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THE BECRAFT-HAMILTON-HOLMES FAMILIES

By Mrs. Frankie Jo Becraft Ranlett & Mr. Leonard Thatcher.



Hamilton & Becraft families about 1900

I was born July 3, 1894 in Greenville, Plumas County, a small town in the Sierra Nevada mountains. My mother was Maryetta Becraft and my father was John Thomas Becraft. Mother's maiden name was Hamilton. Both my parents were natives of California. They were first cousins; their mothers beings sisters. My mother's mother was Sara Jane Holmes and my father's mother was Rebecca Ann Holmes. Their father's name was Isaac Holmes and their mother's name, Elizabeth. They had a large family of fourteen children, all but two reaching maturity.

Isaac Holmes was captain of a wagon train coming west from St. Joseph, Missouri.

My father's parents Rebecca Holmes and James T. Becraft were married before leaving for California.

Isaac Holmes related at one time, the train was held up for three hours to let a herd of buffalo pass.

Another time one of their oxen died and he yoked up a young heifer with an ox to help pull the wagon to California.

We were also told how a small party of Indians followed the train for three days. They were friendly but attracted to Rebecca Ann. She had long dark hair and lovely dark eyes. They wanted to trade ponies for her. She was kept out of sight in a covered wagon until they were sure the Indians had left. They were afraid the Indians would try to steal her.

Another story they told us was how Katie Holmes (a high spirited and



Rebecca Holmes Becraft



James T. Becraft

mischievous girl) was always getting into trouble (disobeying her parents). To punish her she was made to walk at the back of the wagon or beside it, nearly walking all the way to California.

At one time the train stopped to bury a child (Rose Holmes) who died on the plains and another time for Elizabeth to give birth. A son Isaac died somewhere in Missouri.

The wagon train finally reached Indian Valley at a trading post near where the town of Greenville is located. The Holmes family decided to stay there. It's always interested me that Elizabeth and Isaac had twin sons, Abraham and Aaron. I remember them both especially Uncle Aaron singing to me "I danced with a girl with a hole in her stocking." I remember going to Clear Creek with Uncle Abe and Aunt Birdie. I sat between them and Uncle Abe and I sang all the way there.

My mother's father, John T. Hamilton, (Harvey's son) was born January 31, 1825. He left home when a young, single man, joining a wagon train going to California. During the trip, the train needed meat and he and another man were sent out to hunt. He (John Hamilton) became separated from his companion and was lost for three or four days when he saw a wagon train in the distance. On reaching it, he found it was not the one he had started with. He joined up with it however, having only his horse, guns and the clothes on his back.

The wagon train followed a regular overland route to Reno, Nevada. (I'm vague about the rest of the trip). However, I know they went over the Beckwourth Pass. They were one of the first trains over that pass. The train then went down into Genesee Valley and Indian Valley to a trading post not far from where the town of Greenville is now located.

On reaching California, my grandfather, John Hamilton, started mining for gold. He worked at it until he had a "fortune" of ten thousand dollars. He then decided he needed some fun and went to San Francisco to find it. He soon spent all his savings and returned to Plumas County where he met my grandmother, Sara Jane Holmes. After a short courtship they were married August 12, 1856. That ended his mining career!

At some time in his wanderings, my grandfather had passed through a beautiful valley (later name Big Meadows). When he married, he decided to go there to live and so took his wife there. They settled there in 1856 and lived the remainder of their lives. The North Fork of the Feather River flowed through the valley, the river teeming with trout. Large springs, some forty feet in depth with the clearest, coldest water and full of trout; and beautiful snow-capped Mt. Lassen in the distance. They had the most beautiful view of the valley where they chose to build their cabin. The ducks and geese going south in the fall always stopped in the valley. They had plenty of game for food. The first year, they built a cabin; very primitive, one room, dirt floor and fireplace.

My mother Mayetta Hamilton nee Becraft was born there December 13, 1857. My grandfather was the first settler on the east side of the valley. The Hamilton Branch of the Feather River which flows into Lake Almanor bears his name as do two mountain peaks near Mt. Dyer.



The Becraft-Hamilton-Holmes Ranch, located on what is now called Lake Almanor East Shore.

name as do two mountain peaks near Mt. Dyer. They first homesteaded some land, then pre-empted some until they acquired 400 acres of valley and timberland.

Mr. Hamilton went into the dairy business. In the winter while the snow was on the ground they had a shop in which they made their own butter kegs out of white fir. In the fall of the year after the milking season was over Mr. Hamilton and his hired help hauled the butter in wagons over the Humbug Pass to Chico where it was marketed and the year's shopping was done.

