



Administrator's Notes

January-February

Volume 17, Issue 1

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I recently read a headline that screamed: *80 Percent of Scientific Data is Gone!* The crux of the article was that data was only available to other researchers for about 20 years before being lost due to obsolete data storage devices. In today's digital age we have to be mindful to preserve the history we are creating now.

The Library of Congress has taken a first step toward solving this problem by archiving billions of tweets. Some might think this is a ridiculous waste of time and taxpayer money, but historians 100 years from now will view this digital archive as a virtual gold mine. What I wouldn't give to be able to peek into the mind of a Forty-Niner as he tweeted about life in the gold fields.

Of course, they didn't have this technology all those years ago, but it's fun to imagine how they would have used it. Think of our own local history; what would Mr. Bernhard blog about? His fruit yield? What the second story door on his house was for?



Was Joe Armes doomed the moment he sent a heart emoticon to Alma Bell on Match.com?

Anyone who saw the posts on Adolf Weber's Facebook page knew he was up to no good that night.

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 email about Dick's location.

How do you calculate the size and number of granite blocks needed for a major construction project while at the job site? Griffith Griffith had 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?

"...living in a time where getting under a school desk would save you from atomic death from above."

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"The operator ran a risk of electric shock, in addition to other dangers like braids caught in the wringer or lost fingers."

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"I'm feeling both excited and anxiously responsible."

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"I begged anyone I could for stamps off of old envelopes."

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A Letter from the Editor



Jason Adair

Dear Readers, Facebook is a cruel mistress who demands constant attention and repays you with wasted time and possibly a repetitive stress disorder.

We here at the museums have a Facebook page that I have been manning for the past year. I've

done my best to use a lot of photos and poor grammar to give our account that real feeling. If you haven't "liked" it, you should take a minute and do so at [facebook.com/placercountymuseums](https://www.facebook.com/placercountymuseums). Doing so will help you keep abreast of the latest developments at our museums and will give you and I yet another way to share photos and videos of cats.

In other news, we still have space

in The Placer for articles from any history lovers/gatherers out there. We'd especially like anything related to the Civil Defense program. Our next exhibit in the Placer County Museum is going to showcase items from the county's old Civil Defense caches as well as recollections about living in a time where getting under a school desk would save you from atomic death from above.

The Placer County Museums Washing Machine Collection

Doing laundry has always been a dreaded and time consuming chore. It's no surprise that early washers were marketed as "monuments to women's freedom", able to "add many years to your life, save your health, keep the wrinkles out of your face and keep you youthful." Before multiple temperature settings and load sizes of modern washing machines, laundry had to be sorted and soaked overnight, usually on a Saturday. The wash began early Monday morning. A tub of water was heated on the stove and the clothes were scrubbed by hand on a washboard and rinsed. Clothes were hung to dry and on Wednesday



Aimee I. Hubbard and Violet Hubbard - Laundry Day. PCM Archives. Kathlyn Taylor Jones Collection.

day they were folded. Mangling and ironing took place on Thursday and Friday. On Saturday the process was repeated.

A rotary washing machine was invented in the 1850's. Hand-operated washing machines continued to be popular even after the

arrival of the electric motor in the early 1900's when companies like Maytag, Whirlpool and Hurley began mass production. The design of washing machines improved in the 1930s, with special emphasis on mechanical and electrical safety. Spin dryers replaced the electric powered wringers and in 1937 the first automatic washing machine was introduced by the Bendix Corporation. It was far from perfect, since it vibrated so roughly that it had to be bolted to the floor. By 1960 more than 90% of all households in America were using electric washers.



Humboldt wooden manual rocking washer, the ancestor to the modern washing machine. It is the oldest washing machine in our collection, patented in 1870, and probably dates to the turn of the century. It is basically a wooden tub with legs. It has a wash-

board inside and a swinging basket composed of wood slats with a handle. The laundry was placed in the swinging basket which moved the clothing over the scrubbing board until it was clean.



Maytag "Swinging Wringer" washing machine with an electric wringer attached. It is made of southern Cypress wood with a "milk stool" agitator under the top lid. 57,193 of these machines were produced between 1911 and 1925. Early washing machine developers faced many engineering challenges. To compensate for their shortcomings, practical messages for the user are stamped on the tub of this model, like "to secure best results spread clothes evenly when using wringer" and "oil bearings

frequently." The tub still had to be filled and emptied by hand. Often the motors on these machines used were not grounded, and since the washers often leaked, the operator ran a risk of electric shock, in addition to other dangers like braids caught in the wringer or lost fingers.



