



The Placer

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Administrator's Notes

by Ralph Gibson, Museums Administrator

Suddenly, the snow in the mountains has begun to melt and I've begun to sweat. It seems we transitioned from winter to summer without much of a spring, but that's OK. We love summertime because it's when we can showcase Placer County History through our Heritage Trail event! This summer-long event opens June 3rd at the Sierra College Natural History Museum and marches on through nearly every weekend at various groups of museums until ending September 2nd at the Forest Hill Divide Museum.

Heritage Trail goers can pick up a "Get-Up-And-Go" card at any participating museum and get it stamped at each museum they visit. Once they get four stamps, they can turn the card in for a chance to win one of three great gift baskets. For kids up to seniors in high school, we have a Student Scavenger Hunt where they can enter to win prizes such as a backpack full of school supplies, a Kindle Fire tablet or a Samsung Galaxy tablet.

I hope everyone has a terrific summer and that I see you on the Trail!

For the full summer schedule: theheritagetrail.blogspot.com



Heritage Trail at Sierra College

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
April.pchs@gmail.com

Kelsey Monahan
 Editor and Staff Writer
 (530) 889-6500
kmonahan@placer.ca.gov



Embroidery Samplers

by Kasia Woroniecka, Curator of Collections

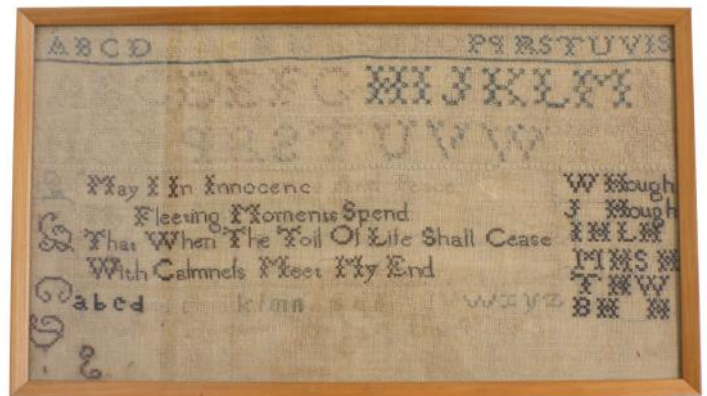
Needlework was a key part of a girl's education in the 19th century. It was a skill that was necessary to operate the family household. Practicing stitching the alphabet prepared her for marking bed linens, undergarments, domestic furnishings, and personal items as well as sewing clothes for her future family.

Samplers date back to the 15th century. Initially they were a reference piece made by skilled needleworkers to record their favorite patterns and stitches for future use in new pieces. The earliest known American sampler was made in 1645 and by the 1700s samplers depicting the alphabet, numbers, religious verses, and decorative designs were made to demonstrate embroidery accomplishments.

Young girls usually began learning to sew at the age of six. They were taught by their mothers, grandmothers, and other female relatives. By the early nineteenth century few girls received an education. Those who could afford it were taught basic reading, writing, dancing and needlework by governesses or were sent to boarding schools and female academies to prepare them for marriage. By the time they were fourteen girls would have created several samplers depicting Bible verses, poems, repeating patterns, and even locations of the schools they attended. The completed samplers were often framed and hung in the parlor to display the girl's skill, and her parents' status and their belief in the value of education.

There are only a few samplers in our collection. They are all unique, with a variety of motifs and stitches.

This sampler by an unknown maker was made in the early 19th century. The top portion is the alphabet stitched in differed sizes and colors, now faded. The bottom portion consists of the verse: "May I with Innocence and peace/ My fleeting moments Spend/ That when the toil of life shall cease/ May Calmness meet my End."



This sampler, made in 1807, is the oldest in our collection. The top portion is a carefully stitched alphabet. The middle portion contains a poignant verse: "This work in hand my friends may have when I am dead and in my grave." It is signed "Catherine Roberts her work done in the Year of our Lord 1807." The bottom is a design of birds, butterflies, trees, dogs and two figures.





This sampler was made by Jessie Pollock Brown at the Ladies College in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1895. She was there to receive a higher education at a time when many still believed that it was unnecessary to educate women, that rigorous study could be unhealthy for them and that their place was at home. The Ladies College of Edinburgh was founded in 1694 by Mary Erskine, a local businesswoman, as a boarding school for girls. In 1870 it was renamed the Edinburgh Educational Institution for Girls and became a day school. In 1889 it was renamed the Edinburgh Ladies' College. In 1944 it was renamed the Mary Erskine School and has been an all-girls secondary school to this day. The top portion of her sampler features numbers and the alphabet. The bottom portion lists her name, the Ladies College of Edinburgh, and the year 1895. This area is also more creative with the Union Flag,

which combines the crosses of England and Wales, Ireland, and Scotland on the left side and the red crown on the right. The bottom shows a dog, a bouquet of flowers and a geometric woven design resembling Berlin work, a style of embroidery which was very popular in the 19th century. It is currently on display at the Bernhard Museum.



