience. Carousels are not as popular today as they were before modern amusement parks, so this is a great opportunity to bring your children and grandchildren to see something that was important to you as a child.

December 4th through the holidays, the Bernhard Museum will be decked out in Victorian splendor. Christmas quilts from the Foothill Quilters Guild will be on display on the second floor of the winery. The Gold Country Museum will be decorated for a Gold Rush Christmas. You will enjoy reading journal entries recorded on Christmas day 1849 by real 49ers.

You won't want to miss Old Town Country Christmas on December 11th and 18th at the Placer County Museum this year. Join us at the historic Courthouse en route to Old Town Auburn and enjoy the carousel exhibit, Christmas tree, and holiday treats.

All our events and museums are free...you won't find a better value!

Best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Christmas in the Great Depression

Ralph Gibson

Christmas during the Great Depression – the very thought is well, depressing. Imagine the millions of families that couldn't afford a nice Christmas dinner or presents for their children. Of course, many families will face the same problem this Christmas. Tragedies and unfortunate events like a depression or recession seem to have a greater impact on us when they happen around the holidays. This is why it's easy for us to believe the myth that the suicide rate is higher this time of year.

Yes, the holidays can be tough, but at the same time, there is an extra sparkle in people's eyes; smiles seem warmer and more genuine; and many walk with a spring in their step. Christmas cheer is infectious. That cheer is reflected in a higher number of monetary and food donations to charities that support the poor.

Canned food drives and toys for tots – these wonderful programs are built around the holidays.

The same was true during the depression. People persevered and they celebrated the holidays however they could with help from local charities that pitched in whenever they were needed. Many of those who lived through the Great Depression as children acknowledge the difficulties that surrounded the holidays, yet they still reflect fondly on Christmas morning.

Something as simple as an orange in their stocking thrilled them with joy. Tears would often flow when a gift their father or mother made for them was unwrapped. Though there wasn't any of the glitz and sparkle of a modern day Christmas, it was still just as special, if not more so.

Some were able to scrape up enough money to buy Christmas gifts and purchase cakes and pies from local bakeries during the depression. Locally, this is reflected in the number of advertisements in the *Placer Herald*. Believe it or not, the first Christmas advertisements between 1929 and 1933 in the *Placer Herald* ran Thanksgiving weekend. This might be because local businesses wanted people to think about Christmas earlier so they could better manage their money to afford a few gifts.

Another method of managing one's funds for Christmas gifts were the Christmas Club accounts offered by many banks. Though Christmas Club accounts started in the early 20th century, they became extremely popular during the Great Depression. These accounts were somewhat tricky because they offered very little to no interest and the penalties were high for withdrawing the money before December 1st, when the funds in one's account became officially available. Of course, this kept many from withdrawing the funds early and helped preserve their savings for the purchase of Christmas gifts.

With some people saving money in Christmas Club accounts, local businesses tried to sway holiday shoppers into entering their stores. G.E. Lukens & Sons renamed their establishment "The Christmas Store" when the holiday neared and offered everything from toys to rugs. To make things even more confusing, a women's clothing shop also added "The Christmas Store" to their title as well. Local bakeries offered baked goodies and PG & E peddled electric ranges and refrigerators.

Bad things that happen around the holidays tend to hit us harder than if they happened any other time of year, but those who survived the Great Depression, especially the children, still

hold onto warm Christmas memories. Perhaps heartwarming events and good fortune have a greater impact on us than negative ones. This would be good to remember as we head into another Christmas during poor economic times. So have a little gleam in your eye, smile a little broader, and get that spring back into your step. Christmas cheer is infectious and a lot of local charities need your cheerful support.

