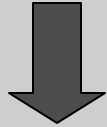


THE PLACER

A Voice of History

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Administrator's Notes

Melanie Barton

As evidenced by the Western States Trail events, it's no easy task to walk, run or ride from east to west over the Sierra Nevada through Placer County. Today we enjoy the relative ease that a major transportation route provides but can you imagine what it was like as seen from foot or horseback in the 18th and 19th centuries? This year's *Placer* will take readers on a transportation journey through Placer County.

The 2011 theme for *The Placer* follows:

Like the arteries that provide you with nutrient-rich blood, the routes that cut through Placer County provided, and continue to provide, the means for the flow of people and commerce that allowed the county to grow and prosper long after the Gold Rush.

Every bimonthly issue will have a different topic beginning with the Early Trails. In subsequent issues we will discuss Wagon Roads, Railroads, the Lincoln Highway, Highway 40 and I-80. Our hope is that each issue will be informative and entertaining for our members.

The Placer County Museums staff is planning for an exciting 2011. Our Living History and Gold Rush programs are larger than ever which means that local children will learn the unique early history of their communities.

We are developing new curriculum based school tour programs for the three Auburn museums. These will provide another opportunity for Placer County teachers to enhance the learning opportunities for their students. The topics of the monthly Community Education programs are more varied than ever. Plans are already underway for the 4th annual Heritage Trail event on August 6th and 7th. Our Exhibit Team is planning a large project in the gallery of the Placer County Museum that interprets the county's economy after the Gold Rush.

We hope that you will participate in a museum program this year. There really is something of interest for everyone. To get the most up to date information about all our programs, check out our blog at www.placercountymuseums.blogspot.com or our web site at www.placer.ca.gov/museum.

Early Trails

Ralph Gibson

The Martis people cut the first trails through what is now Placer County. The Martis pre-date the Maidu and Washoe and are so named because their artifacts were first discovered by Martis Creek near Truckee. The Nisenan-Maidu and the Washoe created many more trails through the region. The trails were mostly used for trade, warfare, and seasonal migration. Smaller trails connected villages and led to good hunting grounds and places to gather food and basket making materials.

The Nisenan conducted trade in an east-west orientation and many of their trails followed rivers and creeks. They relied more heavily on trade with the valley tribes than with their eastern neighbors the Washoe. In Anne Carlson's *Tahoe National Forest Cultural Resources Overview Part II: Ethnography* she found that:

A limited trade relationship existed with the Washoe...the Hill Nisenan traded acorns and shells for Washoe seed beaters and dried fish from Pyramid Lake.

But those first trails by the Nisenan and Washoe were not just used for trade. As Anne Carlson noted in her ethnography:

Hostilities existed between the Hill Nisenan and the Washoe...The Washoe were not allowed over the Sierran crest, and even after white occupation of Nisenan lands, small hunting parties of the Washoe were attacked. Westville, west of the crest along the Foresthill Divide, was a place where the Washoe and Nisenan often fought.

Portions of the trails used by the Martis, Nisenan and Washoe over the Sierra Nevada Mountains provided the foundation for later trails forged by early fur trappers and explorers such as Caleb Greenwood, Kit Carson, and Jedediah Smith, which of course provided the basis for sections of the Emigrant Trail. A large section of the Donner Trail follows what is known as the Trans-Sierran Indian Trail. This trail is marked by many petroglyphs on rock outcroppings nearby and was probably created by the Martis between 1,500 and 4,500 years ago.

Small bands of Indians and lone fur trappers kept the trails worn, but their footsteps eventually disappeared after the gold discovery in Coloma in 1848. Tens of thousands of people walked the Emigrant Trail to California to seek their fortune, many unaware that their path to riches was first cut by the feet of American Indians. But Mrs. Lee Whiple-Haslam, an emigrant

in 1852, understood the origins of the trail. She recorded her observations in her autobiography, *Early Days in California: Scenes and Events of the '50s as I Remember Them*:

