

THE PLACER

A Voice of History

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Ralph Gibson, Interim Museums Administrator
Placer County Museums Division
101 Maple St.
Auburn, CA 95603
(530) 889-6500
rgibson@placer.ca.gov

Michael Otten, President
Placer County Historical Society
PO Box 5643
Auburn, CA 95604
otten@ssctv.net

Editor and Staff Writer:
Kasia Woroniecka
(530) 889-7705
kworonie@placer.ca.gov
www.placer.ca.gov/museum

Administrator's Notes

Ralph Gibson

Another successful Heritage Trail event is behind us and I want to thank all of the participating museums as well as their staff and volunteers for helping out.

The Heritage Trail committee met on August 15th and decided to start planning for another event in 2014. We have set a tentative date of August 2nd and 3rd, but we'll firm that up in a couple of months. I encourage all of you, whether you volunteer for the Placer County Museums or any of a number of historical societies that run a museum in this county, to step up and help with next year's event. For those of you who feel you don't have the knowledge or experience to give tours in your museum, most of the locations also need help greeting the public and stamping their *Get-up-and-Go* cards. There are many volunteer positions available during the Heritage Trail that cover a wide range of training and expertise or lack thereof.

Essentially, we all need help and we will gladly accept yours.

Next year we will roll out promotional material a lot sooner than ever before. We will try to

have Trail Guides available in all museums in May, as well as postcards and bookmarks.

If any of you have any ideas about how we can better manage the Heritage Trail, please don't hesitate to stop by my office or

give me a call at (530)889-6502.

Finally, I assumed the role of Interim Museums Administrator on June 1st and I have loved every busy minute of it. There will be a recruitment for this position soon and while I will be a candidate, I'm sure there will be a number of highly qualified people who will apply. Whoever is selected as Museums Administrator will need your support and guidance and I encourage all of you to take the time to welcome that person into our community.



Placer County Museums Free Programs Fall 2013

October 13

**Jean Baptiste
Charbonneau
Returns to Auburn**
Auburn Veteran's
Memorial Hall
2:00 PM

October 20

Historical Haunts
A Tour of Notable
Cemetery Plots
Old Auburn Cemetery
1:30 PM

November 22

**The Hidden
Wonder of the
World:**
*the Transcontinental
Railroad from Sacramento
to Donner Summit*
Film and Presentation
by Bill George
Bernhard Museum
Winery
6:30 PM

December 14 & 21

**Old Town Country
Christmas**
Crafts, Hot Cider, Cookies
at the Historic
Courthouse
5:00 - 8:00 PM

For information call 530-889-6500
pcmcommunityeducation.blogspot.com

More info on page 4

The care of ceramic and glass objects

By Kasia Woroniecka

The earliest evidence of ceramics dates back to about 20,000 years ago when humans first started to domesticate animals and plants. Ceramics, or pottery, includes objects that are made of clay and hardened by firing in a way that is permanent. Since they are durable and preserve well, clay objects are the most commonly found artifacts at archeological sites and play an important role in understanding past cultures and behaviors.

Ceramics can be divided into four main categories based on the type of clay and the firing temperature: **adobe**, or unfired clay mixture that is used as a building material or in the making of sculptures; **earthenware**, a low fired clay mixture, often red in color, that is porous and scratches easily; **stoneware**, that is less porous and harder than earthenware, often brown and grey in color and does not scratch easily; and **porcelain**, which is fired at very high temperatures, is non-porous, white, translucent and hard.

Before people learned how to make glass, about 3,500 years ago, they used naturally occurring glass, like obsidian. Ancient glass manufacture is closely related to production of ceramics and most likely an accidental by-product of an overheated pottery kiln.



Hand painted porcelain
demitasse cup and saucer
circa 1890-1910.
PCM Collection

Even though glass and ceramic objects are less sensitive to light, temperature and humidity, they require special care that will minimize the possibility for cracks and breaks. As long as they are stable, glass and ceramic objects can be handled without gloves for a better grip. Use both hands to lift objects one at a time and be especially careful with objects that have been repaired previously. Move objects in padded containers and only after the new location has been prepared.

