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## Administrator's Notes

*by Ralph Gibson*

### "Oh, wow!"

Some museums strive to achieve this reaction when visitors first come through the door. Exhibits— which are made of large or very significant objects, wall-sized photographs or murals, and unique interactive displays—help set the tone for the museum. Visitors realize within their first few steps that this particular museum is not simply a collection of dusty artifacts and worn text panels; here, they are in for an experience.

Our big, "Oh, wow!" at the Gold Rush Museum is in progress right now. Derrel Fleener, a retired museum professional and renowned artist, is painting a large landscape with a focus on an early Gold Rush-era mining camp.

With a generous contribution by the PCHS, and using historic photographs from our collection, his own creativity, experience and skill, Derrel is creating a masterpiece in our museum. Even though it is incomplete, "Oh, wow!" is heard nearly every time someone comes through the door.

If you haven't visited the Gold Rush Museum in the past few weeks, I suggest you do. It's open Friday-Sunday, 10:30am to 4:00 pm.



### On The Heritage Trail:

- ★ Sept. 1, 4:00pm-7:00pm— (Auburn) **DeWitt History Museum** (A sneak-peak of this developing museum)
- ★ Sept. 2-3 10:00am-4:00pm— (Foresthill) **Foresthill Divide Museum**

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"Oh, Wow!"

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Who call themselves *Spooners*  
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So, we dug deeper.  
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This well-deserved recog-  
 nition is long overdue  
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## Are you a Spooner?

by Kasia Woroniecka, Curator of Collections

The season of summer travel is almost over and, with it, the temptation to buy touristy key chains, shot glasses, fridge magnets, spoons and other souvenirs celebrating that special visit.

Collecting souvenir spoons has been a popular hobby since the late 1800s. Inspired by his trip to Germany in 1890, jeweler Seth F. Low designed a spoon with a figure of a witch. The "Salem Witch Spoon" is credited with starting the spoon collecting craze in the United States. Its design, registered on January 13, 1891, was marketed in an advertisement in the *Saturday Evening Post* that resulted in several thousand orders.

Soon, hundreds of souvenir spoon patterns were being produced commemorating cities, famous people, and significant events or

## Rewriting History

by Bryanna Ryan, Curator of Archives

So far, in 2017 I have worked with public researchers on over 470 individual requests since January.

Typical researchers are interested in determining

anniversaries. A favorite among spoon collectors, who call themselves *Spooners*, are the World's Fair souvenir spoons.

The Columbian Exposition of 1893, also called the Chicago World's Fair, elevated spoon collecting to a whole new level. It is estimated that more varieties of souvenir spoons were created for this fair than for any other single event in history.

19th-century innovation and technology made mass-production possible, resulting in increased and efficient production of souvenirs. It also made these objects more affordable as more and more Americans were enjoying travel in the United States and abroad.

chain-of-title for their properties, learning more about family members who lived in the area, or obtaining historic photos for their books, documentaries, or



"Auburn." Made by W & H Sterling. 1895.

The establishment of national parks and, later, the popularity of road-trips, gave people access to infinite numbers of mementos to remind them of their trips, long after they had ended.

Collecting spoons continues to be a popular hobby and collectors are still on the lookout for that rare, one-of-a-kind spoon with a great story and superior craftsmanship.



"Golden Gate San Francisco." Made by Wallace and Sons Mfg. Co. whose spoon factory opened in 1833. This spoon belonged to Mabel Carrie Berg-holdt of Newcastle and is dated 1903.

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offices. In everything, this work is driven by primary sources—the maps, deeds, assessment rolls, probate files, and other official records maintained by Placer County. Coupled with newspapers (which jump between being primary and secondary sources), and photographs, these requests illuminate history, one piece at a time.

There are also helpful secondary sources here at the Archive which oftentimes provides a great starting point for delving into the primaries. Using this method, in the past year we have accidentally stumbled upon primary sources that change parts of the established narrative of this County and I would like to share one here.

This is the story of the “Leland Stanford” house in Michigan City/Bluff.

Below is a photograph of it, which includes the original label pasted on the front by former curator, May Perry around 1948.

While working with a researcher to gather all of Leland Stanford’s official records related to his time as Justice of the Peace in Michigan City, we looked at

the minutes of Board of Supervisors, at deeds, and finally at photographs.

Seeing the image of the “Leland Stanford” house did not match up with the records already gathered or with Stanford’s reputed personal account that he had slept on the counter of the Empire Saloon, of which he was a part-owner. We did find his deed for the Saloon but the mystery of the house persisted. So, we dug deeper.