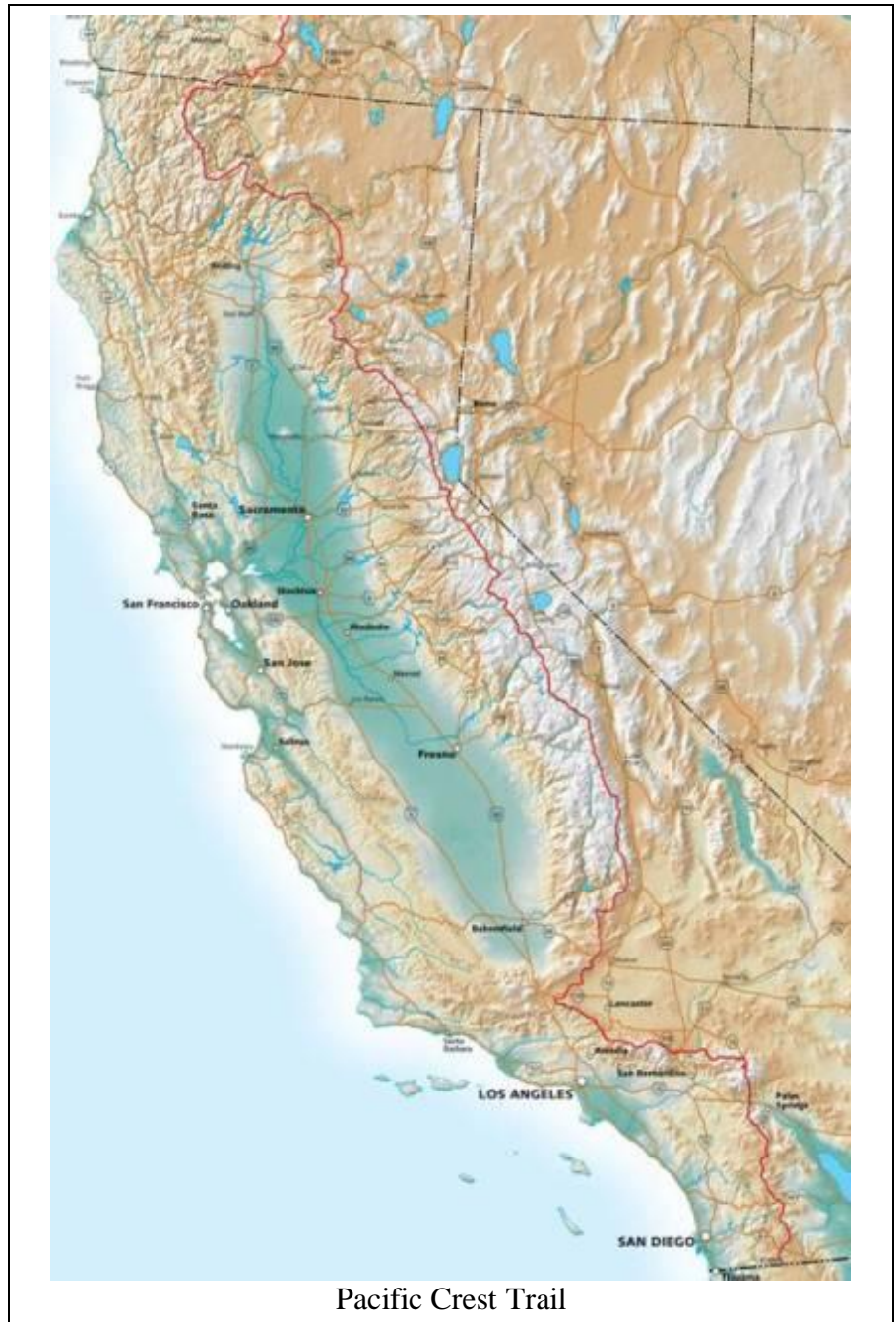
There were no battlefields, but over every mile of the long trail stalked the shadow of death. And what was waiting to greet us in California? A wilderness marked by faint trails of wild Indian feet...

Most of the trails used by the Nisenan and Washoe have been lost over time. Only those that were used as portions of the Emigrant Trail, wagon roads, or modern hiking trails still exist in some form. Part of the Emigrant Trail that cuts through Placer County evolved in the 20th century into the Western States Trail, which is used today for the Tevis Cup (a 100 Mile horse race) and the Western States 100 Mile Run.

