



2015 September-October Volume 18, Issue 5

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## Administrator's Notes

by *Ralph Gibson*

This year's Heritage Trail was a success, with attendance up in most museums despite the 100 degree temperatures. Our free shuttle system for the Valley Museums worked as expected, but few people took advantage of it. One of the biggest complaints we get about the Heritage Trail is that there is no way to see all 20 museums in one weekend. With the new DeWitt History Museum bringing that total to 21 museums next year, we are seriously considering a major change to the 2016 Heritage Trail.

Heritage Trail 2016 may be a summer-long event. Instead of all museums open one long weekend in August, local pockets of museums will be open free of charge on different weekends at hours that best reflect what they do. Imagine the second Saturday in June featuring Heritage Trail at the Bernhard Museum and the Benton Welty School Room; the third weekend showcasing the four Roseville Museums; and on the last Saturday in June the Griffith Quarry Museum offering early morning quarry tours followed by Roy Ruhkala splitting his granite at the Rocklin History Museum. Some museums, like the Donner Summit Historical Society Museum, might have

their own day, with hiking trips near the summit to see historic features and artifacts related to the railroad. Other events like night programs, special tours, etc. might also be listed on a Heritage Trail calendar that would be available to the public in April.



*Docent Jill Hunter assists a visitor at Heritage Trail 2015.*

Families will have the whole summer to plan their adventures along the Heritage Trail. And the entire summer to collect stamps on the Get-up-and-Go cards for a shot at winning a gift basket. I'll post more information about this change in the next *Placer*.

**Ralph Gibson**  
Placer County Museums  
Administrator  
101 Maple St.  
Auburn, CA 95603  
(530) 889-6500  
[rgibson@placer.ca.gov](mailto:rgibson@placer.ca.gov)

**Walt Wilson**  
President Placer County  
Historical Society  
P.O. Box 5643  
Auburn, CA 95604  
[bonwally@hotmail.com](mailto:bonwally@hotmail.com)

**Beth Rohlfes**  
Editor and Staff Writer  
(530) 889-6506

"Final Days of Auburn Drug Company," a nostalgic look at this now-vanished Auburn treasure.

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Most of the POWs worked at the DeWitt Army base performing maintenance duties.

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At roughly 1 p.m., a traditional Markley toast will be made with Aquavit and beer.

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## Golden West Film Festival

by Bill George

The first-ever Golden West Documentary Film Festival will be held at Auburn’s State Theatre Saturday, September 26, 2015.

“The goal of the festival is to present films by regional artists and to build interest in telling incredible stories about the people and places that make our area so fascinating,” said Bill George, film producer and festival founder. “We are very fortunate to live in one of the richest historic areas in the Americas.”

Productions will include work from area filmmakers such as Auburn's Brendan Compton of BA Productions and the Donner Rails series, well known for his films on the region's rich railroad heritage; and Bill George of Nimbus Films, who documents the vestiges of our area's historic past. Sacramento-area historian and film critic Matías Antonio Bombal will present “The Sacramento Picture,” which has sold out on multiple occasions.

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### Film Festival Schedule

**10:00 a.m.** – Filmmakers Introduction.

**10:15 a.m.** – “Ghosts of the West Ghosts of the West: The End of the Bonanza Trail” from Ethan Knightchilde and Knight Sky Pictures of Denver Colorado. Ten years in the making, this film tells the story of lost mines, abandoned diggings, and ghost towns in the lands between the Great Plains and the Pacific Ocean. The film visits the near-forgotten sites that hide, isolated, out in the mountains and deserts of the American West.

**11:00 a.m.** – “Rotaries, Avalanche on the Mountain,” from Brendan Compton of BA Productions and the Donner Rail series. The film captures the heroic story of the rescue of a Union Pacific Railroad crew during the epic winter of 2011.

**1:00 p.m.** – “Chinese Builders of Gold Mountain,” from Bill George and Nimbus Films. This film follows the 1850s path of the Chinese who helped create modern California.

**2:00 p.m.** – “Final Days of Auburn Drug Company” from Philip Jacques and Cody Hitchcock and Auburn Community TV, a nostalgic look at this now-vanished Auburn treasure.

**2:15 p.m.** – “The Sacramento Picture” by Mattias Antonio Bombal and Chad E. Williams. This movie features a collection of rare films of Sacramento from 1910-1974, and selections from the KCRA-TV news film collection photographed between 1957-1960 in the care of Center for Sacramento History. Local historians bring the footage to life with observations, commentary and music.

**3:30 p.m.** – Filmmakers Panel

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Festival Tickets cost \$6.17 and are available at 800-838-3006 or <http://gwestfilmfestival.brownpaper tickets.com>.

“Hopefully, the community will respond,” said George, “and we can continue to grow the festival in future years.”

Inaugural sponsors include the Placer County Historical Society, Nimbus Films and the Placer County Office of Economic Development.

## Artifact Highlight

*by Kasia Woroniecka  
Curator of Collections*

This pendulum wall clock was made by German prisoners of war who were housed at Camp Flint during WWII. It was donated to Placer County Museums in 1999 by Fred and Joyce Wilkinson.