In meticulously gathering every “Stanford” deed starting in 1851 to see if there was *any chance* that he purchased this house, suddenly, there it was.

In Deed Book D on Page 146, Elijah Stanford purchased this house and lot “fronting Main Street” in Michigan City from Nathan and Francis Maria Wentworth on February 17, 1858. Leland Stanford, by this point, had moved on from Michigan City and everything else matched up. Elijah Stanford was Leland’s cousin.

There are still some unanswered questions in this story. How long did Elijah own the house? Did they ever live there? How early did the rumor begin?



What we do know is that Leland Stanford never owned this house. However, we have not located the deed for its sale from Elijah Stanford.

Maybe the next researcher can help complete the whole story of this mysterious dwelling.

## The Scoop

by Beth Rohlfes, Supervising Curator

**Are you the one we're searching for?**

Do you enjoy history?

Would you like to learn more about the history of Placer County?

Do you like meeting people?

Would you get a thrill out of watching faces light up when you share fascinating stories about real people who mined for gold and settled here and teach them to pan for gold?

Or, take part in making the history of the DeWitt General Hospital come to life with photographs, uniforms, and original artifacts from this historic WWII military hospital?

Or, would you prefer working with original and historic records in the archives and help to preserve and uncover the history of Placer

County?

Would you be willing to learn more about doing oral histories, get out into the community and interview citizens about their lives and experiences in this area?

Would you enjoy being part of a friendly and knowledgeable community of volunteers?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you might be the new volunteer we're searching for at Placer County Museums.

On September 14, we begin our annual New Volunteer Training—a series of classes that introduce



2016 Gold Rush Program Docents

new volunteers to the history of our county and teach them to become effective volunteers and docents for our museums. You could be part of this great adventure.

Contact me ASAP to learn more, at [brohlfes@placer.ca.gov](mailto:brohlfes@placer.ca.gov) or 530-889-6504.

There are good reasons why many Placer County Museum volunteers have been with us for five, ten, fifteen, even twenty-plus years!

Come, discover for yourself.

## From the Editor

**It has been 93 years since the first issue of The Placer was published. We hope you are enjoying it, and want to hear from you.**

If you have any historical questions or topics you would like us to investigate for upcoming issues, please send them to me at [bryan@placer.ca.gov](mailto:bryan@placer.ca.gov).

We are also working to update the distribution list for The Placer so do not hesitate to send in names and addresses (email preferred) of those who should be added to the list.

## News from Placer County Historical Society

By April McDonald-Loomis, President

[April400@wavecable.com](mailto:April400@wavecable.com) (530) 823-2128

This year, PCHS had several volunteers from the Docent Guild participate at the Benton Welty classroom for Heritage Trail. Christie Brzyszc and Sandy Rogers brought in quill pens with ink, along with chalk and small chalkboards, and handed out coloring pages of scenes around Auburn. Jean Allender, who oversees the classroom for PCHS, reported a large increase in visitors this year. It seems that the children who attended loved working with the very messy (but fun) quill pens and ink!

PCHS is moving forward with a plaque for the new Gold Rush Museum to commemorate the efforts of former Placer County museum curator, May Perry. For those who don't know, we can credit May with saving so much of our local heritage. She was a force behind creating the County's first museum, led the push to save and restore the firehouses, and was an



May W. Perry rock-hunting in Nevada.  
Circa 1948.

avid collector of historical photos which formed the beginning of the photo collection of the Placer County Archive. This well-deserved recognition is long overdue.

At the next Dinner Meeting we will present some By-Laws changes. Most are just "housekeeping" items, i.e. changing *chairman* to *chairperson*. We are proposing streamlining in the procedure for nominating officers and a few other items in that same vein. The changes will be presented at the October meeting and the entire membership will have the opportunity to vote on them at the December meeting.

As always, we would like to hear from you regarding speakers you think would be of interest or for ideas on ways to improve the Society and fulfill our mission of preserving the history of this county.

## Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting

By Addah Owens, Program Chair

**When:** October 5, 2017

**Time:** 6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Program

**Where:** Veterans Hall, 100 East St, Auburn

**Cost:** \$15 per person

**Menu:** Grilled pork loin, roasted sweet potatoes, seasonal vegies, salad, and dessert.

**Program:** "Bowman—Making of the Book."

Co-authors, Mike Lynch, Rodi Lee,

Donna Howell, and Karri Samson will talk about the effort and results of putting together their new book on the history of the Bowman area.

The *Bowman* book is a 132-page history of this community, featuring over 400 photos and other images.