Before cleaning your ceramic or glass object, examine it carefully for previous repairs, cracks, decorations, metal mounts, flaking or painted surfaces that could be damaged during cleaning. Remove jewelry like rings and long necklaces, as they can scratch the surface of the object when handled. Ceramic and glass objects can be dusted using a soft brush. Use lukewarm water with mild detergent. Do not immerse porous

ceramics, like earthenware, in water. The cleaning of unglazed, stained or archeological objects should be left to a professional conservator.



American pressed glass with spiral and bull's eye pattern and a pewter stopper, circa 1880-1900. PCM Collection

Wash each piece separately in a plastic tub or a towel-lined sink to prevent breakage. Cloudy calcium deposits left by hard water can be removed by soaking the item in vinegar, preferably overnight, followed by cleaning, rinsing and drying. Glassware with stains and other mineral deposits can be cleaned with genuine copper wool pads that will not scratch the surface. Coarse steel wool and other household pads can cause damage. Towel dry your item immediately after washing and leave without the lid or stopper to

air dry. Use a long, twisted piece of paper towel to dry the inside of a bottle or a small-mouthed container. Make sure that water does not get under any metal parts where it can corrode and cause irreversible damage.

In case of accidental breakage collect all the fragments no matter how small. Make sure your hands are clean as you wrap the fragments loosely in tissue or place in self-sealing bags. Avoid trying to fit pieces together. That can cause more damage and a less than perfect fit when the object is assembled. Repairs are often difficult to execute, so leaving that task to a conservator is advisable, especially when dealing with an important piece. Make sure to choose the best adhesive for the job: strong, clear and light stable. Use tape to hold the fragments together until the adhesive cures.



Pink glass darning egg, circa 1880-1900. PCM Collection

that ensures the object is held at a proper angle as the adhesive cures.



Ceramic pudding mold circa 1890. PCM Collection

Glass and ceramics should not be exposed to extremes in temperature and humidity. The recommended temperature is 65-70F with relative humidity at 45-55%. Ceramic and glass objects are best stored and displayed in sturdy cabinets. Make sure that the shelves are stable and not overcrowded, located away from direct sunlight, basements and attics. Use museum wax (only on non-porous objects) or leather pads for added protection against any vibrations. Do not use metal spring plate hangers to display your plates. They corrode and are often too tight, causing cracks and chips. Do not use heirloom glass or ceramics to display flower arrangements. Place a separate container inside the vase with padding to protect against scratches and water stains.



Museums Intelligence

Placer County Museums News

Ralph Gibson

Although we are short-staffed, we continue to be very busy. This fall looks to be very busy indeed. First, though, I'd like to welcome a new full time member of our staff. Beth Rohlfes, who was hired last March to help with the Living History program, has been hired as our new Curator of Education. She has done a terrific job so far and has earned the respect of her peers and all the volunteers she's worked with. Please say hello when you see her!

Currently, we are preparing for Volunteer Training which begins next month. If you know of anyone who you think would be a great volunteer, please have them give our office a call (530)889-6500.

We're also wrapping up an offsite exhibit in a small case in the County Administrative Center, also known as The Domes, and planning other offsite exhibits at the Tahoe Community Development Resource Agency office in Tahoe City and the Financial Administration Building at the DeWitt Center. For more information about our new offsite exhibits, visit us on Facebook at facebook.com/placercountymuseums

Of course, every fall we also prepare for Fall Living History, and this year is no exception. In all, there are 13 days of Living History scheduled in October.

October is going to be a very busy month with Volunteer Training and Living History, but we will also have two Community Education Programs. On Sunday, October 13th, in conjunction with the Placer County Historical Society and the Lewis and Clark Heritage Trail Foundation, we will host *Jean Baptiste Charbonneau Returns to Auburn*. National Park certified First Person Interpreter Garry Bush will take on the role of Jean Baptiste Charbonneau and he will enlighten all with an entertaining presentation on life as a fir trapper in the mid-19th century. Mr. Bush has made a career of portraying Charbonneau and he has received rave reviews from the various institutions, including the Nez Perce National Park in Idaho. The program will be at the Auburn Veteran's Memorial Hall and will start at 2:00 pm.

