



**Inside this issue:**

Administrator's Notes 1  
 Ghosts in the Archives 2  
 Miniature Tea Set 3  
 The Scoop 4  
 News from PCHS & PCHS Dinner Meeting 5  
 Historical Organizations 6  
 Volunteer Recognition 6  
 Calendar of Events 7

## Administrator's Notes

by *Ralph Gibson*

The temperatures are finally beginning to ebb, and Halloween decorations have already hit the shelves in stores. This is our cue for volunteer training. We have about 20 people signed up for our annual fall classes, and they all seem eager to get started here at our museums and facilities. In fact, some have already started. A few years ago, we revised some of our procedures to capture that early enthusiasm and improve the new volunteer experience.



In the past, people who signed up early in the year had to wait months for the training classes to start in the fall. This was risky for us and not ideal for some recruits who lost their enthusiasm and dropped out before the fall training. Now, when two or three people sign up to work in the same museum (like the Bernhard, for example), we schedule early classes to orient them to the Volunteer Program and to that particular museum. They can begin shadowing in the museum immediately after they've had both classes, and when

training starts in the fall, those docents simply attend the remainder of the classes to round off their training and introduce them to other possibilities. This practice has been more satisfying for our docents and promises better retention for our museums.

The Docent Guild also has revived some effective strategies to help retain volunteers. Through the ongoing efforts of a new Docent Support Committee, which includes Curator of Education Beth Rohlfses, they now offer mentors to our new volunteers (nothing like a friendly veteran to help you learn the ropes). In addition to the Guild's highly successful Lunch & Learn programs, mentoring is just one of our exciting, new and improved initiatives that will help attract and retain museum volunteers.

I hope each of you had a terrific summer and I look forward to seeing you in one of our museums or facilities. Happy Halloween!

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

**Walt Wilson**  
 President Placer County  
 Historical Society  
 P.O. Box 5643  
 Auburn, CA 95604  
[bonwally@hotmail.com](mailto:bonwally@hotmail.com)

**Beth Rohlfses**  
 Editor and Staff Writer  
 (530) 889-6506  
[brohlfes@placer.ca.gov](mailto:brohlfes@placer.ca.gov)



"There were plenty of deathly happenings."

page 2

"She waited on tables and prepared lunches for the miners."

page 3

"After 10 years, thousands of public comments and contentious debates..."

page 6

"It seems most would rather not indulge."

page 6

## Ghosts in the Archives

by *Bryanna Ryan*  
Curator of Archives

We do, in fact, have ghosts in the Archives. Well, sort of.

Recently, much research has been conducted here around the topic of ghosts. In the spirit of the season, we have prepared a research packet of historical information that will inform the development of “Ghost Tours,” a two-day event put on by an outside group in Old Town Auburn at the end of October. I am happy to share some tidbits from this effort but encourage everyone to check out <https://m.facebook.com/HauntsofAuburn/> for more information.

So, ghosts... As a historian, this is an interesting subject. I have no evidence to either confirm or deny the presence of paranormal activity in Auburn. What I can say is that Auburn has a colorful history and is a wonderful example of an old west town that developed quickly and became a central hub for commerce, community, and law and order. We are fortunate to have so many history--ic buildings preserved, and en-



J.C. Crowell Furniture Store on Commercial Street, c. 1890. It was not uncommon for stores that made furniture to also make caskets. Crowell's store also advertised as undertakers and embalmers. Placer County Archives.

joy the same types of commercial activities in Old Town that have been happening since the Gold Rush. The old saying “If these walls could talk” applies well here, as many of them have been here a long time and witnessed events that, today, we can only imagine through the sources left behind.

In the vicinity of Old Town, there were murders, a hanging tree, suicide, bank robbery, and natural deaths. In 1856, a man was famously hanged in the central square after being convicted of murder. Our 24-year-old first sheriff (R.A. Echols) was shot and succumbed to his wounds.

You will have to take a tour for the details of these events, but either way, there were plenty of deathly happenings which occurred in the area. There was a coffin maker, an undertaker, and at the top of the hill (where the Courthouse now stands) the original “burying ground” for the earliest residents who perished.

We do not deal in myth, rumor, or legend. Our work is the historic record. The ghost stories are out there, and perchance you have one of your own? The validity of ghosts is not for us to determine. What we do know is that Old Town has seen it all and remains today a place where you can stand where it happened.

## Miniature Tea Set

by *Kasia Woroniecka*  
Curator of Collections

This miniature faience tea set became part of our collection recently and is currently on display at the Foresthill Divide Museum. It belonged to Estella Bowman and dates to around 1900. She was born in Deadwood in 1886 to William and Fredolina Ebbert. Her father emigrated from Germany, and her mother's parents came from Pennsylvania during the Gold Rush and settled in Deadwood, where they had a store. When she was 17 Stella worked at the Red Point Mine

boarding house where she waited on tables and prepared lunches for the miners. In 1927 she moved to Foresthill. She married twice. Her second husband, Sam Bowman, worked at the Bowman Mine.

