



Administrator's Notes by *Ralph Gibson, Museums Administrator*

Inside this Issue:

Administrator's Notes	1
Online Content	2
Can I have your Autograph?	4
News from PCHS	6
Changes at the PCM	6
Historical Organizations	7

Ralph Gibson
 Museums Administrator
 101 Maple Street
 Auburn, CA 95603
 (530) 889-6500
rgibson@placer.ca.gov

April McDonald-Loomis
 President
 Placer County Historical Society
 P.O. Box 5643
 Auburn, CA 95604
April400@wavecable.com

Katy Bartosh
 Editor and Staff Writer
 (530) 889-6500
kbartosh@placer.ca.gov



On Monday, June 1st, former Museums Administrator, Melanie Barton passed away. I struggled to find the right words to describe how important she was as a leader and as a mentor, but I settled on Melanie telling you herself. This is her final Placer article from the May-June issue of 2013:

Melanie Barton

“History is People”

I’ve never claimed to be a historian; however, I have a love of history and a passion for sharing it with others. At our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner this month, it was very clear to me that my passion was shared by everyone who attended. Museum volunteers are a unique group. They are dedicated to the role they play sharing history with visitors to our museums, answering research requests at the Archives, leading tours, and assisting staff with programs. This year 200 volunteers spent over 15,500 hours providing these various services. In a very real sense, each and every Museum volunteer is making history. For this, I cannot thank them enough.

“I’m History”

Yes, I am retiring on May 31st after 11 years at the helm of the Museums Division. It has been an extremely rewarding experience and I feel very lucky to have had the opportunity of a lifetime. I cannot help but be reflective at this juncture. Highlights for me are the growth and expansion of the Living History, School Tour, and Community Education programs. I’ve had the pleasure of being involved with the renovation of the Bernhard Winery, building the Summer Kitchen, and a major renovation of the historic Courthouse. The Museum Exhibit Team has done a remarkable job keeping our exhibits ‘refreshed’ and creating outstanding new ones such as *A Leap of Imagination*, *Fashioning a New Identity*, and *Curves and Compromise*.

We made a bold move six years ago when we launched the first **Heritage Trail** event. This year 19 museums from Roseville to Tahoe will participate in the county wide museum tour. More and more visitors are coming to this area for the two-

day event and I can’t think of a better way to highlight local history and all the wonderful local history museums in the county.

Recently, we relocated the Archives and Collections at the County Government Center in Dewitt. This project was first discussed almost nine years ago and we have spent the last year preparing for the move in earnest. The new location provides many amenities that we needed such as climate and humidity control for the collection, high density shelving units, and ample research space for staff and volunteers.

Though I am sad to leave, the time is right. We’ve accomplished much and I have enjoyed every challenge. I know that the Placer County Museums will continue to play a vital role in our community. Museum staff is more professional and better trained than ever before and I am confident that they will move forward in wonderful new directions. Ralph Gibson will assume leadership of the division until a new Museums Administrator is selected.

I am looking forward to spending more time riding my horse Pancho and exploring this beautiful country with my husband in our 5th wheel. Now that I’m a Grandma, I can’t wait to have more time to visit my three sons and grandchildren.

Thank you all for your support and for sharing my vision!

From all of us, Goodbye and Godspeed, Melanie.



We're on the Internet. What, like it's hard?

by Katy Bartosh, Staff Writer

The first two weeks of March gave us no clear indication of how COVID-19 would effect Placer County Museums. Four months later, it feels like a whole new world. While we face challenges and changes in our daily routine, there has been one immense benefit to all of this—the creation of online content.

Prior to COVID-19, Placer County Museums had an online presence, but it wasn't large. This newsletter is on our blog. We have a Twitter, Facebook, and a recently created Instagram page.

But when Placer County Museums shuttered and staff started working from home, we had to find new ways to reach visitors, students, and docents.

No mask? No problem. Jason, our Exhibit Tech, utilized an Adobe program called Spark to create simple, yet effective webpages to display material on artifacts, tours, and historic topics. All from the comfort and safety of your computer or smartphone.

Museum staff have been putting together numerous "Spark Pages" since March. These are easily available through our Museums' home page and cover a variety of topics.

With no opportunity to greet visitors, we immediately opened "Ask a Curator" for the curious to submit their queries. The responses have been posted and we're still taking questions.

Without a gallery to visit in person, Kasia in Collections has been providing patrons with their recommended

dose of objects through beautifully photographed artifact highlights.

One of Kelsey's (in Archives) big projects has been recreating self-guided tours with meticulously researched pages on buildings in Old Town and Downtown Auburn.