The following week on Sunday, October 20th, will be a program that has consumed a lot of research hours at the Archives. We will present *Historical Haunts: A Tour of Notable Plots in the Old Auburn Cemetery*. The first tour will commence at 1:30 pm and a new tour will begin every five to seven minutes. The Native Sons of the Golden West, Parlor #59 will have their restored hearse on display and free refreshments will be available. You can have a cookie and get your photo taken next to the hearse while you wait for your tour.

For more information about either of these programs, please call 530-889-6500.

Placer County Historical Society News

President's Message

*Michael Otten,
President*

1. Virginiatown rededication Sept. 20

Revisit a bit of Wild West Placer County history with us. Discover the era when most men packed heat, women were few, and how a populous hamlet turned into a ghost town.

The fun begins at 12:03 p.m. Friday, Sept. 20, at a site marking the once boom town of Virginia. It was where the lust for riches motivated Capt. John Bristow to build the state's first railroad. The goal: Carry prospectively rich pay dirt to Auburn Ravine to free the gold. The lesson: It was better to bring the water to the diggings.

Sept. 20 is when the PCHS will team with the Lord Sholto Douglas Chapter 3, E Clampus Vitas, to unveil a replacement plaque for the original Virginiatown State Registered Landmark 400 that was dedicated by your society on Sept. 28, 1952.

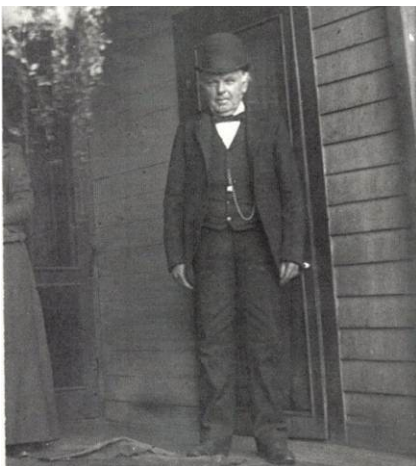
Some scoundrel made off with the plaque last year. It was done most likely for pocket money its copper content might bring.

The theft didn't set too well with Kurteous Maximus who discovered the naked granite base. Kurteous (real name Kurt Hexberg) is historian for the Newcastle-based ECV. The Clampers quickly got the ball rolling on replacing the plaque and teaming with us to get the job done.

The site is on Virginiatown Road, two tenths of a mile northeast of Lincoln. Arrive early as parking is limited to the roadside.

Be a part of history by attending and obtaining a reproduction of the original centennial brochure plus a new one.

2. Sept. 2 exhibit on Auburn's 125th



A second marriage generally means you quit celebrating the anniversary of the first one. The City of Auburn is no different. The PCHS is putting in a special display September 2nd at the Auburn Library taking a look at what 1888 was like with a photograph of the first mayor, Ed Walsh.

3. The Ruby Benjamin mystery

I have a special prize for the first person who can clear up the mystery about who Ruby Benjamin is and why her large Class of 1909 diploma from the Oroville Public Schools is hanging in a corner of the Benton Welty classroom. To find out what it's all about, keep checking placercountyhistoricalsociety.org as Webmaster Jon Brommeland adds updates.

4. Heritage Trail winner and Thanks



Sarah Hudson, 10, started the 5th grade at Fiddymont Farm Elementary School in Roseville on August 19 with an unexpected basket of school supplies, games and other items. Sarah was the lucky Heritage Trail winner of the Benton Welty Historical Classroom basket drawing. She and her parents, Chris and Andi Hudson, said the Placer County Historical Society museum at City Hall was among about nine museums they visited the weekend of Aug. 10-11.

The classroom in the 1915-built Auburn Grammar School is now on the National Register of

Historic Places and may be the only grammar school in the state to find new life as a City Hall while retaining its historic look and feel. Special thanks to board member Jean Allender, who chairs the classroom tours. Thanks go to those who helped with donations, City Historian April McDonald-Loomis and the city. Thanks too to Eula Marriott, Sally Palmer Dawley, MaryLue Hardey, Jane Misplay, Dorothy Hall Overton, Bonnie and Walt Wilson, Karen Bleuel, Jane Hamilton, Professor Bones and Betty and Karri Samson who were among the tour guides that special weekend.

