



2020 September-October Volume 23, Issue 5

## Inside this issue:

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Administrator's Notes | 1 |
| Pipes & More Pipes    | 2 |
| Gold & Circuses       | 4 |
| Our Latest Ventures   | 6 |
| News from PCHS        | 7 |

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## Administrator's Notes

by Ralph Gibson, Museums Administrator

As a museum professional, I am ethically forbidden from collecting in areas that compete with our museums' collection. But, like most people in my field, I am a collector. What I collect are vintage Halloween cards. Some collectors aspire to possess cards in mint condition that were never mailed. Myself, I prefer used cards produced before 1920 that may not be in the best condition. Their use is part of the history I find appealing. This was a time when superstitions held more weight than today, especially in rural areas. The cards were designed, produced, purchased, and mailed in fun, but sometimes with a kiss of old-world magic.



Before Trick or Treating became popular in the 1930s, Halloween was about parties, games, spooky stories, and mischief. Many of the cards I have in my collection interpret superstitions that revolved around young people magically discerning who they will marry in the future. Some women looked into a mirror with a lit candle at midnight on Halloween to catch a glimpse of their intended. Others divined the first letter of their future mate's name by the shape of a long peel shaved from an apple.

My cards also reflect the pranks and mischief that were an important part of the holiday. But what I love most is the iconography: the old-world witches, ghosts, bats, Jack-O'-Lanterns, black cats, etc. In the era I collect there aren't any cards with vampires, mummies, or Frankenstein's monster. These creatures, though born in history and literature much earlier, wouldn't become part of Halloween until the Universal movies of the 1930s.

There probably won't be Trick or Treating this year due to Coronavirus. Instead,

Halloween 2020 will likely resemble the holiday interpreted in my cards. It may be more about spooky stories, games, mischief, and little bit of old-world magic – my favorite!

**Happy Halloween!**

"Smoke 'em if you got 'em."

Bactrian camels and hippos in the gold fields?

Placer County Museums' latest ventures.

A new plaque for Emily Casement, Auburn's "Fire Queen."

## Pipes in Placer County

by Kasia Woroniecka, Curator of Collections

We know today that smoking is not good for you. Yet people have been smoking for thousands of years with the help of some very interesting objects. Pipes come in many shapes and sizes, and are made of many different materials like wood, clay, metal, porcelain, plaster, or bone. Researching these was quite an adventure. We have thousands of objects in our collection, so it is not surprising that things occasionally get misidentified. It turned out that we do not have as many opium pipes as we thought we did. Here are a few examples of pipes in our collection.



Chinese Water Pipe, c. 1850-70

This Chinese water pipe dates to around 1850-1870. It is decorated with a beautiful floral cloisonné pattern and a small tassel. The water pipe operated like a hookah: the hot smoke passed through water in the container at the base of the pipe. This removed impurities and cooled the smoke which was then inhaled through the long pipe. Tobacco was introduced in China sometime in the 16th century and smoking it grew in popularity due to its supposed healing properties. Tobacco, except for snuff, was made illegal during the Ming and early Qing Dynasties in the early 17th century. Even though the penalty for breaking the law was harsh, people of all classes still indulged

in the practice and tobacco was an important part of social gatherings and entertainment. Water pipes were expensive and were used as decoration when not in use. This type of pipe is often mistaken for an opium pipe. Many historic photographs of opium dens show opium pipes along with water pipes, which leads to the confusion.



Chinese Opium Pipe

This is a Chinese opium pipe made of bamboo. Opium smoking was an accepted social practice in 19th century China. The Chinese who came to California during the Gold Rush brought recreational opium smoking with them. This pipe is missing a bowl, which would be attached to the metal fitting on top of the pipe, called the saddle. Smoking opium is different than smoking tobacco and required several tools and a lot of practice. That is why most opium smokers preferred opium dens, where attendants would prepare the pipes for them. The opium was first heated over a lamp and shaped with a needle into a small pill, called chandu. The pill was placed in the bowl on the pipe's saddle and heated by the lamp. Once the opium simmered, the smoker inhaled the fumes. Smoking opium was usually practiced lying down, because it was the most comfortable position to hold the pipe over the lamp. Opium pipes were long since space was needed between the smoker and the heat source.



Chinese Long-stem Pipe, c. 1875

This is a Chinese long-stem tobacco pipe that dates to around 1875. The length of the pipe stem affected the taste. The longer the stem the milder the taste.