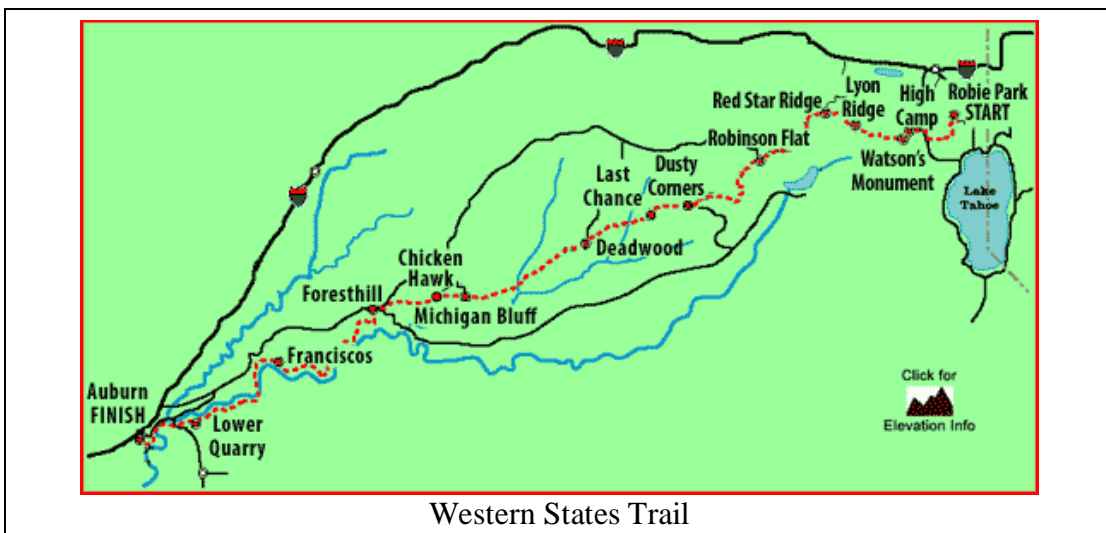
Sections of the Pacific Crest Trail, which spans 2,650 miles from Canada to Mexico through the states of Washington, Oregon and California, overlap several different Indian trails. The plot of the trail itself was explored and mapped in the 1930s and has become a popular hiking trail – though most hike only part of the trail in one outing. A section of the Pacific Crest Trail cuts through Placer County. Just to our south is the

Rubicon Trail, which is a popular trail used by four-wheel drive enthusiasts. The Rubicon, too, began as an Indian trail that was later discovered by fur trappers and emigrants.

In physics, the path of least resistance describes the path that objects take through a particular system. But it also describes how people move through a particular environment. Given the imposing features of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, people over time figured out the best way to crest certain hills and mountains and to ascend down steep slopes to the canyons and valleys below. Many of the trails forged by American Indians follow this concept. It is no wonder then, that later trails, roads, railroads, and highways would follow along many of the same paths.



Pacific Crest Trail



Western States Trail



Museums Intelligence

Placer County Museums News

Ralph Gibson

A new year and a new decade have begun. What changes will come in 2011? For starters, we'll have new exhibits in the Placer County Museum; new Community Education programs; and you'll see some new faces in our volunteer ranks.

The biggest change will be the complete remodel of the economic exhibit in the Placer County Museum in the Courthouse. Currently, this exhibit is a display of a pear-packing shed, a large windmill, and various agricultural objects. What will this exhibit look like? We don't know yet, but it's a large space and we intend to take our time to tell the story about the transition from gold to agriculture and other Placer County industries in a clear, interesting way.

Our Fourth Grade Gold Rush program begins this month and shortly after that, Spring Living History will commence. We have 14 days of the Gold Rush program on the calendar and there are only three days available for Spring Living History. We will host and educate thousands of area

children over the next six months. It promises to be a fast winter and spring. I hope all of you had a terrific New Year (and that you haven't fallen back on your resolutions yet). We have a great year planned ahead, so get ready to join us at the museums!

Community Education Program: *The History of Gas Lighting and How it Changed America*

Ever wonder what kind of gas was used in the street lights of the 19th century or how safe it was to have gas lighting in one's home? Please join us on Saturday, January 22nd at 1:00 pm in the Bernhard Museum Winery for our next community education program presented by Paul Ivazes. Paul is an expert on gas lighting and has given lectures to various groups including California State Park's staff and volunteers at the Stanford Mansion.

He promises to show us how gas lighting affected everything from architecture to how we drive a car. He will present a slideshow of gas lights and will have examples for you to look at. This program is free!