Bry, our Supervising Curator, put together an awesome overview of Placer County Geology, and if you're missing the Highways Through Time video in the gallery, you can read her Journey Through the Sierras Page.

I've loved researching and writing on the 1918 Influenza, Rattlesnake Dick, and Hawver Cave; but I'm really glad the student resources have been helpful to kids missing school this spring.

This has been a big change, but worth it. We currently have 44 Spark Pages which by late June had 24,000 views. This isn't counting Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, or YouTube visitors.

When we re-open fully, will we stop creating online content? No! This internet thing seems to have caught on, and we plan to keep releasing content. This has shown us a new way to engage with people who already knows us, and it also allows us to connect with those who can't reach us for lack of means, mobility, or distance.

How is the push to more online platforms effecting you? Are you enjoying our new content? Do you have any questions for a curator, or suggestions of things you'd like to see?

Most of our online material can be reached through our Museums' home page at: <https://www.placer.ca.gov/2489/Museums> It can link to our Spark Pages or our awesome blog posts—Like Kelsey's recommendations on how to preserve old photographs!

- Student Resources
 - Artifact Highlights
 - Self-Guided Tours
 - Placer County History
 - Ask a Curator
 - The Placer Newsletter
 - Museum Listings
 - County Archive and Museum Collections
 - Tours and Events
 - Volunteer!
- Use the links on the right side to navigate our webpage:
Want to know more about buildings in town?
Self-Guided Tours!
Interested in objects?
Artifact Highlights!
Do you have students at home?
Student Resources!*



Health Update:

In response to COVID-19, our museum

Ask a Curator #1

We just opened up our "Ask a Curator" service to answer questions about local history as well as about practical museum advice. Our first question was from Facebook-



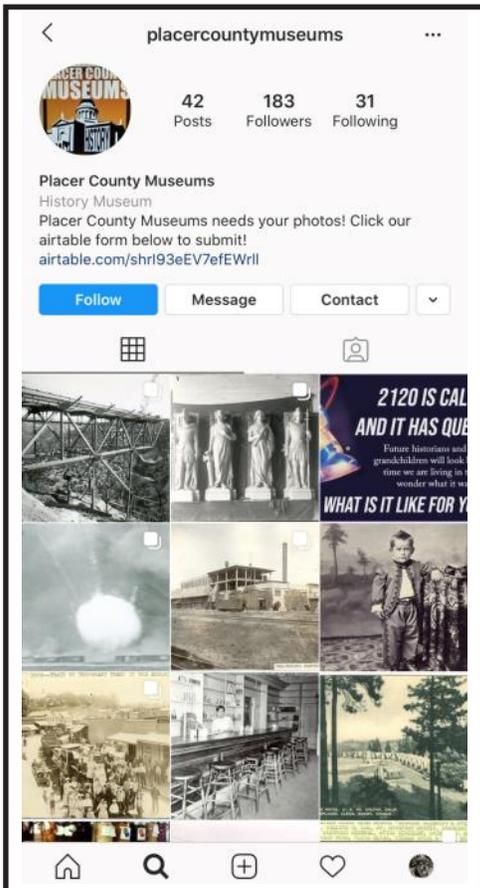
Christina Lynn Richter Question- we have hundreds of hard copy family photos and will soon be just keeping a select collection. Is it best to scan them, preserve them (and how), send them off to a service... what is your advice? I also want to be sure there are dates and names associated with each. Thank you!

Like · Reply · Message · 1d

To fully answer the question our Curator of Archives, Kelsey Monahan, made a quick video to explain some of the finer points of scanning photos.



We also put together this handy one sheet on scanning.



Feeling tech savvy? Follow us on Instagram and Twitter @placercountymuseums and @placermuseums

Can I Get Your Autograph?

by Kasia Woroniecka, Curator of Collections

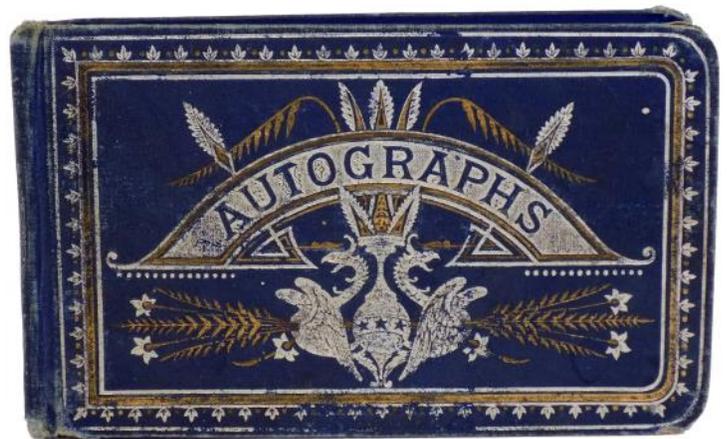
Autograph books are not very popular today, but they have been around for centuries. They originated in Europe probably during the 16th century and were a way for students to collect signatures and notes of classmates or fellow colleagues and instructors. Initially, students used the blank pages of their own books or bibles, but over time little notebooks with blank pages became popular and were traded amongst friends and filled with autographs, notes, and other correspondence. Autograph books became more affordable during the 19th century and were especially popular among German immigrants in America.

