



2016 January-February Volume 19, Issue 1

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Administrator's Notes

by *Ralph Gibson*

This year, 2016, promises to be a year of completing big projects and starting several smaller ones. We will have our grand openings for the Gold Rush and DeWitt History Museums as our total number of museums rises to seven. We start the year with a brand new Curator of Archives, Bryanna Ryan. Bryanna comes to us from the Center for Sacramento History, where she gained valuable experience in Archives Management. She also spent time working for California State Parks at the Railroad Museum, the State Capitol Museum, and the State Museum Resource Center. Please stop by the Archives and say hello to our newest employee!

With a full-time Curator of Archives, the public hours at the Research Center will expand. The new hours beginning January 4th will be Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to Noon; and from 12:30 pm to 3:00 p.m. The Research Center will be open by appointment only on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

To promote these changes we will unveil

a new, completely redesigned Placer County Museums brochure sometime this spring. Until then, keep checking our website placer.ca.gov/museums where you will also find links to our Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Blogger pages.



Welcome to Bryanna Ryan, our new Curator at the Archives!

This past year was a very busy and, personally, very difficult one. But we can only look ahead to finish what we started and take even greater strides forward than we ever have before.

I hope everyone has a great 2016!

The Merci Train Tapestry

by *Kasia Woroniecka*
Curator of Collections



27" x 36" Tapestry from the Merci Train, depicting Comtesse Du Barry, courtier and mistress of King Louis XV. (pre-beheading)

There are a lot of things to be thankful for in 2015. Gas prices are down, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* is finally in theatres, and the panning stream at the Gold Rush Museum is working without leaks.

Of course gratitude doesn't have to be reserved only for momentous occasions. It is very beneficial to those who practice it on a regular basis, and according to studies it makes you feel more alive, sleep better and have a stronger immune system.

People show their appreciation in different ways, but one of the most

common is gift giving. In 1949, The Placer County Museum received a beautiful tapestry from the French Gratitude Train. The train, also called the Merci Train and the Train de la Reconnaissance, was filled with tens of thousands of gifts of gratitude from French citizens. It was a "thank you" gift to the United States for relief supplies collected by the Friendship Train as it traveled across the United States, passing through Roseville on its way to New York. The supplies and millions of dollars in aid sent to France and Italy in 1947 were indispensable during severe food shortages that followed the end of WWII.

The idea of the Gratitude Train came from Andre Picard, who was a French railroad worker and WWII veteran. The train cars were decorated with the coat of arms of the 40 provinces of France. One car was sent to each of the 48 states with the 49th shared by Washington D. C. and the territory of Hawaii. An estimated 6 million French families contributed something of value, and the train arrived in New Jersey on February 3, 1949.

The tapestry that became part of the Placer County Museums Collection

was donated to the Merci Train by Madame Juliette Morreton from the city of Beauvais in northern France. Made by an unknown weaver, it depicts Comtesse Du Barry, courtier and mistress of King Louis XV, who was guillotined during the French Revolution. Beauvais was extensively damaged during the German advance on Paris in 1940 and later liberated by British troops in August 1944. The tag that was attached to the tapestry reads: "To our American friends with hearty gratefulness for all that they have done for France and French people."



The arrival of the Merci Train (U.S. state unknown).

The scale of destruction after WWII was enormous. As people began to deal with the consequences of war and focused on rebuilding their lives and cities they, like Juliette Morreton, found a lot to be thankful for.

The Scoop

by *Beth Rohlfes*

Editor and Staff Writer

In the spirit of Janus, the Roman god of beginnings and transitions...

In 2015 we welcomed 21 new volunteers to our Museums! Auburn: Diane Adams, Nicole Bartley, Val Buonocontri, Ruth Casler, Savannah Chervenick, Mary-Jane Coon, Kate Gamble, Andy Hayes, Christy Cox Jackson, Hester Jones, Joyce Panciera, Beth Short, Lucas Suter.

Foresthill: Cathy Gerber (also Auburn), Roger Del Papa (also Auburn), Jon Ryan.

Dutch Flat: Kim and Laura Glassco, Cecil Lane, Holland Lorang, Dr. Richard Richman, Frank Schwartz III.

