



# Administrator's Notes

*by Ralph Gibson, Museums Administrator*

### Inside this issue:

Administrator's Note	1
A Process of Elimination	2
Frank Chase	3
Documenting History	4
Placer County Museums Collecting COVID-19	5
News from PCHS	6

On February 27th, we had the first Heritage Trail 2020 meeting. It was well attended and within days of that meeting the Heritage Trail calendar was set for the summer, something that usually happens by the first week of May.

But then the world changed.

Shelter in place orders from Placer County and the State quarantined us all at home, except for essential work and travel. Hopefully it won't be long before some of the restrictions are lifted and people can go back to what they were doing before COVID-19, but it will be a long time before they can go back to how they were doing it. Until there is a vaccine, Social Distancing will likely continue which limits how many people can be in a given space at one time. Our focus is on the health and well-being of our patrons, our volunteers, our staff, and the families of all.

Because of this, Heritage Trail 2020 is canceled. In the foreseeable future, museums around the county will remain closed, but their online presence will be much more important. We have completely refocused our interpretive projects from physical exhibits and programs to virtual exhibits and educational programming online. Please visit our website at [www.placer.ca.gov/museums](http://www.placer.ca.gov/museums) to experience the vast content we have produced, and will continue to produce, into the summer. If your museum has created special online content, please let us know and we'll post links on our social media pages. Be safe and healthy everyone!

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

**April McDonald-Loomis**  
President Placer County  
Historical Society  
P.O. Box 5643  
Auburn, CA 95604  
[April400@wavecable.com](mailto:April400@wavecable.com)

**Katy Bartosh**  
Editor and Staff Writer  
101 Maple Street  
Auburn, CA 95603  
(530) 889-6500  
[kbartosh@placer.ca.gov](mailto:kbartosh@placer.ca.gov)



A guest collection highlight.

pg. 2

Do you know about an ocelot named Angie?

pg. 3

This is how we're documenting history as it's happening.

pg. 4

Keep up to date with the PCHS and other historical organizations

pg. 6-7

## A Process of Elimination - A Bizarre Guest Collection

by Rod Moser, PA, PhD, Curator, Gold Country Medical History Museum

All museums start with personal collections, be it art, antiques, or in my case....something more strange and bizarre. While in medical training in rural West Virginia, I became fascinated by finding old pharmaceuticals still on the shelves for sale. One of my first acquisitions was a sealed box of Natures Remedy Vegetable Laxative (circa 1920), marked 37 cents. That is what I paid. Later, I was given access to the attic storeroom of this old country store. It was filled with hundreds of old medicines. As a student with limited funds, I bought as many as I could afford. On careful inspection, most of these patent medicines were all laxatives. This was the beginning of my medical antique and quackery collection.

My Appalachian grandmother, mother of 13, was a self-taught healer of sorts. I can fondly recall her giving me doses of Castoria (a laxative) or Dewitt's Worm medicine, because I seemed too skinny. Clearly, I needed purging. Constipation was believed to cause all kinds of maladies and derangements, such as delayed puberty, headaches, lung disease, drowsiness, stupor, irritability, and insanity. During the Gold Rush years, many Snake Oil salesman hawked their dubious nostrums and cures from the back of wagons in downtown Auburn. Many of these cure-alls were herbal laxatives, mixed with alcohol.

In the early 1980s, I entered the Most Bizarre Collection Contest sponsored by the Sacramento Bee. I took second prize with my sub-collection of 150 antique laxatives. I was disappointed but had bragging rights as being "number two".

The Gold Country Medical History Museum is in the restored site of the first hospital in the Gold Country, 1855

at 219 Maple Street, below the Court-house. The museum is currently closed due to COVID-19, but please call (530) 906-9822 for more information on when we will be re-opening.



# Frank Chase: The Most Interesting Man in the World?

by Kelsey Monahan, Curator of Archives



In the photograph collection of the Placer County Archives and Research Center, there is an image that never fails to grab my attention. It is photograph number A2014.54.2, of Frank Chase and his pet ocelot.

Chase was born in 1872 in Lincoln to Daniel and Mary Ann Chase, and was one of five children.

Daniel Chase was a miner and was offered \$300 a month, roughly \$7,500 today, to take charge of a mine in Venezuela. Unfortunately, he died from a fever only four days after his arrival.

Frank and his siblings were forced to provide for the family, and he went to work in the mines in Nevada County. After finishing school, Frank enlisted with the Nevada County National Guard and fought in the Spanish American War. He rose to the rank of sergeant with Company I, 8th U.S. California Volunteers. During his service, Frank was stationed in Oakland, California; Vancouver, Washington; and the Philippines.