Japanese Kiseru Pipe

This is a Japanese Kiseru tobacco pipe. Kiseru were made from metal or a combination of metal and wood or bamboo and came in various styles. This one is the Natamame. It is flat to fit easily in the belt of the kimono. This type of pipe has been used in Japan since the 16<sup>th</sup> century when tobacco was introduced by Portuguese traders. A small amount of shredded tobacco is placed in the tiny bowl at the tip of the pipe. It is enough for a few puffs before the ashes are dumped out, and a fresh supply is added.

This pipe is called the “Tyrolean” for Tyrol, the Austrian and Italian region in the Alps. It is sometimes called the Jaeger pipe, the wine pipe, or the German hunter pipe. This style has a large bowl or reservoir called the abguss, used to hold juices and tar to improve the fragrance and flavor of the tobacco. This style was



Tyrolean Pipe

popular in Central Europe since the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the one in our collection dates to 1907-1927.

This is a tiny figural clay pipe c. 1850-1900 that portrays Punch, one of the characters of the traditional puppet show Punch and Judy. Pipes representing political figures, animals, occupations, or other symbols were popular during this time-period. Clay was a common and inexpensive material for tobacco pipes. These pipes were fragile and their long stems broke easily. This one was made in a casting mold.



Figural Clay Pipe, c. 1850-1900



Plains Indian Style Pipe, c. 1900-40

This is a Plains Indians style “peace pipe” with a pipe-stone carved bowl and wooden stem c. 1900-1940. It is not an original sacred pipe, but one made for sale. Traditionally ceremonial pipes were smoked to offer prayers or to seal a treaty.

Pipes have become objects of great creativity and ingenuity. This one was made around 1850 out of a polished sea snail shell giving a broader meaning to the old saying “smoke 'em if you got 'em.”



Sea Snail Shell Pipe, c. 1850



## Gold & Circuses

by Katy Bartosh, Curator of Education

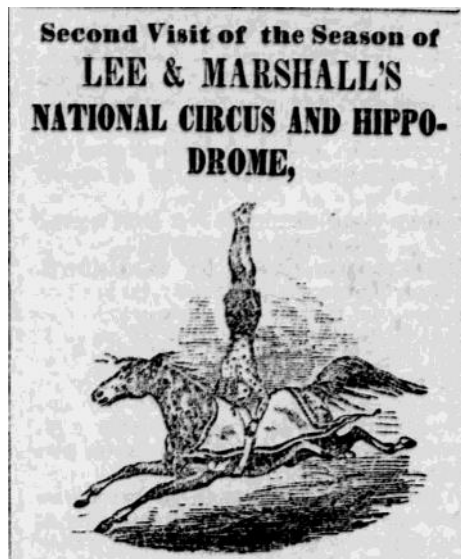
What amusements were available to a miner during the Gold Rush? What did they have to look forward to after the backbreaking work of mining a claim? The circus! Saloons and music were common forms of entertainment, but circuses arrived early and returned annually. These shows started in the 1850s and continued into the 20th century.

The first circuses started in America in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. These were small European endeavors with acrobatics, trick riding, and clowns. In 1825, showman Joshua Purdy Brown started the first real American circus.

When public amusements were banned in Wilmington, Delaware during the Second Great Awakening, Brown erected a “pavilion circus” outside the city limits, starting America’s tradition of canvas, big top circuses. With expansion moving westward, circuses did as well.

The Placer Herald announced the arrival of Lee & Marshall’s National Circus and Hippodrome on June 10th, 1853. Lee and Marshall were operating a primarily equestrian exhibition out of Sacramento. These

early gold rush circuses relied on show drama and equestrian skills.



*Placer Herald, June 10, 1853*

Articles reference a dedicated “Circus Lot” in Auburn that was used for shows. It was located behind the Methodist Church.

A variety of shows continued to rotate through Auburn, typically June through September. In 1856, Rowe & Co.’s Circus arrived with Adonis, the dancing horse, and Mr. R. Wills, the Wizard Bugler.

Dan Rice’s Great Show stopped in 1860. Rice would go on to become the most famous circus clown of the 19th century, and even ran for president in 1868.