My grandfather was a hardworking man. He split rails, fencing some of the land, made shingles for cabins, besides building shelters (barns) for the stock. In the summers while he put up the wild grass for hay for the stock during the long winters, my grandmother pieced quilts, and made soap. My grandfather laid a puncheon floor in the cabin and made a trundle bed for my mother and gradually acquired a few comforts.

Mother told of how my grandmother used to take her children under a large pine tree for shade and sit facing up the hill or mountains to watch for Indians. They would also take their dog "Tige" along.

The local Indians were friendly but they and another tribe were fighting each other and the "foreign" Indians would steal or harm the whites if they got the opportunity. Mother told how frightened she was when the friendly Indians one day passed by carrying one of their band who had been killed. They had a long pole and had tied his hands and feet to the pole to carry him back to camp for burial.

One of my sisters and a cousin, and myself (all three of the same generation) are grandmothers of twins. Also a daughter of my cousin had twins, and a cousin of my mother also had twins.



Summer kitchen at the Becraft Ranch on Hamilton Branch.

MY FIRST "REAL" JOB 60 YEARS AGO

By Mr. George A. (Tony) Starbird

In June of 1956, I finished my first year of college. My parents had suggested that I not work filing policies at my father's insurance business, but get a "real" job and help with college expenses. I had just turned 18 years old that March.

So, as soon as school was out, I headed from hometown San Jose up to Lake Tahoe in my new to me 1949 Ford coupe. My aim was to get a job in construction until school started in September. After several days applying for a half a dozen jobs and being unsuccessful, I drove over to Graeagle.

My family had vacationed at the Gold Lake Beach Resort every year since 1947 and I was fond of Graeagle. I was hoping to be hired by the Graeagle Lumber Company.

On June 20th, I approached the General Manager's office with high anxiety. He (now known as Herb Rowe) agreed to see me right away. His first question was "Have you had any experience in working in a mill or with wood



A view of the Lumber Mill at Graeagle, California

products?" I said "no", thinking that this was not going to work out! He then asked me another group of questions as to why I was there. At the end, he said "You're hired. You are the only summer applicant that has told me the truth about your work history." This was very exciting! I filled out paperwork and was shown to the "bunk house" across the road and given a pass to the mess hall behind the Graeagle Restaurant for dinner and breakfast. I enjoyed the view from the second floor lots of ventilation.

The next morning, the manager walked me over to the "box factory" part of the mill where I met Frank. He was in charge of making lug box ends with a big printing press machine that cut out the handholds and imprinted the customer's name on the box ends. He was not happy to see me. Frank was in his 60's, small, lean and needed help from someone other than a "school boy." He spoke little, just giving me directions as to stacking the finished ends. I was ready to work and at the box factory in the morning when the whistle blew. What a busy and noisy place! Frank kept me hustling and by work day's end, I was very tired and sore. After a week, I became more adept and stronger. My pay envelope at the end of the week was very much appreciated! Small deductions were made for meals and lodging. After my half day working Saturday, I walked down to the General Store bought a few things, got in my car and drove over to explore Blairsden, then over to the Feather River seeking out where to fish. I sat out on a rock sunning myself and fishing.

In the second week I got Frank to smile, and shortly thereafter the Union Steward came by to see me. Membership would cost a week's pay! He gave me three days to decide. It seemed like everyone was in the union excepting managers. With Frank's urging, I became a member of the International Woodworkers of America. I believe it was in late June when I was invited to the annual union picnic. There were so many employees and their families! We ate on tables arranged outdoors in a forest setting. I can't remember the speeches; I just enjoyed the good food and people were very friendly.

Frank was still very quiet but in early August he invited me to go fishing! So, after work he drove me up into the mountains in his Studebaker coupe, the one that was hard to tell if it was coming or going. Again, very few words were spoken and we fished until dark.

Then late one night, I was awakened in the barracks by people hollering outside the "bunk house." It turned out that every union employee available was counted on to go over to the Portola Lumber Co. (they had locked out their employees) and confront the "scabs." So, around 10 cars filled with men drove over to Portola. This was frightening to me, thinking I would be expected to fight. When we arrived, we could find no one there. Not even a security guard. After some shouting, there was nothing for us to do but get in the cars and go back home. Not much sleep that night!

I have some very sharp memories of my short time at the Graeagle Lumber Company:

There was very tasty and plentiful food at the mess hall, no limit on seconds. I was always hungry.