Tea sets as toys for children first appeared in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Germany. They were made of pewter and copper, and later of porcelain. Because they were

continued on page 4



Miniature faience tea set belonging to Estella Bowman, c. 1900. Currently on display at the Forest Hill Divide Museum.



Birthday party, 1895. Managing a tea service was an important part of a Victorian girl's education. Placer County Archives.

continued from page 3

expensive and fragile, their popularity did not reach its height until the 1850s, when the scientific and technical progress of the Industrial Revolution introduced stronger, inexpensive materials like celluloid and Bakelite.

Nineteenth century tea sets were not just toys fostering imagination. Managing a tea service was an important part of a Victorian girl's education, preparing her for adulthood and domestic duties. An article in the July 1866 issue

of *Godey's Lady's Book* explains: "The next great step is in allowing little miss to make the tea, which is a very great promotion indeed, and ere many years go by she presides at the

tea and breakfast table with a perfect sense of what is required of her; and to the great relief of mamma, who knows that if she goes out to tea she leaves some one behind who is quite

capable of conducting things satisfactorily in her absence."

As people's attitudes towards children and childhood began to change, markets around the world began to grow and mass produce toys and games. Today miniature tea sets are still a part of many little girls' toy collections.



Tea party. Placer County Archives, Art Sommers' Collection.

## The Scoop

by Beth Rohlfes, Curator of Education

As students return to school and museums prepare for a new season of field trips, I wonder how many of us are pondering how we might adapt our museum education goals to reflect the upcoming rewrite of California's K-12 history books. "After 10 years, thousands of public comments and contentious debates, the California Department of Education has rewritten the history standards for California's ... public school students" (*Sac Bee*, July 29, 2016). The goal is to be more inclusive and diverse so that ALL students can see how people like them impacted the development of our state and country. New textbooks will be out by 2018.

You might call it telling the true story, warts and all, of California—the actual impact of the missions and the Gold Rush on Native Americans, for example, and the

difficult challenges of California's diverse communities and the roles their people have played in California history. Of course, this isn't an entirely new effort, but it has new relevance in a time when mass migration has been described by some as "the defining issue of this century." While an objective analysis of today's struggles may not be available for decades, it is time to clarify what we understand to be objective truths about what happened here over a hundred years ago.

History is not stagnant, as our Museum Director Ralph Gibson likes to remind our new volunteers. We are always uncovering new primary source information that enlightens our perspective and adds new depth and richness to our understanding of the past. It enables a fresh telling of the story— until the next rewrite.

# News from Placer County Historical Society

by Michael Otten, immediate past president

[otten@ssctv.net](mailto:otten@ssctv.net) or (530) 888-7837



CCHS Award of Merit winner, Betty Sampson, with Michael Otten and Supervisor Jim Holmes. 8/23/16.

Betty Samson, 91, was presented her CCHS award of merit on at the August 23 Board of Supervisors meeting. Watch Supervisor Jim Holmes' presentation on the Board's agenda website.

\*\*\*

For better or worse, much of our communicating these days is done through Facebook and other social media, including email. When I sit in on historical group meetings, it seems most would rather not indulge. But if you do, please provide

PCHS with your information.

Busy, multi-tasking PCHS President Walt Wilson prefers the telephone or in person. He is deeply worried no one is going to show up for dinners or meetings now that Betty Samson, the voice and face of the Society, has retired. No one has volunteered to take her place yet.

So now Wilson wants to build a huge telephone tree with many branches of members building their own Do-Call list. Please contact him with your name and phone number (or email) to be part of the tree: (530) 878-6640 or [bonwally@hotmail.com](mailto:bonwally@hotmail.com). While you're at it, if you haven't renewed, please do.

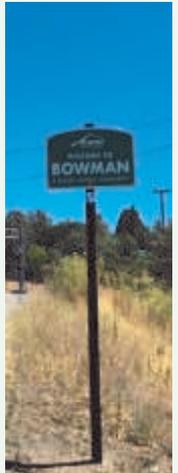
\*\*\*

As the new 1<sup>st</sup> VP of the Conference of California Historical Society, I am setting up a regional workshop for Placer-Sacramento historical societies and members on safe and easy use of social media. The day-long event that will include lunch,

beverages, etc., with a cost to cover expenses. Please contact me to be put on the invitation list.