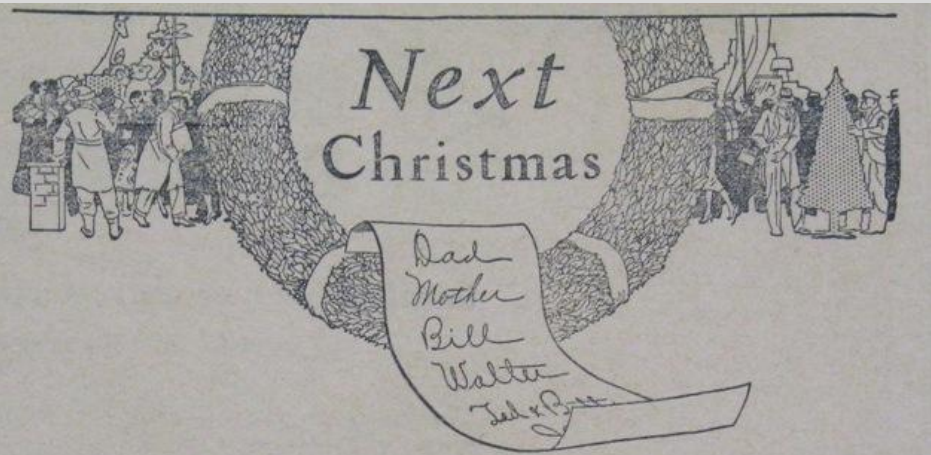
**The
Christmas Store**

Toys, Furniture, Cutlery,
Hardware, Rugs,
Electrical Articles

G. E. Lukens & Sons Inc.
"Headquarter's for Sporting Goods"
Auburn California

SHOP EARLY FOR CHRISTMAS!

Advertisement
December 13, 1930
Placer Herald



Next Christmas

*Here's the easy road
to Merry Christmas*

Bank of America's 1932 Christmas Club is now open. Initial deposits accepted any time up to January 31, 1932. Which classification suits you best?

| DEPOSIT for 50 weeks | You RECEIVE next December |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 50c each week . . . | \$25.00 |
| \$1 each week | \$50.00 |
| \$2 each week | \$100.00 |
| \$4 each week | \$200.00 |
| \$5 each week | \$250.00 |
| \$10 each week . . . | \$500.00 |
| \$20 each week . . . | \$1000.00 |

Plus interest at prevailing rates, providing all deposits are made promptly

INQUIRE at your nearest
Bank of America Branch

A PROBLEM OR A JOY?


*Save the extra money you need in
Bank of America's 1932 Christmas Club*

Next year be better prepared for holiday wants. Just a small deposit each week mounts up to a helpful total in Bank of America's Christmas Club.

You can so easily save enough to give your loved ones a wonderful Christmas. Or finance an educational course. Or take a trip yourself. Many families use this plan to accumulate cash for taxes or investment or emergency.

More than \$5,000,000 was distributed on December first to 78,000 members of our 1931 Christmas Club.

What would one of these checks have meant to you? Plan now for next year. Join the 1932 Bank of America Christmas Club at your nearest branch—*today!*



Bank of America

National Trust & Savings Association

Bank of America National Trust & Savings Association, a National Bank and Bank of America, a California State Bank, are identical in ownership and management . . . 415 offices in 243 California cities

AUBURN BRANCH - - NEWCASTLE BRANCH

Bank of America Christmas Club Advertisement
December 5, 1931 *Placer Herald*

**This Christmas Gift
saves \$50⁰⁰ to \$150⁰⁰
a year on food....**



*An electric
refrigerator
is a wise
investment!*

EVERY UP-TO-DATE GROCER has a large refrigerator. He knows it pays for itself by preventing food from spoiling. It keeps food fresh and wholesome for you.

But what happens when you take perishable food home?

Facts show that 10 per cent of food is wasted if there is a lack of proper refrigeration. An electric refrigerator saves that 10 per cent.

You can also make additional savings by buying food in larger quantities at "special" prices. The food keeps perfectly in an electric refrigerator.

Food authorities figure that an electric refrigerator saves \$50 to \$150 a year on food! Here is an example, based upon shopping tests, of the savings possible in the average family of four where an electric refrigerator is used:

| | Weekly Savings | Monthly Savings |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| Dairy Products | \$.12 | \$.50 |
| Vegetables | .85 | 3.30 |
| Fruits | .40 | 1.60 |
| Meats | .50 | 2.00 |
| Elimination of waste, 10% of month's food bill | 3.35 | \$10.75 |

These savings amount to \$129 a year.

For a small down payment, that will not interfere with your Christmas budget, you can have an electric refrigerator placed in your home.

See a *dealer* now. Make arrangements to have an electric refrigerator delivered on Christmas Eve.



ELECTRIC REFRIGERATION BUREAU

Supported by

General Electric, Servel, Kelvinator, Copeland, Frigidaire, Mayflower, Majestic, Norge

PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

P.G. and E.

Owned · Operated · Managed
by Californians ·

133-1231

Advertisement
December 5, 1931
Placer Herald

SHOP EARLY!

Keep up the tradition of
Christmas Giving

Certainly there is no need for one's generous impulse to be an extravagant gesture, As there are scores of gifts in good taste—very modestly priced.