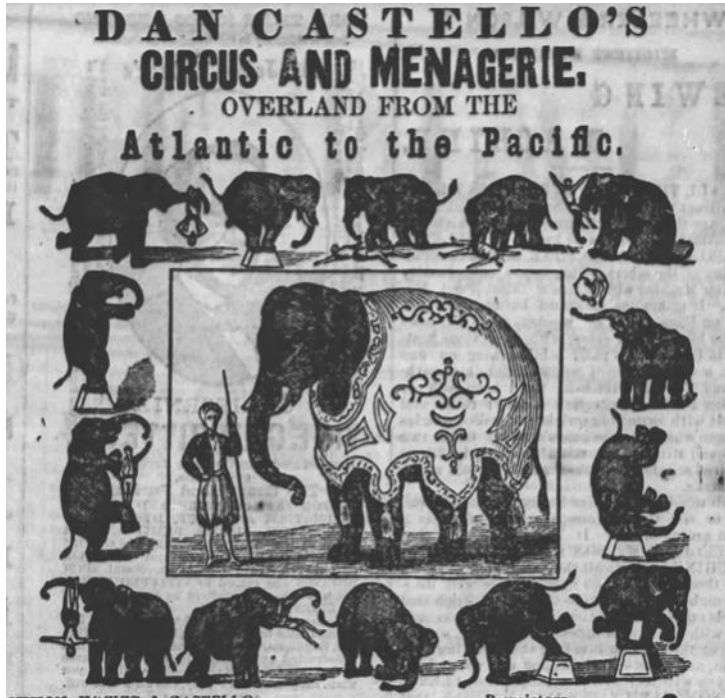


*Dan Rice*

While early shows primarily utilized horses, elephants and other exotic animals became more prevalent with the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad. The railroad made it easier and less expensive to ship larger shows with a greater variety of animals

Wisconsin showman Dan Castello took his circus from Omaha to California on the newly completed railroad in May 1869. He arrived in Auburn in September, and his whole season was immensely profitable.

Castello would convince P.T. Barnum to join the venture a year later and the circus would eventually become the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus—The Greatest Show on Earth.



*Placer Herald, September 18, 1869*

By this point, the railroad and the circus became synonymous in America.

The Great New York and New Orleans Zoological Equestrian Exposition set up in Auburn on July 25, 1873. The show boasted a variety of animals including zebras, kangaroos, gorillas, and a drove of Bactrian camels.

These large circuses were more extravagant. In 1877, the Grand Trans-Continental Tour of Forepaugh's Aggregation was the most elaborate to date. Forepaugh featured the "only living male hippopotamus, or river horse, in America," as well as lions, tigers, bears, a rhinoceros, and a "magnificent museum of wonders."

**From the Atlantic to the Pacific!**  
GRAND TRANS-CONTINENTAL TOUR OF  
**Forepaugh's Aggregation,**  
WITH ITS  
**Wealth of Attractions**  
THE LARGEST and most refined Zoological Museum and Equestrian Organization in the World!  
Using for its TRANSIT THE FINEST PRIVATE RAILWAY EQUIPAGE IN AMERICA!  
Monster Menagerie inhabited by a wilderness of Wild Beasts, Amphibious Monsters and Language Gifted Birds. Among our special Zoological Features may be found a  
**Herd of SIX PERFORMING ELEPHANTS.**  
Huge Tropical Mammoths, while as the very acme of animal acting their intelligence has, through patient and admirable education, becomes so phenomenal as to suggest the spontaneous operation of reason rather than trained movements of mere instinct.  
Peculiar nature added to our Menagerie last spring  
**A Baby ELEPHANT,**  
The only one ever born in America, a self-constituted pet of the public and an enigma for the naturalist.  
**The Only LIVING MALE HIPPOPOTAMUS**  
OR RIVER HORSE, IN AMERICA.  
The Behemoth of Holy Writ! A Blood Perspiring Amphibia.  
A Huge 3 Ton Black Rhinoceros, Black Tigers, Horned Horse, Sea Cow, Lions, Horse Antelope, White Bears, Cow Antelopes, Ten Man-Eating Lions, and Hundreds of others too numerous to mention.




*Placer Herald, August 25, 1877*

The arrival of the circus was usually well received, though the occasional complaint appeared in the local paper about the quality of the animals, acrobatics, or conduct of the performers.

In 1893 there was a tragic accident. Sells & Rentfrow was coming through Grass Valley on the railroad when two engines and four cars went off the track, killing a young man and several animals. This was only a month after the circus lost several of their animals in the town of Salem, Oregon, including a black bear, monkey, and hedgehog.