After being honorably discharged from the military in 1899, he returned to Placer County and continued his mining career. He didn't stay very long, and in 1903 he, along with his brother Bert, went off to work as a Captain at the Darien Gold Mine in Panama. Frank did not enjoy the climate there and suffered from several attacks of "tropical fever."

After briefly returning once again to Northern California, he was offered a position with the Oriental Consolidated Mining Company, in Japanese-occupied Korea. While aboard the ship on his way to Korea, he ran into old acquaintances from Placer County, George Ford and his daughter Azalea. Frank and Azalea decided to marry, and when the boat

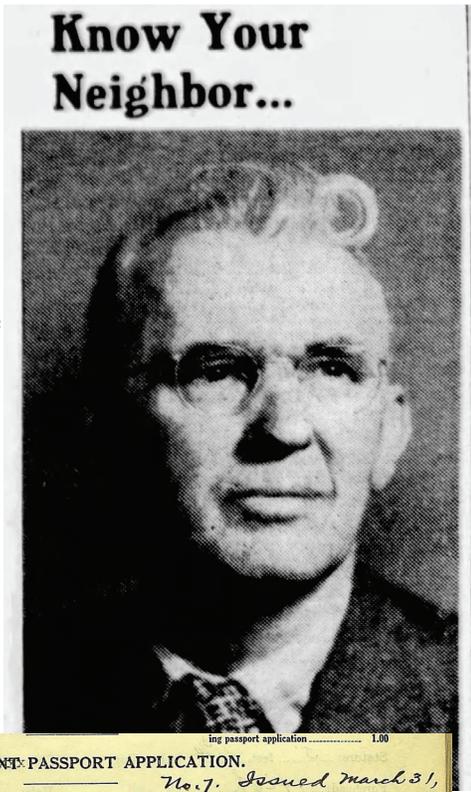
docked in Seoul, the U.S. Consul General officiated their wedding. Frank and Azalea would go on to live in Korea for 12 years and have their two children, Ovilla and Ford.

The Chase family again returned to Placer County, and Frank tried his hand at different businesses, but nothing stuck. In 1929 he was officially appointed a night watchman for the City of Auburn where he served for almost 30 years. While on the police force, one of his most notable successes was when he apprehended a pair of thieves trying to rob the post office.

Frank Chase passed away in 1958 at the age of 85. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge in Seoul, Korea; the Scottish Rite in Sacramento; and the Tahoe Club.

But what about the ocelot?! In 1997 a descendant of Frank's, Don Costello, remembered his mother's stories of living with Frank and Azalea – and the ocelot. The ocelot's name was Angie, and family lore said she lived with the Chase family in the early 1900s in Auburn until the local residents became concerned, and Angie was sent away. To where exactly it was not known.

Sometimes the most interesting photographs can have even more interesting stories behind them!



EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT PASSPORT APPLICATION 100

No. 7. Issued March 31, 1919.

NATIVE.

I, Frank Henry Chase, a NATIVE AND LOYAL CITIZEN of the UNITED STATES, hereby apply to the DEPARTMENT OF STATE, at Washington, for a passport for myself, accompanied by my wife, Azalea Ford Chase, and minor children, as follows:

Ovilla May Chase, born at Unsankinko, Chosen, on Oct. 22, 1909 (Date)

and Edwin Ford Chase, born at Unsankinko, Chosen, on May 17, 1911 (Date)

and \_\_\_\_\_

I solemnly swear that I was born at Lincoln, in the State of California, on October 8, 1872, \* that my (father) Daniel Carter Chase, was born in Bancroft, Maine and is now deceased, for the

## Documenting History: COVID-19 in Placer County

by Kelsey Monahan, Curator of Archives



The caption on this photo in our collection reads: “AUBURN CELEBRATES ARMISTICE – FLU OR NO FLU. November 11, 1918 – CENTRAL SQUARE.”

This photograph in our collection depicts the day when Auburn, and the world, celebrated the end of the First World War on November 11, 1918. This gathering in the streets of Auburn was significant not only because of the occasion but also because of the invisible enemy that was being fought at home - Spanish influenza. This deadly flu killed an estimated 675,000 Americans and changed daily life in Placer County. Ordinances were passed that made wearing masks in public required, and social gatherings canceled.

While parts of this historic time in Placer County is documented through photographs and newspaper articles, we still don't fully know what life was like then.

Amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, we have the unique opportunity to speak to the future, and document what life is like now in this historic moment.

At Placer County Museums, we value the feelings, experiences, and stories of our communities. We want to help preserve this moment for the future to learn from. Everyone's life is different, and the way we get through this will be together but also as individuals whose unique experiences offer valuable insight.

### Ways you can help:

**Keep a journal** - Write down your daily reflections. How is the world around you changing, and how does that make you feel? Are you learning a new talent? Are you busier than ever before? Did you have big plans canceled and are having to find a way to deal with that?

