



2016 November-December Volume 19, Issue 6

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Administrator's Notes

by *Ralph Gibson*



The Holidays are around the corner, and first up is Thanksgiving. In many parts of the county, this feast and football-related holiday is known as Christmas Part One as droves of shoppers brave crowded stores to find great deals on Christmas gifts. But let's give the Holiday its due. It's been around in what is now the United States since 1621, and its roots go much further back in time. The Puritans brought with them the tradition of Days of Fasting (usually after something terrible like a flood or plague) and Days of Thanksgiving (usually after a particularly good harvest or a great event).

It wasn't until the late 1660s that Thanksgiving became routine. However, it wasn't always celebrated on the same day by each colony or state. President George Washington tried to rectify this by proclaiming the first nationwide Day of Thanksgiving on November 26, 1789. But it wasn't set in stone until 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed that Thanksgiving would be

the last Thursday in November (and a federal holiday to boot). In 1941 President Roosevelt signed a joint resolution of Congress that set the date on the fourth Thursday in November.

In California, the first official Thanksgiving was celebrated on November 29, 1849 by proclamation of Governor Benet C. Riley, the last Military Governor of California.

From the Nov. 29, 1849 Daily Alta newspaper:

Thanksgiving Day. We welcome it to California! The first ever appointed on the shores of the Pacific! It reminds us of home and of the scenes of childhood. We cannot this year gather round those ancient fire-sides and festal boards that have welcomed us always before; but we can observe Thanksgiving in our new home, and we rejoice that the governor has issued a proclamation appointing the day.

I hope each of you has a terrific, merry and happy Holiday season!

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an inexpensive and easy wardrobe
 accessory one can add to any ensemble
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the highest ever received by a
 presidential candidate
 page 3

the restoration of world peace
 page 4

we've decided to take a trip
 through time
 page 5

Political Campaign Buttons

by Kasia Woroniecka,
Curator of Collections

The United States general election is only a few weeks away. It's a busy time for political memorabilia collectors searching for posters, hats or buttons. Political buttons have been a way of showing support for a candidate or an issue since the days of George Washington. Their popularity derives from the fact that they are an inexpensive and easy wardrobe accessory one can add to any ensemble. The first mass production of buttons dates to the 1896 William McKinley presidential campaign. Placer County Museums has a sizable collection

of

buttons from different political campaigns. Here are some of the highlights:

Although not a presidential campaign button, the "Gage and Neff" button (at left) has a Placer County connection. Henry T. Gage was a Republican candidate for California governor. An attorney by profession, he became a successful sheep dealer and a gold miner in Southern California. Jacob H. Neff, a Placer County miner and sheriff, was a Republican candidate for California lieutenant governor. They won the election and served one term in office from 1899 until 1903.

At the bottom right are two campaign buttons for Theodore Roosevelt. The darker one on top was produced by "First Voters" clubs, which sprang up across college campuses in 1904 and helped ensure Roosevelt's success. He won in a landslide victory against Conservative Democrat Alton Parker.

At bottom left, is a campaign button for Champ Clark. James Beauchamp "Champ" Clark was a Democrat from Missouri. He served as Speaker of the House from 1911 to 1919. He was a frontrunner for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1912, but failed to receive the necessary two-thirds of the vote on the first several ballots. The nomination went to Woodrow Wilson, who ran against incumbent William Howard Taft, winning the election.

The "I Want Roosevelt Again" button (next page) was created for Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1936 presidential



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campaign. He ran against Republican Alf Landon. Roosevelt won in the greatest electoral landslide since the beginning of the current two-party system in the 1850s. He was also the only president to be elected four times.

“America Wants Willkie” button was made for the 1940 presidential election in which Republican Robert Willkie ran against incumbent Franklin D. Roosevelt, his third term. Roosevelt’s decision to seek the presidency was controversial, but the raging war in Europe influenced public opinion, and he was reelected.



Richard Nixon. They were unsuccessful.

The button on the bottom was made for the 1984 presidential campaign. Democrat Walter Mondale and his running mate Geraldine Ferraro, the first woman nominated for that position by a major party, ran against Ronald Reagan. Reagan won with 525 electoral votes, the highest ever received by a presidential candidate.