There are many autograph books in our collection. They are full of handwritten messages, famous quotes, funny poems, colorful paper stickers, and original drawings. They provide a fascinating insight into the Victorian aesthetic, family histories and social interactions of the past.

Unlike diaries, autograph books were meant to be viewed by others and came in many shapes and sizes, although the most common was 8" x 7". Many had decorative covers; some covered in velvet or leather with intricate embossed designs.



Autograph book with velvet and leather cover with embossed leaf design c. 1880s. PCM Collection



Autograph book with leather cover. It belonged to Nellie May Remier c. 1885-1891. Nellie was born in Foresthill in 1877.



Autograph book with leather embossed design. Belonged to Lydia S. Helmich. 1878. PCM Collection.



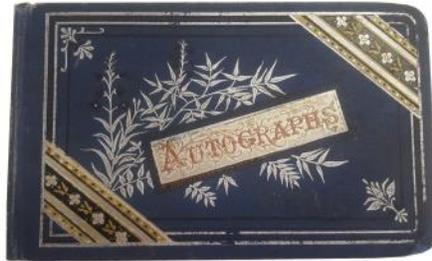
Autograph book with leather cover. Belonged to Ina Stone c. 1883-1885. PCM Collection.

Many of the pages are filled with simple entries exchanged between friends. But some include colorful stickers, lighthearted and amusing entries, and beautiful drawings.

These little books are colorful, and full of interesting information. Their popularity peaked around the time of the Civil War. They were gradually replaced by yearbooks, which today are often published in digital format. However, they remain a fascinating glimpse into past lives led.

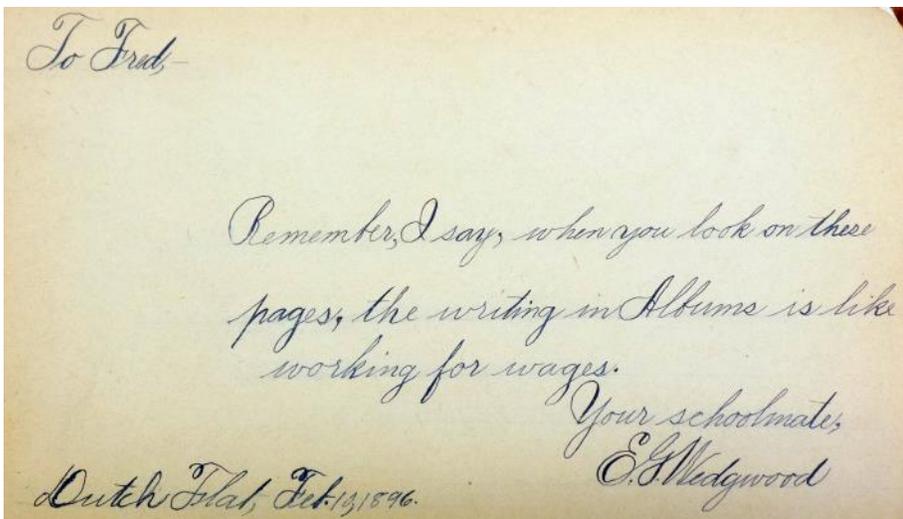
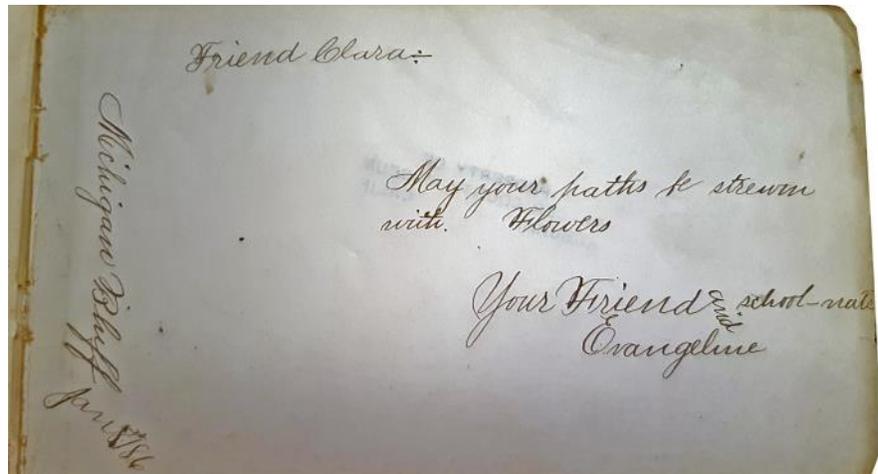