**Write a letter to the future citizens of Placer County** - “Dear Future Reader,” what should they know about your experience during this unprecedented time? With school children home for nearly a month now, I am sure there might be some feelings about how life is going?

**Write your memoir** - While this moment in time is a big one, this might be a good time to reflect upon your life as a whole and write down your experience. 2020 does not define us but is a part of a bigger picture. Consider putting your life experience into words. As long as you are old enough to read and write, you can make a memoir!

**Take Photos** - Did you or your family make a mask to wear? Was it out of some fabric you had on hand? Consider taking a selfie or photo and sending it our way!

**Record an Interview** – Use your phone to record a voice or video interview with a family member or friend. How has daily life changed? How have your experiences been different?

If you have anything you would like to submit for our collection, please fill out the form at the link below. Digital material (mp3s, PDFs, photos, or word documents) can be attached directly to the form. If you wish to donate a physical object, please choose that option on the form. We will be in touch to collect your donation as soon as it is safe to do so.

[Click here to submit your material](https://airtable.com/shroiTm5cw4Eub5ky) [airtable.com/shroiTm5cw4Eub5ky]

Sharing your stories with us will help us to better document the history of Placer County, and we appreciate your help in this vital work!

## Placer County Museums Update

by Bryanna Ryan, *Supervising Curator*

Thank you all for letting us bombard you with our emails and new projects as they come out. By now, you are probably pretty familiar with the direction we have been headed but I wanted to share a couple of details about ones that are more behind-the-scenes.

First, a note to say that Jason is our tech-savvy designer who is creating and formatting the pages so that they can look good and function well for viewers. If you like the way they look, the credit for that goes to Jason.

On an Archive side, Kelsey has been busily uploading records onto our data storage system “Preservica” and we are engaged in the slow process of getting the archival records ready for the public to search and download through our website. Deeds, mining claims, photos, and more! That will be a big day for our division.

On a related note, with exhibit projects on pause, Darryl has turned his attention to digitizing our oral history cassettes. There are over 400 oral history interviews in the collection and his work will allow us to get them online. They are already transcribed and indexed so it will be a nice complete set and fascinating record of the history of Placer County. A big thanks to the Placer County Historical Society for recording most of these over the past few decades!



**2120 IS CALLING,  
AND IT HAS QUESTIONS.**

Future historians and our great grandchildren will look back on this time we are living in today, and wonder what it was like.

When our lives return to normal, please consider donating your journals, photos, and other artifacts pertaining to this historic moment in time to Placer County Museums.

[museums@placer.ca.gov](mailto:museums@placer.ca.gov)

---

## News from Placer County Historical Society

*by April McDonald-Loomis, President PCHS, April400@wavecable.com, (530) 823-2128*

“What a long, strange trip it’s been.” The Grateful Dead certainly said it well, but we are not done with it yet! Because of the pandemic, just about everything has been put on “pause” both for the Historical Society and for most of us personally. About the only excitement for the Society was a contribution we received from a member, who wishes to remain anonymous, for \$10,000! We are brain storming (online) about the best way to use this incredible gift. We wish we could publicly thank the person but respect their wishes to remain out of sight, nonetheless, we are so very grateful! If you have any ideas for a big project that we might participate in, please let one of the board members know. We would like to do something significant with this gift.

On the personal level, I have been reading a lot, doing a few jigsaw puzzles, and doing some put-off household chores. We have had some family game nights via “google meet,” that have given us all some laughs especially the trivia game that, unbeknownst to us, originated in New Zealand with lots of New Zealand trivia which, of course, we all failed miserably to answer.

I do hope everyone is keeping busy and staying safe. The museum staff have been doing a great job of reaching out with fun stuff which we all appreciate.

It is membership time for the Society, so if you haven’t sent in your dues, now is the time. The address is P. O. Box 5643, Auburn 95604. Checks might not be cashed right away as I am avoiding the post office as much as possible and the Treasurer is trying to make very few trips to the bank.

We do have a general dinner meeting on the books for June 4th, but it remains to be seen if it will take place. Will be in touch via email, a notice on our website and in the local paper if we can follow through with a large group gathering. We shall see. In the meantime, stay inside, stay safe!

---

## 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  
donnersummithistoricalociety.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  
sierraskimuseum.com

### 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

(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  
rosevillefiremueum@gmail.org

### Roseville Historical Society

Denise Fiddymment  
(916) 773-3003  
rosevillehistorical.org

## Calendar of Events

Please note that due to COVID-19, many meetings are cancelled or postponed. If you have a question about meetings for a specific historical organization going into May or June, please contact them directly.



101 Maple Street  
Auburn, CA 95603



Volume 23, Issue 3

May - June 2020