The last button was made for the 1992 Bill Clinton and Al Gore presidential campaign against Republican George H. W. Bush and Independent Ross Perot. Clinton won the election.

Enthusiasm runs high during presidential election season, sometimes with the help of a small round wardrobe accessory. Although some of the buttons don’t grab your interest with clever slogans or designs, they serve to remind us of a unique period in the American political past.



The last three buttons (above) are from more recent elections. The dark blue button was made for the 1972 presidential bid of Democrat George McGovern and Sargent Shriver, who ran an anti-war campaign again

Christmas at DeWitt Army Hospital

by Bryanna Ryan, Curator of Archives

The DeWitt General Army Hospital occupied a very brief yet significant place in the history of Placer County and America during the Second World War. Over

the course of about 22 months of official operation, 9,741 patients were treated there for injuries sustained in the war effort at home and abroad. The man-in-

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charge was Colonel William H. Smith, whose "Christmas Message" for 1944 acknowledged the great sacrifices being made and asked that "the coming year bring us greater achievements as well as the restoration of world peace and the return of our soldiers to their homes." In the meantime, there would be a Christmas celebration.

On Christmas day in 1944, the complex was buzzing with festivities in merriment with 1,424 patients, 94 officers, 102 Army Nurse Corps officers, 393 enlisted men, and 457 civilians. Preparations to celebrate the holiday had been underway for over a month. Local choir groups had spent the week caroling throughout the hospital. The American Red Cross had been gathering donations of care packages for the patients, while civilian volunteers eagerly engaged in "friendly visiting," and the Dietetics Department was preparing the Christmas dinner. In order to provide a home-like Christmas atmosphere, patients and military personnel were encouraged to invite relatives and enjoy the holiday feast together in one of the mess halls.

By Christmas of 1945, Colonel Smith's wish for the return of soldiers to their homes had become reality.



Colonel Smith greets St. Nick at DeWitt Army Hospital, Christmas 1944. Placer County Archives.

The war had ended and the DeWitt General Army Hospital was inactivated on December 31st.

The Scoop

by Beth Rohlfes, Curator of Education

Join us for an evening of holiday merriment here at the Courthouse during Old Town Auburn's annual event.

Country Christmas
December 10 and 17, 5 - 8 p.m.

★ A very special treat this year! Storytellers will delight listeners, young and old, under the mantel.

- ★ Free hot cider and cookies
- ★ Victorian crafts
- ★ Musicians from Auburn Winds
- ★ Photo op as Santa & Mrs. Claus
- ★ Placer County Museum, with its gold display and hallway exhibits
- ★ Warm bathrooms!

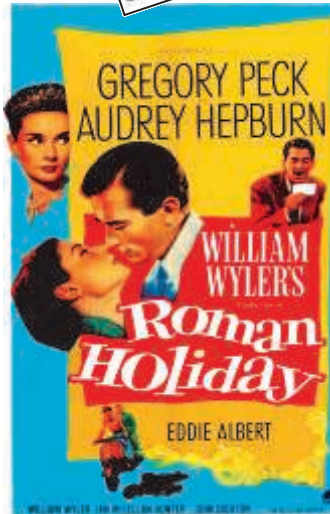


Destination: Roman Holiday

by Jason Adair, Exhibit Preparator

Anyone who's attended the Placer County Museum Docent Christmas Party since I've taken over the Pirate Gift Exchange knows that I'm really into change. This year I've been given the opportunity to arrange the 2016 Docent Appreciation Trip. In the past, we've tried to stick to destinations within a couple hours distance of Auburn. This year I wanted to go further. Instead of putting a couple hundred miles on a bus, we've decided to take a trip through time. To be specific, we're going back 63 years to 1953.

On November 7th, we'll be transporting our



volunteers back in time through a portal we've created at the State Theater in downtown Auburn.

We've rented out the place and will be doing our best to make it feel like a matinee from the past. Museum staff will be working behind the counter as theater staff, and Ralph Gibson will be giving a brief presentation before the movie regarding some interesting history about our feature film, "Roman Holiday."

Doors open at 1:00, and the program begins at 1:30. See you there!

News from Placer County Historical Society

by Michael Otten, immediate past president

It is that giving time of year in terms of both money and time. For the first time, thanks to Mike Holmes, Bill George and your board, we are embarking on a special \$500 annual history scholarship program at Sierra College. So please donate to the scholarship fund as well as give a PCHS membership to a history-minded friend.