Community Education Program: *Dinosaurs of the Sierra Nevada*

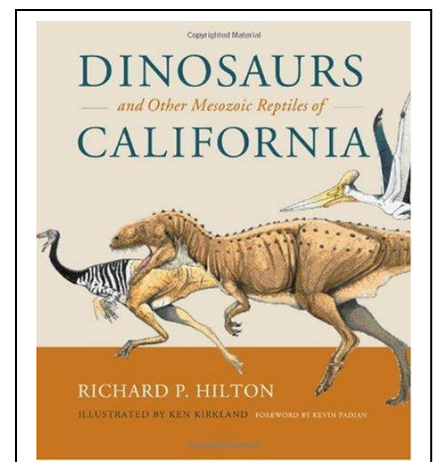
The geologic history of the Sierra Nevada Mountains is

reasonably understood, but they still hold many secrets that are only recently being discovered. Fossils have been discovered that shed light on the dinosaurs that once roamed the area tens of millions of years ago.

Dr. Richard Hilton will present *Dinosaurs of the Sierra Nevada* on February 5th at 1:00 pm in the Bernhard Museum Winery. He is the author of the book *Dinosaurs and Other Mesozoic Reptiles of California*, a professor of Earth Sciences at Sierra College, and is a frequent guest on documentaries about dinosaurs. This community education program is free!

Reservations are required for this program (call after Jan. 22nd).

The Bernhard Museum Winery is located at 291 Auburn Folsom Road in Auburn. To make your reservations for *Dinosaurs of the Sierra Nevada* or for more information about these programs, please call 530-889-6500.



Placer County Historical Society News

President's Message

*Michael Otten,
President*

Historical activities will welcome in 2011. Here are some of the items commanding attention:

1. In case you haven't heard, the City of Auburn has a new historian. She is April Loomis-McDonald who is passionate about history and Placer County. She succeeds Loreley Hodkin, who virtually created the job a decade ago and amassed a wealth of local maps and photographs and put together numerous binders of historical information. Hodkin will continue her volunteer activities as a research historian.



April McDonald



Loreley Hodkin

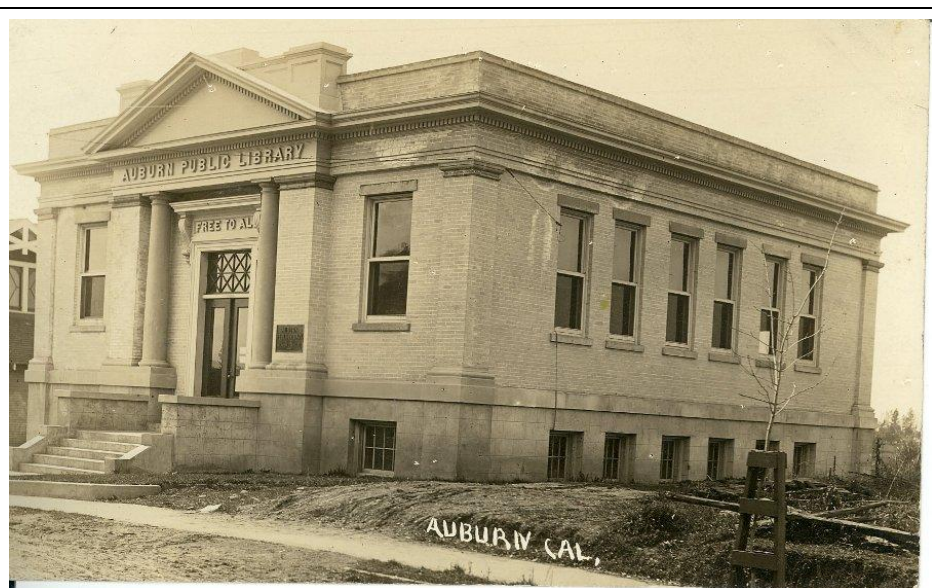
April, an ardent and much appreciated volunteer researcher at the Placer County Archives and Research Center, said she anticipates devoting about eight hours a month to her new volunteer job as the official City Historian, including being open to the public one afternoon a week. She can be reached at historian@auburn.ca.gov.

2. The State Historical Resources Commission will consider the nomination of the Auburn Public Library for the National Register of Historical Places at its quarterly workshop and meeting Jan. 28-29 in the Santa Rosa City Council chambers. The agenda should be available online about 10 days prior to the session.

