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## Administrator's Notes

by *Ralph Gibson, Museums Administrator*

It's going to take us a while, perhaps a decade or more, to fully grasp what we experienced in 2020 so I'm not even going to try. As we enter 2021, it's good to be cautious. The year has ended, not the pandemic. With vaccines, we can see the light at the end of the tunnel and, as long as there aren't any major setbacks, things should get back to normal this year. Estimates range from late spring to the end of the year, so, just like in March of 2020, we really have no idea.

What we will do is follow expert advice and open our museums and facilities when the state and county permit us to do so with all safeguards in place. Because it will take time to organize a schedule, not all of our museums will reopen at the same time. The Bernhard Museum will remain closed until the pandemic is effectively over and social distancing and mask wearing are no longer required. Every precaution we take is with the health and safety of the public, our volunteers (most of whom fall into the high-risk category for COVID) and our staff in mind. Perhaps by the next Placer, I'll feel more confident about predicting when everything will reopen, but until then, stay safe everyone!



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Pop-up, die-cut, and honey-comb puffs make these cards unique and beautiful.

A new donation gives insight into a local event.

Help us document the history of our community.

Find out what history projects are happening locally.

## Valentine's Day Pop-up Cards

by *Kasia Woroniecka, Curator of Collections*

Celebrating messages of love dates back centuries. The advances in printing and the introduction of the postage stamp made the exchange of greeting cards very popular during the Victorian Period. Early Valentine's Day cards were handmade with paper, lace, ribbons, drawings, and dried flowers. Early cards sold in America were commercially made in England and Germany. In 1848, Esther Howland, an enterprising graduate of a Massachusetts women's seminary, began manufacturing cards decorated with paper lace and picture collages. Her business thrived and today she is credited with popularizing the American-made Valentine.

These elaborate creations were often displayed in parlors or saved in scrapbooks. They featured cupids, roses, forget-me-nots, four-leaf-clovers, doves, and red hearts. Cupid symbolized desire and was a traditional favorite on valentine's cards. Roses were associated with strong emotions of love, respect, and courage. Forget-me-nots symbolized true love. Clovers were tokens of luck and affection. Doves represented loyalty, fidelity, and love. The heart, as the symbolic center of all human emotions, meant selfless love.

Placer County Museums has an extensive collection of Valentine's Day greeting cards and postcards. Among them are a few charming pop-up, or "mechanical" cards that fold out to reveal creative and colorful lithographs, complex die-cut and embossed designs, and three-dimensional foldable honeycomb paper elements. Most of these stand-up cards were printed in Germany around 1900-1920.



Pop-up and die-cut Valentine's Day card with cupids, doves and forget-me-nots. Printed in Germany c. 1900-1915. 1983.9.95

Donated by Vincent Gianella of Auburn. Vincent Gianella was a professor of geology, who spent his career at the University of Nevada and the Mackey School of Mines. He was a resident of Auburn for twenty years and was a member of the Auburn Rotary Club, the Placer County Historical Society, and the Placer County Historical Museum Foundation.



Pop-up and die-cut Valentine's Day card with girl, a honeycomb paper puff, and a birdcage. Message on back: "Love's greeting to Marion from mother, 1914." 1994.42.2

Donated by Marion Malcolm of Newcastle.

(left)



Pop-up and die-cut Valentine's Day card with cupid, a honeycomb puff, forget-me-nots and roses. Message on the back: "To my dear grandma from Elroy. February 12, 1916." 1976.16.67

Donated by Beverly Allyson of Lincoln. Allyson was the manager of Critter Creek Laboratories and Critter Creek Orchards in Lincoln. She was also the president of the Sierra Foothills Dairy Goat Association.

(right)



Pop-up and die-cut Valentine's Day card with a trolley car and cupids. Printed in Germany. Message on back: "From Papa to Marion, 1915." 1994.42.3

Donated by Marion Malcolm of Newcastle.

(left)

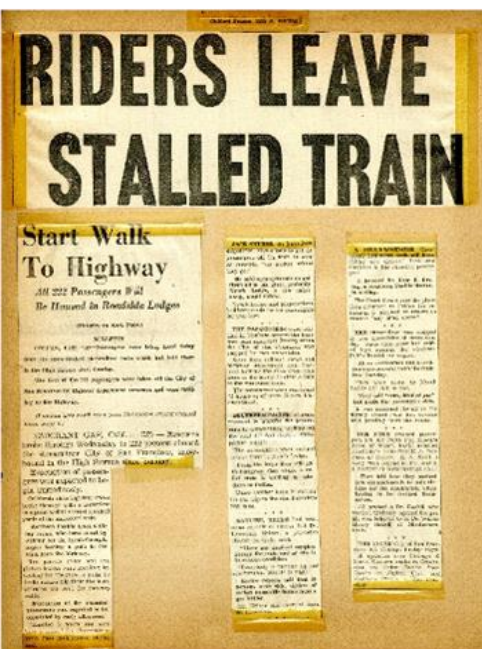
## The Rescue of the City of San Francisco

by Kelsey Monahan, Curator of Archives

While 2020 was quieter than other years, we did receive some great collections into the Archive and Research Center! One of these great donations was from Placer County Museums docent Laura France, of a scrapbook from her father Clifford France. The scrapbook contains newspaper clippings detailing the four-day saga to rescue 196 passengers and 30 crewmembers from the passenger train *City of San Francisco* when it was trapped near the Yuba Pass in January of 1952.