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It was researched and written over a two-year period and covers many subjects including early enterprise, auto camps, and developments like Hollendale and Train Villages.

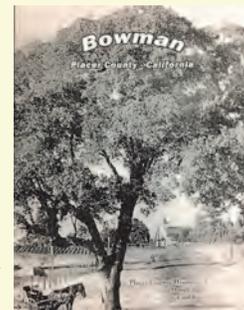
Books will be available for purchase for \$20.00.

Mail Dinner Checks to:

PCHS c/o Jane Hamilton, 1871  
Crockett Road, Auburn, CA  
95603. (530) 885-7839 or

[hamiltonjane1@me.com](mailto:hamiltonjane1@me.com)

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



## Placer County Historical Organizations

### Colfax Area Historical Society,

Chris Miller (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,

Sandy Simester, (530) 367-3535

[foresthillhistory.org](http://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](mailto:bobd@iname.com),

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

### Lincoln Area Archives Museum,

Elizabeth Jansen, (916) 645-3800

[laamca.org](http://laamca.org)

### Loomis Basin Historical Society,

Karen Clifford, (916) 663-3871

### Maidu Museum & Historic Site,

Mark Murphy, (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

<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 Associ-

ation, Mario Farinha (530) 269-2412

### North Lake Tahoe Historical Society,

Marnie Carr, (530) 583-1762

[northtahoemuseums.org](http://northtahoemuseums.org)

### Placer County Historical Society,

April McDonald-Loomis,

(530) 823-2128

[placercountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://placercountyhistoricalsociety.org)

### Placer County Museums Docent

Guild, Tom Innes, (530) 888-8969

### Rocklin Historical Society,

Hank Lohse, (916) 624-3464

[rocklinhistory.org](http://rocklinhistory.org)

### Roseville Historical Society,

Christina Richter, (916) 773-3003

[rosevillehistorical.org](http://rosevillehistorical.org)

### Old Town Auburn Preservation

Society, Lynn Carpenter, (530) 885-1252

### Placer County Genealogical Society,

Toni Rosasco, (530) 888-8036

[pcgenes.com](http://pcgenes.com)

### Roseville Fire Museum, Jim Giblin,

(916) 538-1809

[rosevillefiremuseum@gmail.com](mailto:rosevillefiremuseum@gmail.com)

[rosevillefiremuseum.org](http://rosevillefiremuseum.org)

### Roseville Public Library,

Christopher Webber (916) 774-5239

[www.roseville.ca.us/library](http://www.roseville.ca.us/library)

# Calendar of Events

## September

- 7** 2:00 pm Placer County Historical Society board meeting, Room 10, Auburn City Hall, 1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn. (530) 906-4901
- 11** 6:00 pm Rocklin Historical Society board meeting, Parks & Recreation Office, 5460 5th Street, Rocklin. (916) 624-3464
- 12** 4:00 pm Roseville Historical Society board meeting, Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln Street, Roseville. (916) 773-3003
- 16** 7:00 pm Colfax Area Historical Society annual meeting (board elections) and Summer Program: "Gold Rush Tales from Murder's Bar." Colfax Passenger Depot. [colfaxhistory.org](http://colfaxhistory.org)
- 18** 6:00 pm Forest Hill Divide Historical Society business meeting, Forest Hill Divide Museum. (530) 367-3535
- 20** 6:00 pm Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting, Loomis Library. (916) 663-3871
- 21** 3:30 pm Loomis Basin Historical Society Community Program: "History of Fruit Crate Labels" Loomis Library. (916) 663-3871
- 28** 7:00 pm Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting, Beecher Room, Auburn Library. (866) 894-2076

## October

- 5** 6:30 pm Placer County Historical Society dinner meeting, Room 10, Auburn City Hall, 1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn. (530) 906-4901
- 9** 6:00 pm Rocklin Historical Society Board meeting, Parks & Recreation Office, 5460 5th Street, Rocklin. (916) 624-3464
- 10** 4:00 pm Roseville Historical Society Board meeting, Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln Street, Roseville. (916) 773-3003
- 18** 5:30 pm Historical Advisory Board meeting, Bernhard Winery, 291 Auburn-Folsom Rd. Auburn. (530) 889-6500
- 18** 6:00 pm Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting, Loomis Library. (916) 663-3871
- 19** 3:30 pm Loomis Basin Historical Society Community Program: "Penryn History," (continued) Loomis Library. (916) 663-3871
- 24** 7:00 pm Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting, Beecher Room, Auburn Library. (866) 894-2076



PLACER COUNTY MUSEUMS

101 Maple Street  
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