Volunteers are special folks. We love you. You make things happen with your time and money. Nearly 9 million baby boomers (so-deemed the wealthiest generation) live in California, including a sizeable number in Placer County. The way I figure it baby boomers and the PCHS are a good match. Per the US Bureau of Labor Statistics' American Time Line Survey, men and women over 65 are more likely than any other age group to volunteer.

otten@ssctv.net or call (530) 888-7837

The PCHS, founded circa 1910 in Auburn, is a good nonprofit organization that relies primarily on its dues and volunteers to keep it going. You can make a difference. Donations and inquiries can be sent to PCHS PO Box 5643, Auburn, CA 95604.

Other Notes:

- Special condolences to Addah Owens, our hard-working program chairman for 25 years. She unexpectedly lost her son, Cary Owens, in October.
- CHS president Walt Wilson is the new chair of the Placer County Historical Organizations Committee.
- Want to serve on the PCHS Board of Directors? Please contact me ASAP.
- Contact Addah at 530 305-0058 if you can donate for our prize drawing at the Dec. 1 dinner meeting.

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,
<https://www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/>

Lincoln Area Archives Museum,

Elizabeth Jansen, (916) 645-3800

laamca.org

Loomis Basin Historical Society,

Karen Clifford, (916) 663-3871

Maidu Museum & Historic Site,

Mark Murphy, (916)774-5934

roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum

The Museum of Sierra Ski History and 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,

Kathie Nippert, (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, (916) 538-1809

rosevillefiremuseum@gmail.com

rosevillefiremuseum.org

Roseville Public Library,

Christopher Webber (916)774-5239

www.roseville.ca.us/library

Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting

By Addah Owens, Vice President

When: December 1, 2016

Time: 6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Program

Where: Veterans Hall, 100 East St, Auburn

Cost: \$16 per person (Note \$1 increase)

Menu: Special holiday fare prepared by our new caterer, Lisa

Bloom, owner of A Window Opened in Meadow Vista.

Program: "Gold Rush Medicine."

Dr. Bob LaPerriere, a retired dermatologist affectionately known in the history community as Dr. Bob, is curator of the Sacramento County Medical Society History Museum and so much more in local history

and cemeteries communities. A must-see presentation.

Also a drawing for prizes.

Mail Checks to: PCHS c/o Bonnie Wilson, 1890 Pheasant Hill Lane, Auburn 95602 (530) 878-6640

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

Calendar of Events

November

3 2:00pm

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

14 6:00 pm

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

15 4:00 pm

Roseville Historical Society meeting, Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln St., Roseville (916) 773-3003

16 6:00pm

Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting, Loomis library. (916) 663-3871

19 7:00pm

Colfax Area Historical Society General Meeting, Robin Yonash will talk about Myths & Legends of Iowa Hill, Colfax Depot. (530) 878-6640

21 6:00pm

Forest Hill Divide Historical Society business meeting, Forest Hill Divide Museum. (530) 367-3535

21 7:00pm

Rocklin Historical Society General Membership Meeting and Board Nominations, Old Saint Mary's Chapel, 5251 Front Street, Rocklin. (916) 624-2355

24 6:00pm

Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting, Beecher Room, Auburn Library. (866) 894-2076

December

1 6:30pm

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

10 6:00pm

Rocklin Christmas Tree Lighting, Old Saint Mary's Chapel, 5251 Front Street, Rocklin. (916) 624-2355

12 6:00pm

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

13 4:00pm

Roseville Historical Society Meeting at the Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln Street, Roseville. (916) 773-3003

19 6:00 pm

Christmas Social at the Rocklin History Museum, 3895 Rocklin Road, Rocklin. (916) 624-2355

21 5:30pm

Historical Advisory Board Meeting, Bernhard Winery, 291 Auburn-Folsom Rd. Auburn. (530) 889-6500

21 6:00pm

Loomis Basin Historical Society Meeting, Loomis Library. (916) 663-3871

22 7:00pm

Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting, Beecher Room, Auburn Library. (866) 894-2076



PLACER COUNTY MUSEUMS

101 Maple Street
Auburn, CA 95603



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The Placer

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Happy Holidays