



# The Placer

2022 March-April

Volume 25, Issue 2

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### Ralph Gibson

Museums Administrator  
 101 Maple Street  
 Auburn, CA 95603  
 (530) 889-6500  
[rgibson@placer.ca.gov](mailto:rgibson@placer.ca.gov)

### April McDonald-Loomis

President Placer County  
 Historical Society  
 P.O. Box 5643  
 Auburn, CA 95604  
[April.pchs@gmail.com](mailto:April.pchs@gmail.com)

### Kelsey Monahan

Editor and Staff Writer  
 (530) 889-6500  
[kmonahan@placer.ca.gov](mailto:kmonahan@placer.ca.gov)



## Administrator's Notes

by *Ralph Gibson, Museums Administrator*

As I write this, I'm preparing for the grand opening of the Fruitvale Schoolhouse Museum and Historic Site. Our museum system has officially swelled to eight museums, an Archives and Collections Facility and an Exhibit Shop. We've come a long way from the 1948 Placer County Historical Museum in the Gold Country Fairgrounds. We're not only expanding in the brick-and-mortar world, but we're expanding in the virtual one as well. If anything good came out of the pandemic, it's our embrace of the virtual. We greatly expanded our online content and, for the first time, conducted virtual education programs to schools as far away as Hawaii and Pennsylvania. Much of our collection is now available to researchers around the world through our Universal Access portal with much more being uploaded onto the platform all the time. We are interpreting & preserving history and enriching the fertile minds of students in ways unimaginable to the museums' staff and volunteers in 1948. Heck, it would have been nearly unimaginable to the Museums' staff in 2001 as they slogged through Windows XP.

But one constant that will not change is our dependence on volunteers. Volunteers keep our museums and Archives and Research Center open to the public and we could not survive without them.

We will celebrate our Volunteers on April 27th at our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon at the Loomis Veteran's Memorial Hall. So, if you're a Placer County Museums Volunteer, please put that date on your calendar!



**The 2019 Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon.**

An artifact highlight that's a sight for sore eyes...

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A new Living History Program and a new way to get involved!

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A surprising Antarctic connection to Auburn.

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Don't miss the upcoming PCHS Dinner Meeting!

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## Eye Cups

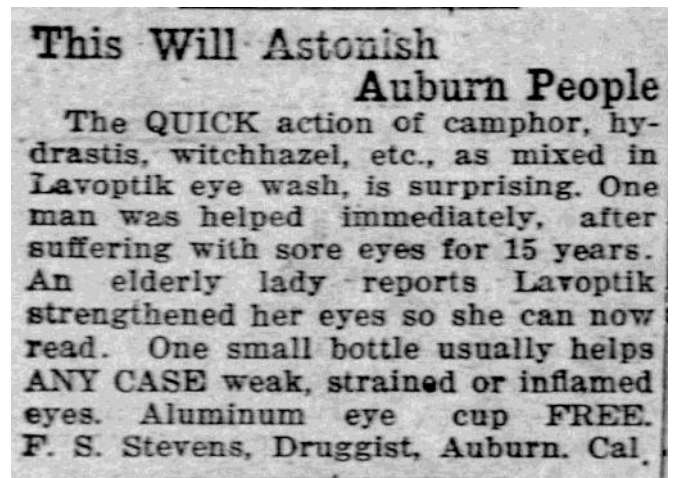
by Kasia Woroniecka, Curator of Collections

These little cups were recently donated to our collection. At first glance they look like they might have been used for serving boiled eggs or drinking alcohol, but they are eye wash cups, used for rinsing irritated eyes with water or liquid medicine.

Until modern eye drops were developed, cups like these have been around for centuries. They came in variety of sizes, shapes, and colors and were made from many different materials, including glass, porcelain, rubber, and plastic. Some looked like cordial glasses while others were simple cups without stems or pedestals. Their shape evolved over time becoming wider and better suited for the eye.



The Chicago Tribune August 11, 1918.



The Placer Herald April 25, 1925.

The cups were inexpensive and sometimes free with the purchase of medication. The Auburn druggist F. S. Stevens, for example, offered a free eye cup with the purchase of Lavoptik eyewash.



Newspaper health and beauty sections often published advice on how to take care of your eyes and what solutions to use. One recommended judicious use of the eye cup: “A teaspoon of boracic acid should be dissolved in a cup of warm water. Fill the eye cup with the solution and



press it against the eye. Throw back the head until the glass is upside down, then open the lid and let the warm boracic acid solution thoroughly wash the eye.” (Vancouver Daily World 19 October 1915).

Boracic acid, also called boric acid or hydrogen borate, is a mild antibiotic which helps relieve eye irritation caused by bacteria, fungus, and other contaminants. Modern eye solutions still contain it today. While boric acid solution was a standard ingredient, camphor, rose water, witch hazel, and salt were also used.