HOSTESS PAJAMAS

\$7.95 to \$15.00

HOSIERY

Petit point lace mesh silk
\$1.65 to \$1.95

SILK LINGERIE

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Gowns \$3.95 to \$7.95 | Dance Sets \$1.95 to \$3.95 | Bias Slips \$1.95 to \$3.95 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

LINEN HANDKERCHIEFS

10c to 85c

NOVELTIES

15c to \$2.25

WOMEN'S SHOPPE

Maude J. Hanly

If It's New
It's Here

Near Freeman Hotel

Advertisement
December 5, 1931
Placer Herald

Xmas Goodies

Cakes, Pies and Cookies

Specially for the holiday trade

Favorite Bread—New Loaf
Perfect Bread—Sliced

Ann Arbor Bakery

Christmas Goodies

Auburn, Calif.

Advertisement
December 13, 1930
Placer Herald

Christmas Greetings



HARDWARE, CROCKERY, GLASSWARE, GUNS and
AMMUNITION, ELECTRICAL GOODS OF ALL KINDS,
FARMING and CARPENTER TOOLS, Etc.

JOHNSON HARDWARE CO.

304 Lincoln Way AUBURN, CAL. Telephone 33

Advertisement
December 13, 1930
Placer Herald



FARES CUT! Back East for Christmas

Wander, if you like, to the far corners of the earth, but be *home* at Christmas time. To your old circle of friends, to the folks back home, the finest Christmas of all is to see *you* again.

Southern Pacific provides the fastest service to nearly every eastern city. Special Christmas Holiday fares will be *good on all trains* leaving

*December 16 to 22, inclusive.
Return limit January 15, 1931.*

NOTE THESE EXAMPLES OF ROUNDTrips TO:

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Chicago . . . \$106.45 | New York City \$167.85 |
| St. Paul . . . 101.35 | New Orleans . 97.80 |
| Kansas City . 84.40 | St. Louis . . . 97.80 |

and scores of others. Similar fares westbound.

Make reservations early!

Southern Pacific

W. W. SCOTT, Agent
Auburn, California

Advertisement
December 13, 1930
Placer Herald



Museums Intelligence

Placer County Museums News

Ralph Gibson

I can't believe it's time to start thinking about turkeys and Christmas presents again. Of course, for those of you who shop at Costco or Sam's Club you've been exposed to aisles of the latest Christmas decorations since September – so maybe it isn't so unbelievable after all.

This is always a busy time of year for the museums. We're just wrapping up Volunteer Training, we're planning a new carousel exhibit to replace the Native Sons exhibit in the Courthouse, and we're in the planning stages for decorating our museums for the holidays.

Last year, staff submitted dessert recipes for a cookbook we created as our Christmas present to each other. Below are two recipes from that book, which is now available on the museums website (<http://www.placer.ca.gov/museum>) and our blog (<http://www.placercountymuseums.blogspot.com>).

Because of printing costs, our cookbook will only be available online.

Karen's Washboard Cookies

These are really great if you work at a history museum and everyone knows what a washboard looks like.

2 cups flour
1 cup flaked sweetened coconut
½ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp soda
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp nutmeg
1 egg
2 Tbs milk
8 Tbs butter
1 cup light brown sugar

Mix butter and sugar, add dry ingredients. Shape into rectangular log 2 x 3 by 15 long. Wrap in plastic and chill 2 hours. Slice about 3/8 inch thick and make "washboard lines" with floured fork. Bake at 350° for 15-18 minutes. Rotate pan if needed. Yum!

Tom's Black Bottom Cupcakes

Batter: 1½ cup flour
¾ cup sugar
¼ cup cocoa powder
1 tsp baking soda
½ tsp salt
1 cup water
⅓ cup oil
1 Tbs vinegar
1 tsp vanilla

Filling: 8 oz. cream cheese
1 egg
¼ cup sugar
⅛ tsp salt
1 cup chocolate chips

Glaze: 3 oz. semi-sweet chocolate
2 oz. unsalted butter

½ tsp corn syrup

Batter: Preheat oven to 375°. In a bowl, put all dry ingredients, and then add remaining ingredients. Mix with an electric mixer until combined. Pour into greased muffin tins ½ full.

Filling: Beat cream cheese, egg, sugar and salt in a small mixing bowl until combined and smooth. Add chocolate chips. Spoon two heaping tablespoons into the middle of the batter. Bake 30-35 minutes. Let cool 10 minutes, remove from pan and cool completely.