This sampler by an unknown maker was made around 1850-1900. It is unsigned, but whoever made it paid great attention to detail. It features many different designs of flowers and other plants, including a large fruit tree. The top corner has a large lobster next to a few geometric designs. The bottom area shows a city, two figures, furniture, and even a small dog.



Fruitvale Native Plant Garden

by Bryanna Ryan, Supervising Curator

A year has passed since the Fruitvale Schoolhouse Museum opened and during this time, it has welcomed over 2,100 visitors. Nearly 500 have been students participating in the Fruitvale Living History Program. They come to immerse themselves in the child's experience of navigating school and home life in a rural area like the Fruitvale School District during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

One of the activities offers a lesson on "natural science" which was a common element of school curriculum during the period. Today's students participate in a scavenger hunt to study local vegetation and to make comparisons – much like the Fruitvale students would have done with their botany or biology specimens. To add to the experience, we are in the midst of an exciting new installation - a living teaching garden filled with native local California plants.

Through tremendous support from the Placer County Master Gardener's Native Plant Committee and a funding contribution from the Sun City Lincoln Hills Garden Group, the Fruitvale Native Plant Garden has taken root. In time the plants will mature with the goal of opening minds and helping visitors relate to early California and resources indigenous Californians have used extensively.



Cradleboard. Willow trimmed in redbud. Circa 1930.
Washoe and others.

Specimens include western redbud, Sonoma sage, elderberry, California wild rose, deer grass, mugwort, pitcher sage, milkweed, yarrow, soaproot, and a variety of native wildflowers. The plot is situated alongside a variety of oaks.

Like all the native plants in our garden, blue elderberry has many uses. It provides medicine, food, and material for arrows and instruments like flutes and this Miwok clapstick which accompanies ceremonial dances.

Soaproot secretes a toxin that paralyzes fish for capture and is used as a pest repellent. The bulb can be used for soap or cooked for food. The fibers are used for brushes, rope, and string.

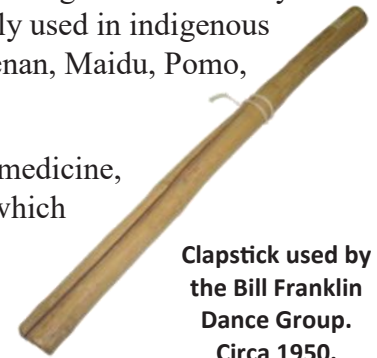
Milkweed provides cordage for nets, baskets, and regalia and is also valued for medicine including as a treatment for poison oak. Yarrow is similarly utilized for medicine and ceremony, including treatments for headaches, stomach-aches, cold, flu, and even in blood clotting. Meanwhile, California wild rose is a major source of vitamin C and is still widely used today.

There is still much work to do to polish up this teaching garden, but we are well underway now that the plants are starting to mature. Stop by and take a look at this budding new exhibit. The museum is open to the public the second Sunday of every month from 12-4pm. It will host a day on the Heritage Trail on June 10th.

To plan your own native plant garden, check out Calscape.org for information on native plants in your area.



Fruitvale School. 1914.



Clapstick used by the Bill Franklin Dance Group. Circa 1950.

A Historic Classroom Hidden in City Hall

by Susan Roughgarden, Placer County Historical Society & Placer County Docent Guild

One room in Auburn's City Hall is not like the others. Opening the door is like stepping back in time to 1916 when the Auburn Grammar School opened and was celebrated as a showcase of modern architecture and education. It is a hidden gem in Auburn.

When modern students visit this classroom today, they get to sit in antique desks to experience a typical 1916 school day. On every desk is a slate, some chalk, and a chalk brush. A docent will take them through an abbreviated school day, starting with morning rituals and including arithmetic, reading, history, and art.

They learn how schools of the past and today are alike and different by engaging in interactive lessons using the tools of an early 20th century classroom: primers, slates, chalk, and blackboards. Students of that era spent a lot of time practicing cursive and recitation



Today's classroom tours are designed to address some of the California State Social studies History curriculum. Some curriculum connections, for example, include discussion of citizens who made important contributions to our community. The list includes the names of real people, including Bernhard Bernhard, a farmer; Claude Chana, a French miner who discovered gold in Auburn; and Sarah Jane Dunlap, a landowner and the first suffragist in Northern California. Others on the list include farmers, bankers, hotel owners, teachers, doctors, and storekeepers.

Other connections that young people make are examples of how communities change over time. The walls and cabinets of the classroom are bursting with photos and other mementoes from over the past 100 years.

The building's architect, William Henry Weeks (1864 – 1936), is recognized as one of the West's significant institutional architects. Weeks is best known for his innovative designs of school buildings that encompassed high engineering standards and safety features. For example, he incorporated lessons learned from the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco, and he designed approximately 200 schools and 22 Carnegie Libraries.