In 1941, as the war raged on in Europe, the United Kingdom was faced with a growing number of prisoners of war and a serious housing shortage. To remedy the problem, more than 400,000 Axis prisoners were shipped to the United States and lived in 700 camps throughout the country.

One of those camps was Camp Flint in Auburn. It was originally established in 1938 as a relief camp during the Great Depression. It was located in the area that is now the Auburn Dam Overlook. It served as a labor camp for unemployed men seeking work on Federal and State funded public works projects in the Auburn area. Laborers lived in a

camp of barracks made of wood and canvas. After the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the 32<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division arrived in Auburn to guard tunnels and bridges against sabotage. In 1942 their work was taken over by the 754<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion. The battalion was transferred to Camp Beal in 1943. That same year the camp grew to over 500 POWs and at least 1000 U.S. troops. Additional fencing and guard towers were added to secure the site. In 1944 Camp Flint was established as a physical therapy Reconditioning Center.

Most of the POWs worked at the DeWitt Army base performing maintenance duties. Prisoners could not be used in work directly related to military operations or in dangerous conditions. They were paid in scrip. Most prisoners were provided with writing materials and art

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supplies and were allowed to correspond with their families in Germany. They ate the same rations as American soldiers. In 1945 thirty-five of the POWs helped to re-condition the Placer High football field.

The wall clock made by German POWs at Camp Flint is an excellent example of the mechanical skills of some of the prisoners. It is made of wood, Lucite, an acrylic resin, glass and metal. Lucite was available in sheets and was used for the body of the clock. Acrylic glass was used during the war in making submarine periscopes, aircraft windshields,

canopies and gun turrets. The initials “HLD” carved and glued on the pendulum are the initials of



Herbert Louis Dennis. The clock was given to Herbert as a thank you gift as the POWs were being returned to Germany. Dennis, a WWI veteran who made Auburn

his home for over twenty years prior to WWII, was a deputized guard and volunteered for the post when the camp was first established. He was a car salesman who owned a garage next to the Auburn Movie Theater. He continued selling Hudson Terraplane cars after the war.

In 1945 200 German prisoners of war were transferred to Camp Flint from Florence, Arizona, to provide support at the DeWitt Hospital. They were gradually shipped back to Germany after the war ended, but some remained as late as February 1946.

## The Scoop

*by Beth Rohlfes*  
*Curator of Education*



*You're it!*

We all know that playground shout out—along with the hearty slap and jarring awareness that you've been caught, you're up next. You're it!

The thing is, if you played the game long enough, you knew you would eventually get tagged. That

was the fun of it after all! And so, after three years with the museums, I am now “it.” I will be Jason's successor as editor of this newsletter. And in the spirit of the game, I am ready and waiting for any news you wish to share with our active history community. So be sure to send me details of what's happening in your neck-of-the-woods. Find me at (530) 889-6506, [brohlfes@placer.ca.gov](mailto:brohlfes@placer.ca.gov) or in the Museums Admin Office.



**Placer County Museums  
New Volunteer Training  
Begins September 17th  
Call (530) 889-6500**



## Placer County Historical Society News

by Walt Wilson  
President

### Know your Trivia. Win a prize!

I have some great history books to give away at our October dinner.

My plan is to have a special drawing at every dinner meeting for history items and at least one trivia prize. So you can be lucky, smart or even both. This is not a raffle, but there will be a jar available for cash donations should you be so moved.

It has been a busy summer, and we were unable to finalize a field trip to explore Placer County connections in Sacramento. We will keep you posted when we can reschedule.

### Markley Monument

Most of you who traveled with Gene Markley know that, in coordination with the Forest Service, he set up several monuments, nine in all, commemorating prominent individuals and events. Markley is a life member of the Placer County Historical Society.



Historical Markers Project. Gene Markley, center in blue.

One of those monuments, Miller's Defeat, was vandalized several years ago. The plaque ended up in the Forest Service warehouse. With the help of Forest Service archeologist Nolan Smith, the plaque was recovered by Tom Birch, who refurbished it for re-installation.

On Saturday, October 17, 2015, several volunteers will do the digging and cement work to reinstall the monument. Nolan Smith will be present to oversee the new installation. The work will commence at 10 a.m. Volunteers should bring a lunch.

At roughly 1 p.m., a traditional Markley toast will be made with Aquavit and beer. Everyone is invited to view the monument and to participate in the toast and dedication.

Pictures will be taken to send to Gene in Wisconsin. To get to the site, take Mosquito Ridge Road to Forest Road 43. This is the connector road to Foresthill Road at Robinson Flat. A sign will be posted at the turn.

Lastly, if you would like to help defer the cost of the cement and monument support structure (and the Aquavit, of course), you can send a contribution care of Dave Jones, 1280 Arrow Court, Auburn 95602. Any excess funds will be used for a future Markley Monument critique and pizza party at Auburn's Old Town Pizza. See more at [www.placercountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.placercountyhistoricalsociety.org) or call (530) 878-6587.