The Library is the first of three Carnegie Libraries in Placer County. The Carnegie Libraries in Lincoln and Roseville are already listed on the National Register. The Commission will also consider the related multiple property nomination

for the City of Auburn's architectural and historic resources. Properties submitted include not only the library but the 1937 City Hall and Fire House, the Auburn Grammar School (the current City Hall) Auburn Fire Houses No. 1 and 2, Bloomer Cut, Masonic Hall, Odd Fellows Hall, Placer County Bank and the State Theatre.

The nominations were prepared by historian Carmel Barry-Schweyer, the retired Placer County Museum's Curator of Archives, at the behest of former Mayor Mike Holmes, a life PCHS member. The draft nominations, available online at ohp.parks.ca.gov, provide good capsule views of Auburn history during the early Gold Rush, the city's community development and the New Deal-Post World War II periods. Written comments should be submitted 15 days prior to the commission meeting or at the meeting.



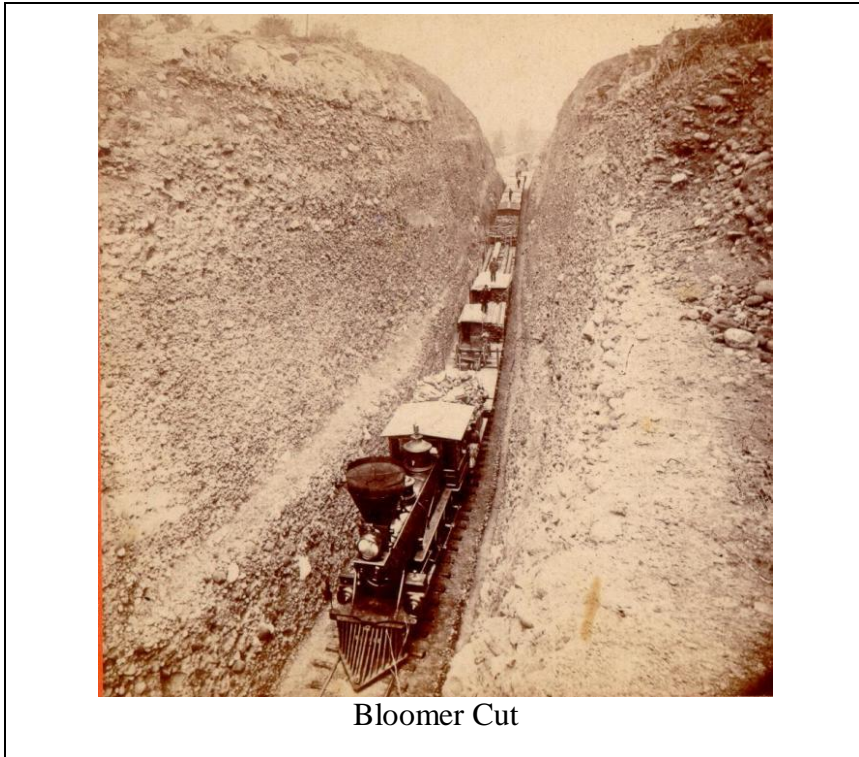
Auburn Public Library

3. It appears that the Baltimore Ravine Project and the controversial bridge crossing of historic Bloomer Cut is well on its way to approval with at least one Auburn City council member predicting the Council will soon give its blessing.

Mountain Quarries Bridge of 1912 being placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Please contact me if you can help.

--**Michael Otten,**
otten@ssctv.net



Bloomer Cut

The Council is scheduled to hear an appeal at a special meeting set for 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 13, of the Planning Commission's 4-0 approval on Nov. 16 of what could prove to be the biggest single development in the city's history. To find out more about the project check City Hall, the city website or the Auburn Library.

4. Grinches not only steal Christmas but they also ruin our efforts to mark meaningful locations in our history. Such was the case last year when they ripped off the bronze historic designation plaques that were dedicated in 2004 to denote the

The Placer County Historical Society is working with M.G. "Mike" Lynch, Auburn State Recreation Area superintendent, the Western States Trail Foundation and Endurance Run and others to replace the plaques and make them more theft proof. Please contact Lynch or local law enforcement if you have any knowledge about the thefts.

5. Volunteers are needed. Areas include serving on the Auburn Streetscape Historical and Arts Committee, the nominating committee, the board of directors and various and sundry historical projects.

Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting
Addah Owens, Vice President

When: Feb. 3, 2011

Time: 6:30 Dinner, 7:30

Program

Where: Veteran's Memorial Hall, 100 East St., Auburn, CA

Cost: \$14 per person

Menu: Chinese Dinner in celebration of the Chinese New Year.