In 2012, the landmark building won inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Today, Room 20 is the sole remaining classroom from that era, and tours are available to the public. Call the Placer County Historical Society (PCHS) to schedule a school tour or general tour for any of the public: (530) 823-2128 or email: April.pchs@gmail.com

Thanks to the dedication and generosity of the Auburn Union Retired Teachers, the Placer County Historical Museum Foundation, and the Placer County Historical Society, this classroom was restored and dedicated in 1996. It is named the Benton Welty Historic Classroom in honor of Benton Welty, who was principal from 1923 – 1943.

News from the Placer County Historical Society

by April McDonald-Loomis, President

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

Happy Spring! It's about time! I know "we need the rain" but sure happy to see sunny days ahead.

We have two plaques finally on their way, should be arriving any day now. One for the Bear River Ditch to be placed at Ashford Park and another one for 812 Lincoln Way, the old Templars Hall building. Like everyone else lately, the plaque making company has been running way behind schedule. We are still working with the City on the signs for Nevada Street, two steps forward, one step back. Perseverance is the key word here!

The recent "Branding Auburn" and "Imagine Auburn" projects that have been floating around town are interesting, I have attended several of the programs/workshops for both of these projects and hope some of you have been able to participate. We are just hoping both projects keep the preservation of our gold camp heritage foremost in their planning.

The newest Society publication is out, Historic Buildings and Homes in Auburn. It contains a short history of over 80 of the historically significant homes and buildings in town.

It is available through our website. Placerhistoricalsociety.org

The Society has been working with the Roseville post office officials trying to get the wooden relief "The Letter" out of storage at the post office and into the museum in Roseville. It was saved from the old post office but disappeared from sight. We hope to get it on display again.

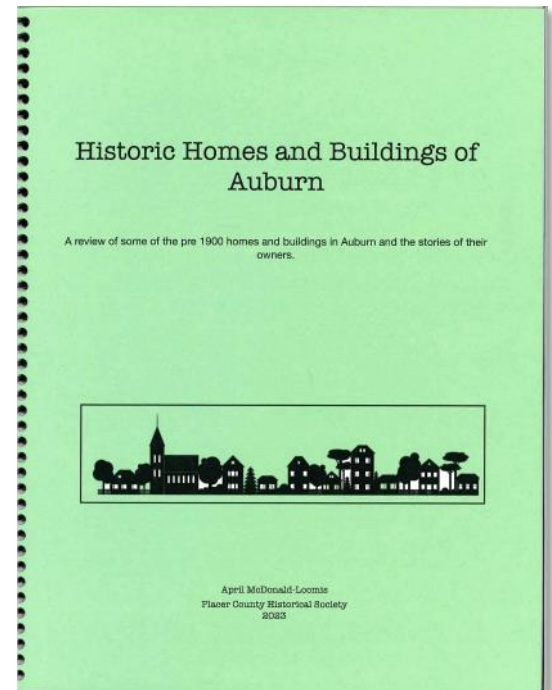
The next dinner meeting will be June 1st with Barbara Leak on the history of Loomis.

Hope to see you there.

April McDonald-Loomis

President

PCHS



Roseville Post Office circa 1935. Placer County Museums.

Placer County Historical Organizations

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

Annie DeMaria-Norris (916) 206-4479
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

Lincoln Highway Association

Trey Pitsenberger
vice.president@lincolnhighwayassoc.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

Diane Fishburn
pcgs.pcgenes.com

Placer County Historical Society

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

Placer County Museums Docent Guild

Craig Norris

Placer Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

Chuck Spinks
Psrhs.org

Rocklin Historical Society

Jim Hammes (916) 624-3464
rocklinhistorical.org

Roseville Historical Society

Denise Fiddymment, (916) 773-3003
rosevillehistorical.org

S.N.O.W. Sports Museum

Jill Short Milne, (415) 254-5686
thesnowmuseum.org

Calendar:

Please confirm all meeting times and locations which each organization

Foresthill Divide Historical Society Meeting: Monday, May 15th at 6:00pm

Golden Drift Historical Society Meeting: Monday, June 5th at 7:00pm

Historical Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, June 21st at 5:30pm

Historical Organizations Committee Meeting: Tuesday, May 2nd at 9:00am

Loomis Basin Historical Society Meeting: Wednesday, May 17th at 6:00pm; Wednesday, June 21st at 6:00pm

Placer County Historical Society Meeting: Thursday, May 4th at 2:00pm, **Dinner Meeting:** Thursday, June 1st at 6:00pm

Placer Sierra Railroad Heritage Society: Tuesday, May 23rd at 7:00pm; Tuesday, June 27th at 7:00pm

Placer Genealogical Society Meeting: Monday, May 22nd at 7:00pm; Monday, June 26th at 7:00pm

Rocklin Historical Society Meeting: Monday, May 8th at 6:00pm; Monday, June 12th at 6:00pm

Roseville Historical Society Meeting: Tuesday, May 9th at 4:00pm; Tuesday, June 13th at 4:00pm



PLACER COUNTY MUSEUMS

101 Maple Street
Auburn, CA 95603