Glaze: Combine chocolate, butter and corn syrup and melt in microwave on medium heat or over a double boiler. Dip top portion of cupcakes into chocolate glaze.

Community Education Program: *Old Town Country Christmas at the Historic Courthouse*

This year Country Christmas comes to the historic Courthouse in Auburn! A carousel exhibit, *A Leap of Imagination* will be on display in the Treasury and a large Christmas tree will stand in the hallway. The museum will be open and we'll serve some old fashioned treats.

The Courthouse will be open from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm Saturday December 11th and 18th during Old Town Country Christmas. For more information, please call 530-889-6500.

Placer County Historical Society News



President's Message

*Michael Otten,
President*

Isn't it about time to recognize the American River for what it really is, a national treasure? It's value lies not only in the recreational opportunities and its wilderness aspects but also in its history, most notably the 1848 gold discoveries by James Marshall at Coloma and Claude Chana in Auburn.

Safeguarding the future of this vital resource, including providing fire safety for canyon communities such as Auburn and property owners along the canyon rim, was the focus of a special forum that attracted an overflow audience to the Board of Supervisors' chambers Oct. 26.

Supervisors Jennifer Montgomery and Jim Holmes and Auburn Councilman Mike Holmes hosted the event to find ways to maintain funding to keep the Auburn State Recreation Area and Lake Clementine open and provide fire safety.

Mike Finnegan, area manager for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which provides funding for the ASRA to manage the 40 mile stretch of river, and a representative for Congressman Tom McClintock, were confident that the needed \$2 million annually to fund the area operations would be in place through at least Sept. 30, 2012. They said it would buy time to come up with a long-term solution and it would take the efforts of everyone there to achieve it.

Mike Holmes said one possibility is to combine the Folsom and Auburn State Recreation areas into a single funding unit. The two areas attract more than 3 million visitors a year.

My suggestion was to convene another forum and include representatives from El Dorado and Sacramento Counties and work toward having the President declare the area a National Monument under the American Antiquities Act of 1906.

Presidents have designated some 100 areas as national monuments, and many of those receive far fewer visitors. The area's gold production not only impacted the creation of the Golden State but secured the Union and bound it together with the Transcontinental Railroad.

At least conceptually such a monument could link the Folsom and Auburn State Recreation Areas with the Coloma State Park and the 271-acre Gold Hill Ranch that was home to the former Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony, the first Japanese settlement in the nation that is being proposed by Rep. McClintock as a national historic site.

President Theodore Roosevelt used the Antiquities Act to proclaim more than 800,000 acres of the Grand Canyon as a National Monument. Other presidents used the act to protect many other areas, many of which later became national parks such as Death Valley. President Clinton used the act to declare 19 monuments and

expand three others. One of these monuments is Pompeys Pillar, near Billings, Montana, one of 16 managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The BLM has proposed another 14 areas to President Obama's Department of Interior for monument designation, including three in Northern California--Bodie Hills, the Modoc Plateau and Berryessa Snow Mountain.

Pompeys Pillar is of some local interest as it was named by William Clark after the youngest member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, the son of Sacagawea who spent the biggest chunk of his life in the Auburn Area and along the American River where he had served as a ferryman and surveyor. Clark nicknamed Charbonneau "Pompy" and had called the Montana outcropping "Pompy's Tower," which was changed to its current name in 1814. The 51-acre monument, that includes Clark's etched signature on July 25, 1806, attracts about 50,000 visitors a year. It has a nice visitors' center and interpretative programs.

By creating a national monument locally we can bring extra focus to resolving a lot of the funding, recreational, historical and health and safety issues, especially if we work cooperatively.

It is as Steve Evans, state conservation director for Friends of the River, says: "we have the basis for a national park in our back yard." Evans contends the canyons lands won't be really protected until it became "an entity unto itself."

Thanks to all who participated in the PCHS's first official dedication of a grave marker on Sept. 26th, at the Old Auburn Cemetery. The Bernhard headstone dedication provided another interesting chapter honoring the lives of a Gold Rush era family who established roots here and whose stories continue to be retold almost daily at the Bernhard House Museum complex. About 40 people attended the ceremony, including Auburn Mayor Bridget Powers, Councilman Mike Holmes and County Supervisor Jim Holmes. The headstone denotes the birth and death dates of Bernhard "Benjamin" Bernhard and his wife, Rosa Hau, who died in 1902 within a few months of each other, and three of their children, who predeceased them.