\*\*\*

Donna Howell, Hal Hall, Mike Lynch and the rest of the Historical Foundation were instrumental in getting Bowman



street signs up as part of the Placer County new community and area branding programs. The County website shows photos of the formal dedication and cake cutting. <http://www.placer.ca.gov/news/2016/aug/community-signs>. The Foundation is busy finalizing a book about the community just off I-80.

\*\*\*

The Auburn City Council has reappointed two PCHS members, Cindy Combs and Kathryn Kratzer-Yue to the Historic Design Review Commission.

## Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting

By Addah Owens, Vice President

**When:** October 6, 2016

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

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

**Cost:** \$15 per person

**Menu:** Grilled port loin, roasted sweet potatoes, seasonal vegetables, salad, and dessert.

**Program:** Be surprised!

**Mail Check to:** PCHS c/o Bonnie Wilson, 1890 Pheasant Hill Lane, Auburn 95602 (530) 878-6640

**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 Association,

Mario Farinha (530) 269-2412

### North Lake Tahoe Historical Society,

Rebecca Phipps, (530) 583-1762

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

### Placer County Historical Society,

Walt Wilson, (530) 878-6640

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

### Placer County Museums Docent Guild,

Tom Innes, (530) 888-8969

### Rocklin Historical Society,

Kathie Nippert, (916) 624-2355

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

### Roseville Historical Society,

Phoebe Astill, (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)



Kudos to  
Volunteers who  
kept the  
2016 Heritage Trail  
going  
*All Summer Long!*



**Special thanks to**  
Fran Hanson, Barbara Fernald, Daphne Lake and Ruth Casler, for washing drapes, and Leona Harrington (photo at left) for polishing the silver during our annual cleaning week at the Bernhard Museum. And kudos to Carole McCarthy for freshening up our Bernhard kitchens. The museum looks and smells ready for guests!

# Calendar of Events

## September

## October

<p><u>1</u> 2:00pm</p>	<p>Placer County Historical Society Board of Directors meeting, Room 10, Auburn City Hall, 1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn. (530) 878-6640</p>	<p><u>6</u> 6:30pm</p>	<p>Placer County Historical Society dinner meeting, Veterans Memorial Hall, 100 East Street, Auburn. (530) 878-6640</p>
<p><u>2</u> 4:00-7:00pm</p>	<p> <b>DeWitt Museum, Auburn</b></p>	<p><u>10</u> 6:00pm</p>	<p>Rocklin Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting, Old St. Mary's Chapel, 5152 Front Street, Rocklin. (916) 624-2355</p>
<p><u>3,4</u> 10am-4pm</p>	<p> <b>Forest Hill Divide Museum</b></p>	<p><u>11</u> 4:00pm</p>	<p>Roseville Historical Society Meeting at the Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln Street, Roseville. (916) 773-3003</p>
<p><u>12</u> 6:00pm</p>	<p>Rocklin Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting, Old St. Mary's Chapel, 5152 Front Street, Rocklin. (916) 624-2355</p>	<p><u>15</u> 10am-4pm</p>	<p>Roseville Historical Society's Grand Reopening of the Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln Street. Ticketed "It's To Die For" Murder Mystery Dinner Party, 6-10pm. (916) 773-3003</p>
<p><u>13</u> 4:00am</p>	<p>Roseville Historical Society meeting, Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln St., Roseville (916) 773-3003</p>	<p><u>19</u> 5:30pm</p>	<p>Historical Advisory Board Meeting, Bernhard Winery, 291 Auburn-Folsom Rd. Auburn. (530) 889-6500</p>
<p><u>17</u> 7:00pm</p>	<p>Colfax Area Historical Society General Meeting, Colfax Depot. Ralph Gibson will talk about the new DeWitt Museum. Refreshments. Bring a friend. (530) 878-6640</p>	<p><u>22</u> 6:00pm</p>	<p>Forest Hill Divide Historical Society end-of-season dinner meeting, Memorial Hall.</p>
<p><u>19</u> 6:00pm</p>	<p>Forest Hill Divide Historical Society business meeting, Forest Hill Divide Museum. (530) 367-3535</p>	<p><u>24</u> 6:00pm</p>	<p>Loomis Basin Historical Society Meeting, Loomis Library. (916) 663-3871</p>
<p><u>21</u> 6:00pm</p>	<p>Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting, Loomis library. (916) 663-3871</p>	<p><u>27</u> 10am-4pm</p>	<p>Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting, Beecher Room, Auburn Library. (866) 894-2076</p>
<p><u>22</u> 7:00pm</p>	<p>Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting, Beecher Room, Auburn Library. (866) 894-2076</p>		

Thursday, September 23, 7:21 a.m. — Autumnal Equinox, when the sun shines directly on the equator and the length of day and night is nearly equal.

The Placer County Museums is on Twitter!  
You can find us @PlacerMuseums.