Maytag Gyrofoam washing machine with wringer circa 1920. This machine belonged to Victor Wickman, who owned and operated the Alexson Granite Company in Rocklin from the 1920s until the early 1940s. The Gyrofoam became the most popular washing machine in America in the early 1920's. Not only could this Maytag clean your clothes, with the use of special attachments it could also churn butter, grind meat, and even wash dishes.

The Scoop

Beth Rohlfes

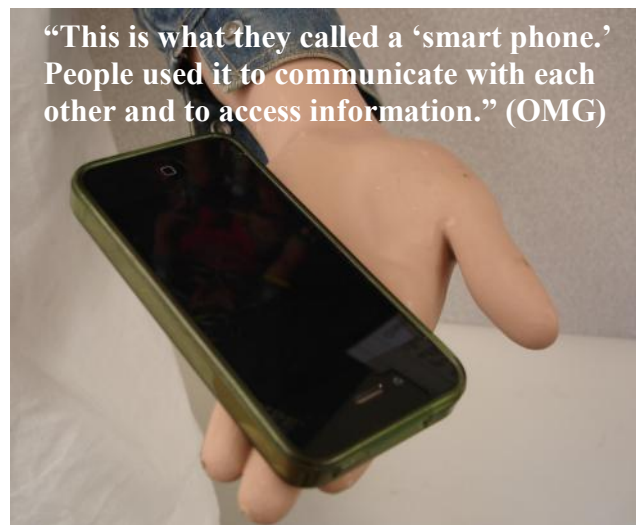
The approach of our spring 2014 3rd grade Living History Program at the Bernhard Museum has me a little on edge. It will be my first complete season as full-time permanent employee, and there is work to do. I'm feeling both excited and anxiously responsible. After all, the Program has a history, and it's a darn good one!

What makes it so good? *A well-designed formula of kid-friendly activities served up by a host of enthused parents and museum docents.* Yes, of course. But at its heart is the experience of stepping back into the past—into the lives of people not too much different from us.

Living History students get to dress and act the part of children in Victorian America. In those four hours they become the Bernhard brood whose lives evolved around farm chores and simple play. They get it that hand scrubbing laundry and building fruit crates can be hard work, but it's different enough to not feel like work, so they love it!

Their trip back in time is capped by a tour inside the Bernhard home. This world of Victorian décor and decorum contrasts sharply to the 21st century they know. In the dining room a table is set for a family dinner, with hand-washed china, polished silver and painstakingly-ironed white linen—a big effort towards refinement that, I imagine, had to be challenging in a home where farm dust and long days of labor were the norm.

So, what if a modern home, possibly even *your* home, became an historic site? What artifacts would the docent class of 2114 use to explain the daily lives of the folk from the year 2000?



“This is where families sat down to watch television,” future docent

would say, “Back then it wasn't uncommon to have one room dedicated solely to this pastime.”

“When the family moved here, all the homes were new and big to accommodate families with young children, sometimes as many as 2 or 3!”

“See all the books on these shelves? Families in 2014 still read printed books.”

“Most people vacationed abroad at least once in their lifetime. Note the Costa Rican tourist pottery.”

“This sewing machine is almost 200 years old. It was likely passed down from mother to daughter. It's unlikely that many women in 2014 actually sewed their own clothes, or even knew how to operate the machine, except in the most rudimentary fashion.”

Living history, you see, is not limited to a hands-on, 3rd grade field trip experience. It is about empathizing, stepping back into the lives of regular people. And ultimately, it's about your life. And it's about mine.

Placer County Historical Society News

Presidents Message

*Michael Otten,
President*

Yikes! Another year slipped into the history books, albeit the driest on record. On Christmas Eve came the news: The 49ers are coming. The new rush for riches may well be called the "forever" one.

Postage rates go up 6.5 percent Jan. 26. They say the rise is tempo-

As the independent federal USPS agency boasts, it is the only delivery service that visits every address in the nation: 146 million homes and businesses, six days a week. It has 37,000 retail locations. USPS relies on postage sales, services and an ever increasing line of products to keep it afloat. The annual revenue for delivering nearly half the world's mail is \$75 billion.

Marshall's historic find Jan. 24, 1848, in the tailrace of John Sutter's American River sawmill at Coloma. Methinks that at least with the issue of the first 49 cent forever stamp, it should have made the change date Jan. 24. It could highlight a colorful saga in postal history, the short-lived Pony Express, an era when one might spend a week's wages to send a less than one ounce missive across



rary, like two years max, to recoup \$2.8 billion because of severe losses in mail delivery volume since 2008.