## Placer County Historical Organizations

**Colfax Area Historical Society,**  
Chris Miller (530) 346-8599  
[colfaxhistory.org](http://colfaxhistory.org)

**Donner Summit Historical Society**  
Bill Oudegeest, (209) 606-6859  
[donnersummithistoricalsociety.org](http://donnersummithistoricalsociety.org)

**Foresthill Divide Historical Society**  
Sandy Simester, (530) 367-3535  
[foresthillhistory.org](http://foresthillhistory.org)

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

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

**Historical Advisory Board**  
Glenn Vineyard, (916) 747-1961

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

**Lincoln Highway Association**  
Bob Dieterich,  
[bobd@iname.com](mailto:bobd@iname.com)  
or [lincolnhwy.org](http://lincolnhwy.org)

**Lincoln Area Archives Museum**  
Elizabeth Jansen, (916) 645-3800  
[laamca.org](http://laamca.org)

**Maidu Museum & Historic Site**  
Glenie Strome, (916) 782-3299  
[roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum](http://roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum)

**The Museum of Sierra Ski History and the 1960 Winter Olympics**  
David C. Antonucci (775) 722-3502  
<http://tahoemuseum.org/>

**Native Sons of the Golden West, Parlor #59**  
Dave Allen, (530) 878-2878  
[dsallen59@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dsallen59@sbcglobal.net)

**Newcastle Portuguese Hall Association**  
Mario Farinha (530) 269-2412

**North Lake Tahoe Historical Society**  
Rebecca Phipps, (530) 583-1762  
[northtahoemuseums.org](http://northtahoemuseums.org)

**Placer County Historical Society**  
Walt Wilson, (530) 878-6640  
[placercountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://placercountyhistoricalsociety.org)

**Placer County Museums Docent Guild**  
Tom Innes, (530) 888-8969

**Rocklin Historical Society**  
Barbara Chapman, (916) 415-0153  
[rocklinhistory.org](http://rocklinhistory.org)

**Roseville Historical Society**  
Phoebe Astill, (916) 773-3003  
[rosevillehistorical.org](http://rosevillehistorical.org)

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

**Placer County Genealogical Society**  
Toni Rosasco, (530) 888-8036  
[pcgenes.com](http://pcgenes.com)

**Roseville Fire Museum**  
Jim Giblin, [JGiblin@roseville.ca.us](mailto:JGiblin@roseville.ca.us)  
[rosevillefiremuseum.org](http://rosevillefiremuseum.org)

**Roseville Public Library**  
Christopher Webber (916) 774-5239  
[www.roseville.ca.us/library](http://www.roseville.ca.us/library)

## Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting

*By Addah Owens, Vice President*

**When:** October 1

**Time:** 6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Program

**Where:** Auburn Veterans Hall 100 East St, Auburn

**Cost:** \$15 per person

**Menu:** Roasted pork loin, garlic mashed potatoes, seasonal vegetables, green salad, rolls, dessert and coffee.

**Program:** John Knox and April McDonald-Loomis will present an enticing glimpse into their new book, Images of America: Early Auburn. The 20 minute slide show will feature photographs from the book. Copies of the book will be available for sale for \$20.



**Mail Check to:**

PCHS  
c/o Betty Samson  
8780 Baxter Grade Rd  
Auburn, CA 95603

**DO NOT BRING ALCOHOL. County directives prohibit it, and, we can't get liability coverage.**

# Calendar of Events

## September

**8** 4:00pm Roseville Historical Society meeting at the Auburn Depot, 610 Lincoln Way (916) 773-3003

**10** 2:30pm Placer County Historical Society Board of Directors meeting, Room 10, Auburn City Hall, 1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn. (530) 878-6640

**14** 6:00pm Rocklin Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting at Old St. Mary's Chapel, 5152 Front Street, Rocklin. (916) 415-0153

**16** 6:30pm Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis library. (916) 663-3971

**19** 7:00pm Colfax Area Historical Society General Summer Meeting, Colfax Depot. Robin Yonash will talk about her new book on Weimar Cemetery and Sanitorium..

**21** 6:00pm Forest Hill Divide Historical Society business meeting, at the Forest Hill Divide Museum. (530) 367-3535

**24** 7:00pm Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting, in the Beecher Room, at the Auburn Library. (530) 885-2216

## October

**1** 6:30pm Placer County Historical Society dinner meeting at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 100 East Street, Auburn. (530) 878-6640

**12** 6:00pm Rocklin Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting at Old St. Mary's Chapel, 5152 Front Street, Rocklin. (916) 415-0153

**13** 4:00 pm Roseville Historical Society Meeting at the Carnegie Museum. 557 Lincoln Street, Roseville. (916) 773-3003

**14** 5:30pm Historical Advisory Board Meeting at the Bernhard Winery 291 Auburn-Folsom Rd. Auburn. (530) 889-6500

**21** 6:30 pm Loomis Basin Historical Society Meeting at the Loomis Library. (916) 663-3871

**22** 7:00pm Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library. (530) 885-2216



### FREE Tour of the Old Auburn Cemetery

Sunday, October 18, 1:30 pm

Call (530) 889-6500 for details

**Placer County Museums**  
101 Maple Street  
Auburn, CA 95603