Clara Holt Jones with her family, Sunny South, Placer County. Top row: "Clara Holt, Oscar M., John A. Bottom row: "Mickel Johansson Holt; Anne S. Holt; Anna Sophia (Bostrom) Holt.



In Clara Holt's book, she has a page from Evangeline: "May your paths be strewn with flowers. Your friend and schoolmate Evangeline. Michigan Bluff, January 1886."

Evangeline Polifka was born in 1876. In 1901 she married Alfred Pine in San Francisco. She died in 1953. Clara Holt was born in 1867. She married Henry Jones, a grocer from Roseville. She died in Auburn in 1961.



From an album belonging to "Fred":

"Remember I say, when you look at these pages, the writing in albums is like working for wages. Your schoolmate E. Wedgwood. Dutch Flat Feb 10, 1896. "

News from Placer County Historical Society

by April McDonald-Loomis, President

April400@wavecable.com (530) 823-2128

We are truly living through historic times. The pandemic, racial strife, protests...what's next? The museum staff is chronicling this period with a survey that will provide a record of what people are currently doing and feeling in their own communities. I'm sure it will give insight to researchers years from now. Since most of us involved with the "history community" are in the vulnerable category, I do hope you are staying close to home, wearing a face mask, and social distancing. It is hard. There are a lot of things I'm sure we all miss.

Thank you all for renewing your membership, our yearly dues campaign was very successful despite everything.

I really don't have anything to report since the Board has not met since early March. The general meeting dinners are on hold for who knows how long. We missed the election of officers in May. Who knows how many of our by-laws we are breaking!

There is a call from the Historic Foundation for nominations for the Placer County History Award. If you have anyone you are interested in nominating, I can send you the digital form.

The Board is still trying to come up with ways to use the money we have on hand for some useful and meaningful project. Again, if you have any ideas, please let me know. Let's all hope we will see an end soon and that some positive results will come from the new national consciousness.

We Killed the American Hat

by Katy Bartosh, Staff Writer

In 2013, Placer County Museums asked visitors the following question: "What Killed the American Hat?" Was it the Kennedys? Hollywood? Youth Culture? The clickers racked up the numbers, and guests filled in their own opinions on the pin board. Was it the Pope's fault? Maybe hairspray? Or is it simply one more industry that millennials destroyed, somehow decades before their birth.



If you haven't decided yet, I'm here to inform you that our Top Secret Case Files are no longer available to help you. *What Killed the American Hat?* was deinstalled last week to make room for Placer County Museums' newest exhibit...Stay tuned on our social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and more) for more information.

Placer County Historical Organizations

Contact individual organizations for information on their event and meeting schedules.

Colfax Area Historical Society

Jay McIntyre, President
(530) 346-8599
colfaxhistory.org

Donner Summit Historical Society

Bill Oudegeest (209) 606-6859
donnersummithistoricalsociety.org

Foresthill Divide Historical Society

Troy Simester
(530) 367-3535
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

Loomis Basin Historical Society

Karen Clifford
(916) 663-3871
ppgn.com/loomishistorical.html

Maidu Museum & Historic Site

Kaitlin Kincade
(916) 774-5934
roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum

The Museum of Sierra Ski History and 1960 Winter Olympics

David C. Antonucci
(775) 722-3502
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

Phil Sexton
(530) 583-1762
northtahoemuseums.org

Placer County Genealogical Society

Toni Rosasco
(530) 888-8036
pcgenes.com

Placer County Historical Society

April McDonald-Loomis
(530) 823-2128
placercountyhistoricalsociety.org

Placer County Museums Docent Guild

Fran Hanson
(530) 878-6990

Rocklin Historical Society

Hank Lohse
(916) 624-3464
rocklinhistory.org

Roseville Fire Museum

Jim Giblin (916) 538-1809
rosevillefiremusem@gmail.org

Roseville Historical Society

Denise Fiddymment
(916) 773-3003
rosevillehistorical.org



PLACER COUNTY MUSEUMS

101 Maple Street
Auburn, CA 95603



Volume 23, Issue 4

July-August 2020