The San Francisco Examiner February 25, 1917

## News from the Archive and Research Center

By Kelsey Monahan, Curator of Archives

In 2020, thanks to the support of the Placer County Museums Docent Guild, we acquired ten 16mm film reels that document the construction of the Foresthill Bridge between 1969-1973. These reels were created by Ray Hattrup and his son Marvin Hattrup, and we believe also contain their documentary film “Bridge in the Sky.” Unfortunately, due to the condition of the reels, we have been unable to determine their exact contents.

That is why I am very excited to share that these reels have been selected as part of the California Revealed Project! They will now be digitized, made accessible, and ultimately be preserved for generations to come. We are so excited to see what these reels hold and can’t wait to share them with everyone.



Foresthill Bridge Construction, c. 1972.

## Living History at Fruitvale Schoolhouse

by Katy Bartosh, Curator of Education

The Bernhard Museum Complex Living History Program has been growing and evolving for 25 years. Over that time, it has become a staple of the community, and a unique (and wonderful!) educational opportunity for local students. The Living History Program at the Bernhard Museum Complex has been growing for 25 years. With the program running seven months out of the year, it's rare that I go a week without talking to someone who has participated. This has been one of the highlights of my time here, getting to hear firsthand how much this program has meant to students, parents, and teachers alike.

This past year, Placer County Museums acquired an eighth museum – the Fruitvale Schoolhouse. I am proud to announce that within this first year of operation we will be able to offer an entirely new Living History program. While there are one room schoolhouse museum programs throughout the United States, the Fruitvale Schoolhouse Living History Program promises to be unique experience. We will not only offer students lessons within the 19th-century classroom, but we will also offer other activities to help them further build their understanding of the period. Students will learn about the natural world, local agriculture, and favorite past times at Fruitvale.

Much like Living History at the Bernhard, this program is specifically designed to support third grade curriculum in an immersive and interactive way. Students will sit in the recreated one-room schoolhouse and practice cursive and elocution. They'll write on slates with chalk and make autograph books to exchange notes. Outside



Fruitvale Schoolhouse c. 1914.

they'll build fruit crates, paint pots in the garden, and learn how to make leaf impressions. Students will also examine and enjoy toys from the past by analyzing their origin, materials, and construction.

This promises to be an exciting and educational opportunity for students, and I know it will grow and evolve much like our program at the Bernhard.

If you're interested in getting involved, please reach out. My email is [kbartosh@placer.ca.gov](mailto:kbartosh@placer.ca.gov), or you can call at 530-889-6506.

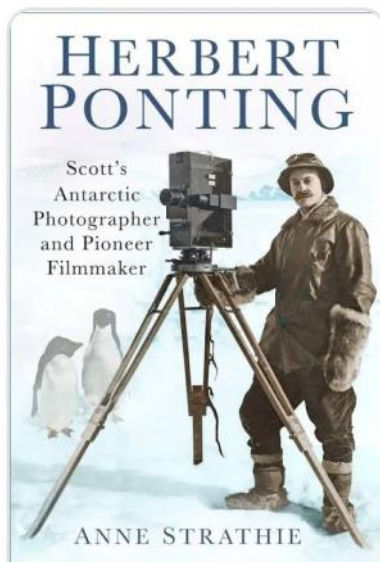
## Herbert G. Ponting

by Karri R. Samson, Placer County Historical Society

A great new book has been written about Herbert G. Ponting: “Herbert Ponting, Scott’s Arctic Photographer and Pioneer Filmmaker.” Ponting was Captain Robert F. Scott’s photographer and cinematographer on his 1911 expedition to the Antarctic. The author, Anne Strathie, of Great Britain, contacted the Placer County Historical Society in 2015 seeking input for her book. Born in England, Ponting has Auburn connections. I sent her information about the English Colony in Loomis and other English residents in Placer County. I knew a descendant of one of Ponting’s friends in Auburn and was able to tell her where his ranch was located. Ponting’s ranch was not far from it.

Ponting lived in Auburn from 1894 to 1898. He owned a fruit ranch on what appears to now be the Boorinakis-Harper Ranch on Dairy Road. The property was productive, but the bottom fell out of the fruit market during the Panic of 1893. In 1894, Auburn olive-grower (his orchard was on Palm Avenue) Feodore Closs produced a birds-eye view poster of Auburn with artist Carl Dahlgren. Auburn was in the center and various locations around town were around the edges. One was “5. Residence and Orchard of H.G. Ponting.”