One day the temperature at the “bunk house” was 28 degrees going to work and 90 coming back!

The mill sounds were very noisy, including the large press I was working next to.

I will not forget the smells of wood being processed and the ink being applied to the lug box ends.

During the week evenings, I would often walk down and back “manager's row,” hoping to get a glimpse of whom I assumed was a very pretty manager's daughter of my age. She would occasionally sit on her front steps. I was just too shy to make contact.

When getting my pay envelope, I enjoyed feeling the bills and coin. Nothing like getting paid in cash!

As each week passed, I could tell that I was getting stronger and stronger. The piles of lug box ends to stack got lighter and lighter. Acceptance in interactions with some of the full time employees was very gratifying. All in all, a truly formative experience for this 18 year old “school boy!”



Ponderosa pine logs going up the jack ladder of Graeagle Lumber Co. September 19, 1947

GOLD LAKE BEACH RESORT NOTES



Camping at Gold Lake Lodge Resort

My parents knew some of the owners the Twists, Wrights and Edwards so after their first visit in 1947, they decided we would come every year. And now the second generation comes every year with the third and fourth generation. We love this beautiful spot!

The first resort owner I remember was Mava Macomich. Joe Vowel and his wife followed for many years. Then came Russell Reid and now Jim Reid. In the early days, we could stay as long as two weeks, now just four nights.

We loved the boat ride from the Gold Lake Beach Resort launch from the northeast end of Gold Lake. So much was offered; boating, swimming, fishing, games, volley ball; one night Joe Vowel shot a bear getting into the garbage and we had bear for dinner. Over the years, we've had great food, for the last fourteen years supplied by Chef Rob.

Ah, the scent of the pines and the long hikes into the Lakes Basin, over toward the Sierra Buttes and into Gold Valley. In the late 1950's, I was asked to play 'taps' on my trumpet every night from above the Gold Lake Beach Resort

There used to be Casey's store at the east end selling very expensive supplies. A few of the guests swam from the Gold Lake Beach Resort to Casey's and were picked up at the launch area. My father especially enjoyed sailing his skiff down the lake and taking much longer coming back.

We remember the early days of no pavement from Graeagle up to Gold Lake and a rough road over to the Gold Lake Beach Resort launch.

Sometimes Joe Vowel would take my brother and me around the south side of the lake in his WWII army ¾ ton pickup. It was a very rough ride!

In the 60's, on the early morning flat surface, we could sometimes see and hear a small hydroplane with wide open exhaust tear across the lake.

We enjoy just sitting on the beach any time of the day and evening just looking at the beautiful lake. A special thank you to Jim Reid for keeping the Gold Lake Beach Resort as it was and better; what a treat for us guests.



Postcard of the Social Hall at Gold Lake Lodge Resort

Meadow Valley Grave Occasion - A Killer Event!

A beautiful fall afternoon greeted the over 100 Museum supporters who turned out for the 7th annual Grave Occasion, held at the Meadow Valley Cemetery on September 17, 2016.

Local thespians Wayne Bauer & Lisa Kelly, Jodi Beynon, Danielle & Bryan Plocki, Denise Russell, Paul Russell and Bob Shipp made ghost appearances as Phillip & Elizabeth Miller, Sarah Heckle Taylor Atwood, Minnie & Elias Jacks, Sarah Kennedy, Edward Henry Metcalf, and Mathias Kniewel, all Meadow Valley pioneers.



Over 100 supporters came to the 7th Annual Grave Occasion held at the Meadow Valley Cemetery on September 17

The cook crew, serving up tasty bratwursts, German potato salad, red cabbage with apples and rolls was headed by Museum Trustee Linda Wallace and included Don Clark, Nancy Gambell, Becky Herrin, Diane Lawson, Margie Oropin, Dwight Pierson, Denise Russell, Elsa Thomas, Jerry Thomas and Diane Uchtyl. Diane also organized and managed the very successful Silent Auction along with Linda Wallace and Denise Russell. Pete & Joyce Dryer and Dave & Diann Montanari kept the wine flowing; Ron Trumbo provided the sound system, and eleven-year old Sam Klem was general assistant. Meadow Valley Cemetery District, Meadow Valley Church, QHS "S" Club, Carey Candy Co., and Moon's Restaurant all provided additional support.



Al Herndon and his Quincy Oompa Band serenaded Museum participants at the Grave Occasion.



Paul Russell, as Edward Metcalf, demonstrates how he fell 40 feet to his death from a flume.