The idea for such a marker came from Ralph Gibson, Program Manager for the Placer County Museums, who noted that headstones for this prominent family were missing. Special thanks goes to Roy and Paul Ruhkala and the Ruhkala Monument Co., Ken Hash and Sue Burkett of the Auburn Cemetery District, John Knox and Carol Cramer for their research on the Bernhard family and our Landmarks Committee: Karri Samson, chair; Doris Viera, Richard Hubbard, Gayle Russell, Rose Ford and Lila Swesey.

Other notes: Thank you George Lay for chairing October's dinner meeting while I was in Europe. Auburn is soliciting a volunteer City Historian. Contact the City Clerk's office for qualifications, expected duties and a one-page application.

**Placer County Historical Society
Dinner Meeting**

Addah Owens, Vice President

When: December 2, 2010

Time: 6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Program

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

Cost: \$14 per person

Menu: Roast Baron of Beef, Roast Turkey, Seasonal Vegetables, Mashed Potatoes, Salad, and Dessert.

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

Program: Walt Wilson will present a slideshow program of photographs on the train filled with bombs that exploded in Antelope in the 1960s.

We will also have Christmas music and our annual raffle.

--Michael Otten, otten@ssctv.net



Christmas Display at the State Theatre in 1939

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
Merilee Reed, (530) 367-2430
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
George Lay, (530) 878-1927

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

Lincoln Area 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

Maidu Museum & Historic Site
Glenie Strome, (916) 782-3299
www.roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum

Native Sons of the Golden West, Parlor #59
Tom Potts, (916) 412-3910

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

Old Town Auburn Preservation Society
Ross Carpenter, (530) 885-1252

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) 773-3003
www.rosevillehistorical.org

Artifact Highlight

Kasia Woroniecka

Shirley Temple Doll, c. 1934

Shirley Temple brought hope and optimism to Americans who went to the movies to forget their problems during the Great Depression. As her popularity grew during the early 1930's, a great number of Shirley Temple related merchandise was being produced including dolls, photos, books, dresses and jewelry. Her break-through 1934 movie "Stand Up and Cheer" inspired a doll wearing a polka dot dress. The pictured doll from our collection was made by the Ideal Toy and Novelty Company, the only company licensed to sell Shirley Temple Dolls. The company was founded as Ideal Novelty and Toy Company in New York in 1907 by Morris and Rose Mitchom. It changed its name to Ideal Toy Company in 1938. It is a composition doll made of sawdust-based wood pulp with a mohair wig showing off Shirley Temple's trademark curls. The Shirley Temple doll was a very popular Christmas present in 1934.



Calendar of Events

November

- Nov. 9th, 4:00 pm** Roseville Historical Society Meeting at the Carnegie Museum.
Contact: 916-773-3003.
- Nov. 15th, 6:00 pm** Foresthill Divide Historical Society Business meeting at the Foresthill Divide Museum.
Contact: 530-367-3535.
- Nov. 15th, 7:00 pm** Rocklin Historical Society meeting at the Old St. Mary's Chapel at 5152 Front Street.
Contact: 916-624-3464.
- Nov. 17th, 6:30 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis Library.
Contact: 916-652-7844.
- Nov. 22nd, 7:00 pm** Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library. Contact 530-885-2216.

December

- Dec. 2nd, 4:00 pm** *A Leap of Imagination* exhibit opens in the Treasury in the historic Courthouse.
Contact: 530-889-6500.
- Dec. 2nd, 6:30 pm** Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting at the Veteran's Memorial Hall.
Contact: 530-885-5074.
- Dec. 11th & 18th** Old Town Country Christmas at the historic Courthouse from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm.
Contact: 530-889-6500.
- Dec. 14th, 4:00 pm** Roseville Historical Society Meeting at the Carnegie Museum.
Contact: 916-773-3003.
- Dec. 15th, 6:30 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis Library.
Contact: 916-652-7844.
- Dec. 15th, 5:30 pm** Historical Advisory Board meeting at the Bernhard Winery.
Contact: 530-889-6500.
- Dec. 20th, 6:30 pm** Foresthill Divide Historical Society Dinner meeting at the Foresthill Memorial Hall.
Contact: 530-367-3535.
- Dec. 20th, 7:00 pm** Rocklin Historical Society meeting at the Old St. Mary's Chapel at 5152 Front Street.
Contact: 916-624-3464.
- Dec. 23rd, 7:00 pm** Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library. Contact 530-885-2216.