In June 1895, Ponting married Mary Elliott of San Francisco. Their daughter, Mildred, was born in Auburn in January 13, 1898. With little income from the fruit, Ponting went to work as manager of a mine in Ophir. In late 1898 he sold the ranch to a wealthy San Franciscan. The house burned down in January 1899.



After briefly visiting his parents in England he returned to the U.S. and turned to his long-time hobby of photography as a profession. He traveled through-out the world taking photographs and has been called a “camera artist.” The book goes into detail about his career traveling, writing and providing photos for well-known British magazines and lecturing on his travels and photography. He died in England in 1935.

In September 2017, the author came to Auburn. She visited the Placer County Archives and the Dairy Road property. I met with her twice. It has been a wonderful experience to correspond with and meet Anne.

Due to the COVID pandemic, the book was not published until November 2021.



**Grotto in an iceberg with Terra Nova in the background at McMurdo Sound, Antarctica.**

## News from the Placer County Historical Society

by April McDonald-Loomis, President

april.pchs@gmail.com (530) 823-2128

Things are still pretty quiet at the Society. With a great deal of reluctance, we cancelled the February dinner meeting due to Covid concerns but we are back on schedule for April 7th. Hope we will have a big turn-out!

We do have a few things in the works, the plaque for the Fruitvale School that we funded is ordered and hopefully will be shipped soon. We are working on getting signage put up by the City of Auburn on Nevada Street to designate the area as the old Spanish Flat mining district. A lot of gold came out of the area right near the current post office and so few people even know about it. Working with the City always seems to take forever but we are persistent and will keep trying to make it happen. We are in the process of updating our website and are looking for any vintage photographs to include on the site. If you have anything you might be able to contribute, please contact me or another Board member. Looking forward to seeing folks at the April dinner meeting!

April McDonald-Loomis  
President

Next Board meeting March 3, 2022

Hopefully we can meet in person at City Hall, TBA.

## Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting

**When:** April 7, 2022

**Time:** 6:00 Meeting, 6:30 Dinner

**Where:** Veterans Memorial Hall,  
100 East Street, Auburn

**Cost:** \$18 per person

**Menu:** Dinner catered by *Catering by Design*- Chicken marinara with zucchini, pasta with a light Italian sauce, Caesar salad, dessert

**Speaker:** Chuck Spinks, Placer  
Sierra Railroad Heritage Society.

**Please RSVP to Jane Hamilton:**

Hamiltonjane1@me.com,  
(530) 885-7839, or send checks to:

PCHS c/o Jane Hamilton

1871 Crockett Road  
Auburn, CA 95603

*Non- Members Always Welcome!*

## Placer County Historical Organizations

### Colfax Area Historical Society

Jay McIntyre, President, (530) 346-8599  
[colfaxhistory.org](http://colfaxhistory.org)

### Donner Summit Historical Society

Bill Oudegeest, (209) 606-6859  
[donnersummithistoricalociety.org](http://donnersummithistoricalociety.org)

### Foresthill Divide Historical Society

Annie DeMaria-Norris (916) 206-4479  
[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)

### Lincoln Highway Association

Trey Pitsenberger  
[vice.president@lincolnhighwayassoc.org](mailto:vice.president@lincolnhighwayassoc.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  
[pcgs.pcgenes.com](http://pcgs.pcgenes.com)

### Placer County Historical Society

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

### Placer County Museums Docent Guild

Craig Norris

### Placer Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

Chuck Spinks  
[Psrhs.org](http://Psrhs.org)

### Rocklin Historical Society

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

### Roseville Historical Society

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

### Calendar:

*Please confirm all meeting times and locations which each organization*

**Foresthill Divide Historical Society Meeting:** Monday, March 21st at 6:00pm

**Golden Drift Historical Society Meeting:** Monday, March 7th at 7:00pm; Monday, April 4th at 7:00pm

**Historical Advisory Board Meeting:** Wednesday, April 20th at 5:30pm

**Loomis Basin Historical Society Meeting:** Wednesday, March 16th at 6:00pm; Wednesday, April 20th at 6:00pm

**Placer County Historical Society Meeting:** Thursday, March 3rd at 2:00pm, **Dinner Meeting:** April 7th at 6:00pm

**Placer Sierra Railroad Heritage Society:** Tuesday, March 22nd at 7:00pm; Tuesday, April 26th at 7:00pm

**Placer Genealogical Society Meeting:** Thursday, March 24th at 7:00pm; Thursday, April 28th at 7:00pm

**Rocklin Historical Society Meeting:** Monday, March 14th at 6:00pm; Monday, April 11th at 6:00pm

**Roseville Historical Society Meeting:** Tuesday, March 8th at 4:00pm; Tuesday, April 12th at 4:00pm



PLACER COUNTY MUSEUMS

101 Maple Street  
Auburn, CA 95603