The yearly arrival and departure of summer circuses continued into the 20th century until the fair became a more popular local attraction.



## Our Latest Ventures

*by Bryanna Ryan, Supervising Curators*

Our interpretive projects look a lot different than usual this year. With our museums closed we have finally realized an opportunity to prioritize getting content online and for those of you keeping track at home, since March we have published seventy-two virtual history projects.



You may now take a virtual walking tour of [Dutch Flat](#) or [Auburn](#) and see historic photos associated with the buildings while you journey. There are grounds tours of the [Gold Rush Museum](#) and the [Bernhard Museum](#). Soon, there will also be grounds tours for the Griffith Quarry Park and the Foresthill Divide Museum.

Kasia has produced [twenty-three artifact highlights](#) and has many more on the horizon. One of the great things about these is that we can feature

things that may not be in display condition or that didn't quite fit into one of the themes of our brick and mortar museums. Even though they are virtual, these have the effect of bringing the object so much closer to the viewer than we usually are able and the [Bernhard Ring](#) and the [1910 Wedding Cake Topper](#) are good examples of how special a small object can become when given a chance to really *see* it.

History projects have explored many things including [Rattlesnake Dick](#), the [Hidden Treasure Mine](#), [Newcastle](#), the [Hawver Cave](#), the [Lincoln Highway](#), and the [geologic beginnings of Placer County](#). With our Living History and Gold Rush Programs unfortunately on pause, we are also looking for ways to reach students where they are through [online content](#).

Through it all, we are learning a lot - both about the history of Placer County as well as what works and what doesn't in developing these projects. The bulk of the research comes from the Archive and Research Center and there is an exciting new venture for this facility, as well. In the next couple of months we are hoping to launch our catalog online where at least some of our records will finally be searchable to the distance researcher. Stay tuned for this and in the meantime, don't hesitate to let us know if you have any questions, thoughts, or suggestions for projects we should explore.



## Placer County Historical Organizations

Contact individual organizations for meeting schedules.

### Colfax Area Historical Society

Jay McIntyre - (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

Troy Simester - (530) 367-3535

[foresthillhistory.org](http://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](http://laamca.org)

### Loomis Basin Historical Society

Karen Clifford - (916) 663-3871

[ppgn.com/loomishistorical.html](http://ppgn.com/loomishistorical.html)

### Maidu Museum & Historic Site

Kaitlin Kincade - (916) 774-5934

[roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum](http://roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum)

### The Museum of Sierra Ski History and 1960 Winter Olympics

David Antonucci - (775) 722-3502

[tahoemuseum.org](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

Phil Sexton - (530) 583-1762

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

### Placer County Genealogical Society

Toni Rosasco - (530) 888-8036

[pcgenes.com](http://pcgenes.com)

### Placer County Historical Society

April McDonald-Loomis

(530) 823-2128

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

### Placer County Museums

#### Docent Guild

Fran Hanson - (530) 878-6990

### Rocklin Historical Society

Hank Lohse - (916) 624-3464

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

### Roseville Fire Museum

Jim Giblin - (916) 538-1809

[rosevillefiremuseum@gmail.com](mailto:rosevillefiremuseum@gmail.com)

### Roseville Historical Society

Denise Fiddymment - (916) 773-3003

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

## Placer County Historical Society

by April McDonald-Loomis, President

I hope everyone is staying in and well. These are certainly challenging times. So many of us are missing our usual routines and volunteer work. We can only hope we see an end in sight. There is hardly anything happening at the Historical Society but I have a few things to share.

Karri Samson, John Knox, and I are working on additional plaques for the following addresses on Lincoln in Auburn: 805, 823, 835, 922, 928, and 1590. If anyone knows who owns these buildings, please let me know so we can save time tracking them down. We always need the owner's permission to place a plaque on the building.

The replacement for the Charbonneau plaque in the Old Town Fire House Park should be coming soon. The wording was incorrect and we are replacing it. We are also involved with E Clampus Vitus in installing a plaque for Emily Casement, the "Fire Queen," in the same park. That one is on track for the Fall. We don't currently have any general dinner meetings planned for the near future. This too, like so many things, is on hold.

A special note, Betty Samson, a Society member for many years just celebrated her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday! We wish her all the best and miss seeing her at the dinner meetings.

Right: Proof for Emily Casement plaque.



28028 22x34 Bronze Single Line Color: Dark Gold Mounting: Deep Shale 7/22/21