Diann & Dave Montanari and Pete & Joyce Dryer keeping the guests happy with wine.

Next year's venue will be the historic Mohawk Valley Cemetery located on the knoll behind the old Mohawk Hotel on the Johnsville Road.



Susan & Scott Arterburn of Chilcoot Monument, Portola, at the Rich Bar Cemetery where they installed a monument to the memory of over two-dozen pioneers who died at that mining camp. It was installed with assistance from the Plumas County Museum, U.S. Forest Service Heritage Division and E Clampus Vitus.



Faces Around The Museum



Rich Knoettgen, chief engineer and designer of the stamp mill-ore car trestle, and his helper Jim Boland are close to finishing this stupendous project.



Denise Russell, seen here as Beckwourth Trail emigrant Mary Variel, gave numerous tours of the Variel Home this summer.



Mr. Woodley and Ms. Anilla's Quincy 8th grade class raked leaves and tidied up around the Museum this November as a community service.



Pam Bolton of Experience Works has been indexing Plumas County court records into a database.



Margie Oropin, our new extra help employee has been scanning many of our photos and documents.



Lisa Hopman has been cataloging Plumas County court records for so long, she should be on the bench!



Keith Nicoles, in concert with Chris Bolton, has been revamping our Photo Panels, one of the most popular exhibit sections in the Museum. Be sure to drop in to see their handiwork.



Ann Castaldini has been our main Variel Home tour guide for a number of years.



Docent Ken Green as Scary Old Man greets Trick or Treaters at the Museum



Sally Nichol braved the cold to wrap peppermint posts on the front of the Museum.



Nancy Nicoles finished up one of the doll cases and is considering starting in on the other, a monumental task.



Bailey Rippey, our newest and youngest docent, is a Feather River College student with a passion for the Variel Home. She gave a number of tours this summer and fall.



1881 Indian Letter Fundraising Campaign

Since 1968, when the Museum opened its doors, we have always worked under the concept that the Museum is a “living museum” one that needs to be actively fed and nourished in order to grow. Knowing that history is not static, in addition to our many individual artifact donations, we also continue to collect and preserve the history of Plumas County through the occasional acquisition of especially important artifacts, documents, and ephemera.

This past summer the Museum was able to purchase an historic letter by Maidu Chief William Biggus of Taylorsville written in 1881. The acquisition of this culturally significant letter and its return to Plumas County, where it will be available to historians and other researchers, was all made possible by the generous efforts, gifts, and donations of the following people and organizations: Gay Bentz; Pete & Joyce Dryer; Dan & Nancy Elliott; Rick & Paula Foster; Sheila Freed; William & Judith Gimple; Ginger Gramm; Debbie Hopkins; Michael Jackson; Chuck James & Pat Holland; Leila Jigour; Branden Johnson; Karen Kleven; Rich Knoettgen; Eileen Kortas; Josh Lawson & Carol Prentice; Corky Lazzarino; James Magill; Larry & Heidi Marsh; Mooretown Rancheria; B. J. North; Vern & Marilyn Ornbaun; Susan Payne; Kathy Peters; Dwight & Karen Pierson; Kay Pierson; Plumas Bank; Kest & Susen Porter; Quincy Rotary members; Sherilyn Schwartz; John Sheehan; Soper Company; Philip Steers; Janice Thomas; Jeff & Lynn Turner; Jack & Kiki Vogenthaler; Joe & Heather Way.

A huge THANK YOU goes out to all who so generously helped us to acquire and preserve this bit of Plumas County history we truly appreciate your support.