On Sunday, January 13, 1952, U.S. Navy Seaman Clifford France was on his way back to his ship in San Francisco from Chicago aboard the *City of San Francisco*, when snow slides and an ongoing snowstorm stalled the train near the Yuba Pass and buried it in 12 feet of snow. Northern California and the Sierras had been experiencing a series of devastating winter storms that the *Auburn Journal* declared were the worst since the winter of 1889-1890.

Initially, spirits remained high among the travelers, until it became clear that rescue would not be easy. Because of the ongoing storms and high winds, relief crews using trucks and snowplows struggled to free the train. By Monday, the boilers had run out of water and the train cabins were without heat. In addition to suffering from the cold, some passengers became ill when carbon monoxide fumes entered the cabins from a generator. Luckily, a doctor had been on board on his way to a vacation and was able to help the sick.



The first relief came Monday night when a group of 13 skiers, aided by a snow tractor, were able to break through the snow and bring food and blankets. The next day, a coast guard helicopter arrived to retrieve ill or injured passengers, but they too were prevented by the storms from reaching them and could only drop off more supplies. It wasn't until Wednesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, that crews were able to clear Highway 40 below the stranded train. Passengers either walked or were taken by snow tractor to waiting cars on the highway. The cars then transported them to the Nyack Lodge in Emigrant Gap, where a rescue train was stationed to finally take them to San Francisco. The train itself was not able to be moved until January 19<sup>th</sup>.

## What is Your Story?

by Bryanna Ryan, Supervising Curator

As another year ends, now is a good time for reflection. Time to think back on this past year and place it into the greater story of our lives. 2020 was not just *any* year, either.

Each of our perspectives are colored by a great many things and our experiences – though maybe similar – are not the same.

We hope you will consider sharing **your** perspectives, reflections, and even life stories with us. There are several ways you can do this, and we would love an opportunity to better document the history of our communities by preserving your experience.

**Oral History Interview:** If you, or someone you know, would like to participate in an oral life-history interview, let us know! This is a great way to document the unique experience of your life in just a few hours. We are making a list of interviews to conduct for when it is safe to do so in the coming year. Please contact Curator of Archives, Kelsey Monahan, to learn more about the oral history program and how to participate: [Kmonahan@placer.ca.gov](mailto:Kmonahan@placer.ca.gov) (530) 889-7789.

**Online Survey:** Consider taking our “[Preserving this Historic Moment](#)” survey. There are several questions designed to better understand how the historic experience of 2020 has played out for you. You may be anonymous if you wish and can take it multiple times as your perspectives may have changed.

**Donate Photos:** Do you have any photos you would like to donate? There are only two photos in our collection that document the 1918 influenza outbreak in Placer County. Please consider helping us to better document historic 2020 through photos. It is easy to do and you can upload them directly on our [collecting portal](#).

Who knows what the next year will bring but as always, we would love to hear from you!





## Placer County Historical Organizations

For information on meeting schedules for 2021, please contact organizations individually.

### Colfax Area Historical Society

Jay McIntyre, President  
(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

Troy Simester  
(530) 367-3535  
[foresthillhistory.org](http://foresthillhistory.org)

### Fruitvale School Hall Community Association

Mark Fowler

### Gold Country Medical History Museum

Lynn Carpenter  
(530) 885-1252

### Golden Drift Historical Society

Sarah Fugate  
(530) 389-2121

### Historical Advisory Board

Glenn Vineyard  
(916) 747-1961

### Joss House Museum and Chinese History Center

Larry Finney  
(530) 305-9380

### Lincoln Area Archives Museum

Elizabeth Jansen  
(916) 645-3800  
[laamca.org](http://laamca.org)

### Loomis Basin Historical Society

Karen Clifford  
(916) 663-3871  
[ppgn.com/loomishistorical.html](http://ppgn.com/loomishistorical.html)

### Maidu Museum & Historic Site

Kaitlin Kincade  
(916) 774-5934  
[roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum](http://roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum)

### The Museum of Sierra Ski History and 1960 Winter Olympics

David C. Antonucci  
(775) 722-3502  
[tahoemuseum.org](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

Phil Sexton  
(530) 583-1762  
[northtahoemuseums.org](http://northtahoemuseums.org)

### Placer County Genealogical Society

Toni Rosasco  
(530) 888-8036  
[pcgenes.com](http://pcgenes.com)

### Placer County Historical Society

April McDonald-Loomis  
(530) 823-2128  
[placercountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://placercountyhistoricalsociety.org)

### Placer County Museums Docent Guild

Fran Hanson  
(530) 878-6990

### Rocklin Historical Society

Hank Lohse  
(916) 624-3464  
[rocklinhistory.org](http://rocklinhistory.org)

### Roseville Fire Museum

Jim Giblin (916) 538-1809  
[rosevillefiremusem@gmail.org](mailto:rosevillefiremusem@gmail.org)

### Roseville Historical Society

Denise Fiddymment  
(916) 773-3003  
[rosevillehistorical.org](http://rosevillehistorical.org)



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Volume 24, Issue 1

January-February 2021