Nearly 2,800 3rd graders participated in 65 Living History days at the Bernhard Museum last spring and fall. The tours engaged 975 volunteer parents and involved almost 800 hours from our Living History Docents!

We celebrated this amazing docent force at our annual Appreciation Dinner in May and Holiday Luncheon last month. Many also journeyed together to the



April McDonald-Loomis and John Knox receive recognition for their many valuable volunteer hours at the Archives.



Roseville Telephone Museum and California State Museum of Collections at McClellan in October.

Gold Rush Program Docents met in the fall to evaluate the program in the new museum space. This impressive program invites students to explore how the Gold Rush changed California, through an interactive study of

rock types and gold panning, mystery trunks and an evolving mural of the California landscape.

In 2016 Gold Rush Program Docents are ready to fine tune that program and run a test tour once the Gold Rush Museum's first level is completed.

We expect 2,400 students to participate in a whopping 51 tours scheduled for Living History at the Bernhard in Spring, and another 800 or so in the fall.

Our Museum Docent Guild has initiated a new Docent Support Group to innovate ways to provide ongoing support to new and seasoned volunteers. Mentors will serve as friendly guides for new recruits. As part of an effort to ensure ongoing education for museum volunteers, the Support Group is planning its first "Lunch and Learn" event in February of 2016.

We look forward to the exciting year ahead with our growing host of docents and new opportunities presented by new museums...and more!

Going for



the Gold



Placer County Historical Society News Donate for a Piece of Placer History

by Michael Otten
Immediate Past President, PCHS

After World War II, your Placer County Historical Society founded the county's first museum and played a pivotal role in the establishment of a county-run museums entity.

We are dedicated to supporting the museums in a unique, nonprofit way. Your dues to the Placer County Historical Society help provide funds

for non-budgeted items. They also give us the ability to purchase history items quickly, including actual county records that somehow disappeared and would provide historical insight to have back.

Toward that end, we are in the process of creating a special fund for these purchases that can't be made through the normal governmental process, and for student research and assistance.

Museums Administrator Ralph Gibson contributed extra copies of county budgets and financial statements for the PCHS to give away in exchange for donations to this fund. Readers of *The Placer* get first chance at these historic documents. Suggested minimum donation is \$10 to \$15. I am donating \$50.

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Since 2016 marks the 75th anniversary of Pearl Harbor and the nation’s quick entry into the war, I pulled out the budgets for fiscal 1941-42 and 1942-43 when the document grew from 39 to 46 pages, detailing about \$1 million in expenditures. The 2015-16 budget is 735 pages long, with \$817 million in spending. Of course, the county’s population has grown from less than 30,000 to more than 370,000.

The five supervisors then—Jerry Shelley, J. E. Boyington, William H. Haines, C. A. Geisendorfer and J. H. McFadden—were paid \$1,800 a year plus \$600 mileage and a total budget of about \$14,000. Today’s supervisory salaries are in the low \$70,000

plus benefits, and the budget is and a near \$2.9 million.

It is like comparing apples and oranges. They did things differently then. It was the Great Depression. District Attorney Lowell L. Sparks was paid \$2,400, Superior Court Judge J. B. Landis, \$2,500; Sheriff Charles S. Silva, \$5,700; County Librarian Fay K. Russell, \$1,800, Schools Supt. E. H. Gregory, \$2,400.

Even before Pearl Harbor, the supervisors were digging into the reserves to pay for the Roseville-Lincoln State Guard and guns and ammo. The County Hospital budget was nearly \$36,000. It included wages of \$2,400 for Supt. William

M. Walsh, \$4,320 for surgeon Dr. J. G. Mackay and even \$350 for tobacco. These old budgets contain a lot of historical tidbits. Be the first on your block to get one by contacting me at otten@ssctv.net or (530) 888-7837.

Happy 2016!