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

Program: Terry Cooney, a Sacramento State graduate with a B.A. in History will present a program about the Chinese miners during the California Gold Rush from 1847 to 1854. He will discuss the events and some of the personalities surrounding the discovery with a focus on the Chinese miner in the gold fields and Auburn, treatment by the other miners, conflicts among themselves, and the eventual "Foreign Miners Tax".

Placer County Historical Organizations

Colfax Area Historical Society
Ed & Nilda Duffek,
(530) 305-3209
www.colfaxhistory.org

Donner Summit Historical Society
Margie Powell, (530) 432-4015
www.donnersummithistoricalociety.org

Foresthill Divide Historical Society
Merilee Reed, (530) 367-2430
www.foresthillhistory.org

Fruitvale School Hall
Community Association
Lyndell Grey, (916) 645-3517

Golden Drift Historical Society
Jim Ricker, (530) 389-8344

Historical Advisory Board
George Lay, (530) 878-1927

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

Lincoln Area Archives Museum
Shirley Russell, (916) 645-3470

Lincoln Highway Association
Norman Root, (916) 483-8669
www.lincolnhwy.org

Loomis Basin Historical Society
Dot Shiro, (916) 663-3892
www.ppgn.com

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

Native Sons of the Golden West, Parlor #59
Tom Potts, (916) 412-3910

Newcastle Portuguese Hall Association
Aileen Gage, (530) 885-9113

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

Placer County Genealogical Society
Alice Bothello, (530) 885-2216
www.pcgenes.com

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

Placer County Museums Docent Guild
Sandi Tribe, (530) 887-9143

Rocklin Historical Society
Barbara Chapman,
(916) 415-0153
www.rocklinhistory.org

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

Conference of California Historical Societies

The Conference of California Historical Societies will be holding its first ever Sacramento workshop from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2nd, at the Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical History Museum located at 5380 Elvas Avenue in Sacramento. The workshop will cover two vital topics of interest to all Placer County historical societies: development of boards of directors plus an in-depth coverage of preservation by the State Office of Historic Preservation.

The deadline for registration is January 28th. To register or for more information please call 909-480-3964.

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The conference's annual meeting on June 23rd thru June 26th should also be quite interesting. It will be in Berkeley and feature the newly renovated Bancroft Library at the University of California.

Calendar of Events

January

- Jan. 10th, 4:00 pm** Roseville Historical Society Meeting at the Carnegie Museum.
Contact: 916-773-3003.
- Jan. 17th, 6:00 pm** Foresthill Divide Historical Society Business meeting at the Foresthill Divide Museum.
Contact: 530-367-3535.
- Jan. 17th, 7:00 pm** Rocklin Historical Society meeting at the Old St. Mary's Chapel at 5152 Front Street.
Contact: 916-624-3464.
- Jan. 19th, 6:30 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis Library.
Contact: 916-652-7844.
- Jan. 22nd, 1:00 pm** Community Education Program: The History of Gas Lighting and How it Changed America by Paul Ivasez. Bernhard Museum Winery. Contact: 530-889-6500.
- Jan. 27th, 7:00 pm** Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library. Contact 530-885-2216.

February

- Feb. 3rd, 6:30 pm** Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting at the Veteran's Memorial Hall.
Contact: 530-885-5074.
- Feb. 5th, 1:00 pm** Community Education Program: Dinosaurs of the Sierra Nevada by Dr. Richard Hilton.
Bernhard Museum Winery. Reservations required. Contact: 530-889-6500.
- Feb. 8th, 4:00 pm** Roseville Historical Society Meeting at the Carnegie Museum.
Contact: 916-773-3003.
- Feb. 16th, 6:30 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis Library.
Contact: 916-652-7844.
- Feb. 16th, 5:30 pm** Historical Advisory Board meeting at the Bernhard Winery.
Contact: 530-889-6500.
- Feb. 21st, 6:30 pm** Foresthill Divide Historical Society Dinner meeting at the Foresthill Memorial Hall.
Contact: 530-367-3535.
- Feb. 21st, 7:00 pm** Rocklin Historical Society meeting at the Old St. Mary's Chapel at 5152 Front Street.
Contact: 916-624-3464.
- Feb. 24th, 7:00 pm** Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library. Contact 530-885-2216.