otten@ssctv.net

**Placer County
Historical Society
Dinner Meeting**
*Addah Owens,
Vice President*



When: Thursday Oct. 3
Time: 6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Program
Where: Veterans Memorial Hall, 100 East St., Auburn, CA
Cost: \$14 per person
Menu: Chicken Marsala, roasted seasonal vegetables, special tossed salad, rolls and desert ala Gail Stout of Mary Belle's Restaurant.
Mail Check to: PCHS, c/o Betty Samson, 8780 Baxter Grade Road, Auburn, CA 95603
Program: presentation by David A. Breninger, longtime general manager of the Placer County Water Agency, on the golden anniversary of the Middle Fork Project, Placer Water History and where our water comes from.

Placer County Historical Organizations

Colfax Area Historical Society
Helen Wayland,
(530) 346-7040
colfaxhistory.org

Donner Summit Historical Society
Bill Oudegeest, (209) 606-6859
donnersummithistoricalsociety.org

Foresthill Divide Historical Society
Sandy Simester, (530) 367-3535
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

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

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

Lincoln Area Archives Museum
Shirley Russell, (916) 645-3800

Lincoln Highway Association
Bob Dieterich,
bobd@iname.com
lincolnhwy.org

Loomis Basin Historical Society
Karen Clifford, (916) 663-3871
ppgn.com/loomishistorical.html

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

Native Sons of the Golden West, Parlor #59
Dave Allen, (530) 878-2878
dsallen59@sbcglobal.net

Newcastle Portuguese Hall Association
Aileen Gage, (530) 885-9111

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

Placer County Museums Docent Guild
Tom Innes, 530-888-8969

Rocklin Historical Society
Jean Sippola,
(916) 652-1034
rocklinhistory.org

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

North Lake Tahoe Historical Society
Javier Rodriguez, (530) 583-1762
northtahoemuseums.org

Placer County Genealogical Society, Toni Rosasco
(530) 888-8036
pcgenes.com

Artifact Highlight

Glass contact lenses

Glass contact lenses date back to the Victorian Period. They were invented by a Swiss physician, Adolph Fick in 1888. Glass lenses were heavy and uncomfortable, and it wasn't until 1939 that the plastic contact lenses were introduced. Soft contact lenses were not available until the 1970's. This set from our collection dates back to around 1940.



2013 Calendar of Events

September

- Sept. 10th, 4:00 pm** Roseville Historical Society meeting at Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln Street, Roseville.
Contact: 916-773-3003
- Sept 12th, 6:30 pm.** Placer County Historical Society meeting at the Auburn Veterans Memorial Hall, 100 East Street, Auburn.
Contact: (530) 885-5074
- Sept. 16th, 6:00 pm** Forest Hill Divide Historical Society business meeting at the Forest Hill Divide Museum.
Contact: 530-367-3535.
- Sept. 18th, 6:00 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis Library.
Contact: 916-663-3871.
- Sept. 26th, 7:00 pm** Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library.
Contact: 530-885-2216.

October

- October 8th, 4:00 pm** Roseville Historical Society meeting at the Carnegie Museum. 557 Lincoln Street, Roseville
Contact: 916-773-3003.
- Oct. 10th, 6:30 pm.** Placer County Historical Society meeting at the Auburn Veterans Memorial Hall, 100 East Street, Auburn.
Contact: (530) 885-5074
- October 13th, 2:00 pm** Community Education program: *Jean Baptiste Charbonneau Returns to Auburn* at the Auburn Veteran's Memorial Hall. Contact: 530-889-6500.
- October 16th, 5:30 pm** Historical Advisory Board meeting at the Bernhard Museum Winery, 291 Auburn-Folsom Rd., Auburn.
Contact: 530-889-6500.
- October 16th, 6:00 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis Library.
Contact: 916-663-3871.
- October 20th, 1:30 pm** Community Education program: *Historical Haunts: A Tour of Notable Plots in the Old Auburn Cemetery*.
Contact: 530-889-6500.
- October 21st, 6:00 pm** Forest Hill Divide Historical Society meeting at the Foresthill Memorial Hall.
Contact: 530-367-3535.
- October 24th, 7:00 pm** Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library.
Contact 530-885-2216.

Placer County Museums
101 Maple Street
Auburn, CA 95603