Call for Volunteers

Walt Wilson, Placer County Historical Society president, is seeking volunteers to serve as board secretary in 2016-17, as well as to fill other positions such as the reservation secretary for dinner meetings and to make reminder calls. Contact him at (530) 878-6640 or 863-8224. ... For other news:

placercountyhistoricalsociety.org

Chinese New Year’s Dinner Meeting

By Addah Owens, Vice President

When: February 4

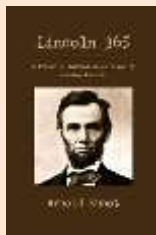
Time: 6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Program

Where: Auburn Veterans Hall, 100 East St, Auburn

Cost: \$15 per person

Menu: Chinese New Year’s dinner

Program: “The Wit and Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln,” presented by Arnold Kunst, author of Lincoln 365. Kunst considers Mr. Lincoln a



to be an excellent role model, a consummate humorist and a wise leader. The author earned his M.A. in history at Queens University in Northern Ireland. He brings a wide range of experience—as teacher, business owner, school administrator, professional musician, freelance journalist and hospice volunteer. Kunst has taught children and adults—ranging from children of cabinet members to

convicted felons—on both sides of Atlantic for well over 30 years. His most recent position is as teacher in a California state prison. Be prepared to answer historical trivia questions for a chance to win a history book!

Mail Check to: PCHS
c/o Betty Samson, 8780 Baxter Grade Rd, Auburn, CA 95603
RSVP to Betty at (530) 885-5074

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

Placer County Historical Organizations

Colfax Area Historical Society,
Chris Miller (530) 346-8599

colfaxhistory.org

Donner Summit Historical Society
Bill Oudegeest, (209) 606-6859

donnersummithistoricalsociety.org

Foresthill Divide Historical Society
Sandy Simester, (530) 367-3535

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

or lincolnhwy.org

Lincoln Area Archives Museum

Elizabeth Jansen, (916) 645-3800

laamca.org

Maidu Museum & Historic Site

Glenie Strome, (916) 782-3299

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

Newcastle Portuguese Hall Association

Mario Farinha (530) 269-2412

North Lake Tahoe Historical Society

Rebecca Phipps, (530) 583-1762

northtahoemuseums.org

Placer County Historical Society

Walt Wilson, (530) 878-6640

placercountyhistoricalsociety.org

Placer County Museums

Docent Guild

Tom Innes, (530) 888-8969

Rocklin Historical Society

Barbara Chapman, (916) 624-2355

rocklinhistory.org

Roseville Historical Society

Phoebe Astill, (916) 773-3003

rosevillehistorical.org

Old Town Auburn Preservation Society

Lynn Carpenter, (530) 885-1252

Placer County Genealogical Society

Toni Rosasco, (530) 888-8036

pcgenes.com

Roseville Fire Museum

Jim Giblin, JGiblin@roseville.ca.us

rosevillefiremuseum.org

Roseville Public Library

Christopher Webber (916)774-5239

www.roseville.ca.us/library



Calendar of Events

January

7 2:00pm Placer County Historical Society Board of Directors meeting, Room 10, Auburn City Hall, 1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn. (530) 878-6640

11 6:00pm Rocklin Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting, Old St. Mary's Chapel, 5152 Front Street, Rocklin. (916) 624-2355

12 4:00pm Roseville Historical Society meeting, Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln St., Roseville (916) 773-3003

18 6:00pm Forest Hill Divide Historical Society business meeting, Forest Hill Divide Museum. (530) 367-3535

20 6:00pm Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting, Loomis library. (916) 663-3871

28 7:00pm Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting, Beecher Room, Auburn Library. (866) 894-2076

February

4 6:30pm Placer County Historical Society dinner meeting, Veterans Memorial Hall, 100 East Street, Auburn. (530) 878-6640

8 6:00pm Rocklin Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting, Old St. Mary's Chapel, 5152 Front Street, Rocklin. (916) 624-2355

9 4:00 pm Roseville Historical Society Meeting at the Carnegie Museum. 557 Lincoln Street, Roseville. (916) 773-3003

17 5:30pm Historical Advisory Board Meeting, Bernhard Winery, 291 Auburn-Folsom Rd. Auburn. (530) 889-6500

17 6:00pm Loomis Basin Historical Society Meeting, Loomis Library. (916) 663-3871

25 7:00pm Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting, Beecher Room, Auburn Library. (866) 894-2076

DeWitt Army Hospital Christmas 1945



Placer County Museums
101 Maple Street
Auburn, CA 95603