Starting Jan. 26, we go to the nation's first 49 cent stamp, the latest forever stamp. Indulge me. I am still fascinated by what some internet aficionados refer to as "snail mail." Historically and practically it is still a big deal.

The last two Januaries saw penny increases, to 45 forever in 2012, to 46 forever in 2013. The forever series began in 2007 when the price jumped two cents to 41 cents. If you have any left, now might be the time to use them.

This month's hike amounts to the price of the California Gold Rush Centennial stamp issued in 1948. That stamp commemorated James

country. Interestingly, an 1880-2014 chart used by Wikipedia indicates when adjusted for inflation the 49 cent stamp is on a par with what folks were paying a century ago.

As a young newspaper carrier I couldn't wait to use some of my earnings to buy the latest commemoratives. I begged anyone I could for stamps off of old envelopes, and hinges and cellophane

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to attach stamps in my Scotts album. Alas, no children, grandchildren or great grandchildren have expressed any interest in the hobby.

I still regularly use commemoratives. In the process I discovered "forever" choices are limited as mail addicts stock up for future savings.

It's time to hit the Old Town Post Office to make an investment. Auburn boasts this post office is the oldest in California housed in its original building and the oldest continually operated Post Office west of the Mississippi.

Call it a fun way to enjoy history in the New Year.

otten@ssctv.net

Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting

Addah Owens, Vice President

When: Thursday February 6th

Time: 6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Program

Where: Veterans Memorial Hall, 100 East St., Auburn, CA

Cost: \$14 per person

Chinese New Year's Menu:
Sweet & Sour Won Tons, Egg Foo Young, Chicken Chow Mein, Pork Fried Rice, Chinese Salad, and Coconut Cake

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

Program: *Romantic Tahoe: A peek at life on the North Shore of Lake Tahoe during the Depression.*

Romantic Tahoe: A peek at life on the North Shore during the Depression. Donna Howell teams up with Mike Lynch for special slide show presentation.

The slide program contains material not in the book. The book will be available for purchase at \$10.00.

Placer County Historical Organizations

Colfax Area Historical Society
Helen Wayland, (530) 346-7040
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

Roseville Fire Museum
Shari Tasler, (916) 538-1809

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

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

Lincoln Highway Association
Bob Dieterich,
bobd@iname.com or lincolnhwy.org

Lincoln Area Archives Museum
Shirley Russell, (916) 645-3800

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

Lincoln Area Archives Museum
Shirley Russell, (916) 645-3800

Loomis Basin Historical Society
Karen Clifford, (916) 663-3871
ppgn.com/loomishistorical.html

Calendar of events

January

14 4:00pm
Roseville Historical Society meeting at Carnegie Museums, 557 Lincoln St., Roseville. (916) 773-3003

15 6:30pm
Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis library. (916) 663-3971

20 6:00pm
Forest Hill Divide Historical Society business meeting, at the Forest Hill Divide Museum. (530) 367-3535

20 7:00pm
Rocklin Historical Society Meeting at Old St. Mary's Chapel, 5152 Front Street, Rocklin. (916) 624-3464

23 7:00pm
Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting, in the Beecher Room, at the Auburn Library. (530) 885-2216

February

6 6:30pm
Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting at the Auburn Veterans Memorial Hall, 100 East St., Auburn. (530) 885-5074

11 4:00pm
Roseville Historical Society Meeting at the Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln Street, Roseville. (916) 773-3003

17 7:00pm
Rocklin Historical Society Meeting at Old St. Mary's Chapel, 5152 Front Street, Rocklin. (916) 624-3464

19 6:30pm
Loomis Basin Historical Society Meeting at the Loomis Library. (916) 663-3871

20 5:30pm
Historical Advisory Board Meeting at the Bernhard Museum Winery, 291 Auburn-Folsom Rd. Auburn. (530) 889-6500

27 7:00pm
Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library. (530) 885-2216

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

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

Newcastle Portuguese Hall Association
Aileen Gage, (530) 885-911

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

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

Rocklin Historical Society
Jean Sippola, (916) 652-1034
rocklinhistory.org

Roseville Historical Society
Phoebe Astill, (916) 773-3003
rosevillehistorical.org

North Lake Tahoe Historical Society
Javier Rodriguez, (530) 583-1762
northtahoemuseums.org

Placer County Genealogical Society,
Toni Rosasco, (530) 888-8036
pcgenes.com

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101 Maple Street
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