Artifact Donations Since May 2016

Anonymous: Unidentified iron object with inserted sheet metal nozzle; Richard Beacham: 1933 Royal Model P manual typewriter; Carol Bordeaux: Miscellaneous newspapers, photos, printouts concerning Quincy history, one wood crate from Grenke's Market, Quincy; Pat & Janna Cook: Large collection of color slides of Paul and Eleanor Zeigelmaier's trips abroad; John & Lorraine Cullen: One 1923 PCHS Pine yearbook, three mining certificates, 1904 1907; Dorothy Edwards: One metal opium spoon, one metal pipe-cleaning tool; Brent English: Postcards of Keddie, mini dinner menu, various scans of Keddie; Cathleen Smoljan Fortune: Nine glass negatives taken by Eli Pavlovich in Johnsville, 1913-1916; Gary France: One mortising tool used for barn building on various Sierra Valley ranches; Estate of Mary June German: Various newspapers concerning the Kennedy Assassination, 1963; Gordon Glain: Various magazines, teaching cassettes on the California Gold Rush, Quality Dairy milk can; Richard Henderson: Quartz crystal specimen; John Hunter: Two panoramic photos of U.S. soldiers, 1919; J. David Kennedy: Two photocopies of photos showing Sarah Kennedy with furs and Sarah Kennedy with family; Mead Kibbey: One iron tea kettle and one iron cook pot; Samuel Lawson: One horseshoe; Marcy Loeb & Lisa Tilford: One Levi Strauss 100th anniversary of the pocket arcuate and rivet, 1973; La Rue McCarthy: Photocopies of Civil War letter and Confederate money related to Alex Murdy; Napa County Historical Society: Four postcards, PNF brochure/map, 1940, La Porte Hotel letterhead, Johnsville Hotel envelope; Jerry Owens: 1948 RCA Victor television, cork coasters, salt and pepper shakers, vintage shaving brushes, glass juicer, miscellaneous household items; Jim Paige: One quart milk bottle from Portola, two half-pint milk bottles from Portola and Greenville; Paul Pauley: Circa 1915 glass vase etched with “Plumas County”; Robert Pierson: Brass soldering torch and soldering iron; Plumas County Library: Two postcards of Quincy scenes; Scott Russell: Iron nut and bolt from tombstone of Edward Davis; five fishing licenses, 1926 -1936, short section of cable and stringers from old washed out footbridge near Virgilia, one section of handmade television cable used in the Twain area, 1960s, and three light switches from cabins at Convict Flat; Kathryn Scully: One 1920 PCHS Pine yearbook, small Bible reading pamphlet; Janice Muat Sibley: Several newspaper clippings and photocopies concerning the Feather River Power Company's Buck's Creek Project; Philip Steers: Publication Historic Feather River Canyon, 1972; Carolyn Strauch: One Block Q cheerleader patch worn by Sammy Stewart, 1952-1955; Michelle Osborne Watson: Collection of correspondence generated by architect Zach Stewart concerning the building of the Plumas County Museum and its exhibits 1964-1974, various film negatives used for exhibit text, and sets of blueprints of preliminary museum building designs and plans; Robert and Pat Welsch: One quarterly California Journal of Mines and Geology, 1937, one PNB newspaper, 1910.

We Been Workin' on The Railroad

The Spanish Peak Lumber Co. locomotive No.2 project is still moving forward. Thanks go to Norm Lambert Construction of Quincy for grading the rail bed, Joy Engineering of Portola for donation of gravel for ballast and Soper Co. of Strawberry Valley for trucking the gravel. We had hoped to have the line operational this fall, but various circumstances precluded that plan. At this point, the weather is playing the leading role in this endeavor making spring 2017 a more realistic goal. Plumas County Public Works assisted with labor and equipment in laying down the gravel for the rail bed.

Welcome To Our New Members Since Our Last Newsletter

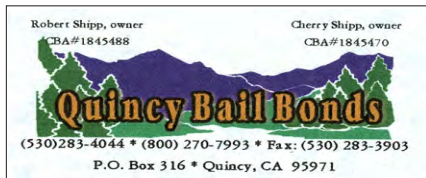
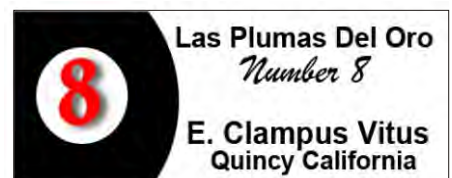
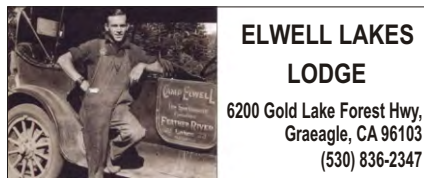
Some of our current Members are shown here because they revised or upgraded their membership category!

Individual: Mary Hunter, Eagle, ID; Beverly Lindquist, Vallejo; Beverly Ogle, Paynes Creek; Paul Pauly, Boise, ID; Jane Roix, Graeagle; Charlotte Smith, Quincy; Paula Sullivan, Portola; Larry Weaver, Quincy.

Family: Ronald Cerruti, Clayton; Raymond & Margaret Chang, Bainbridge Island, WA; Doug & Sally Clarke, Petaluma; James & Carolyn Greenwald, Concord; Eliza Hardee, Quincy; Shannon Lawson & Dan Reyes, Quincy; James Magill, Cromberg; Aaron Murdock, Piedmont; George A. Poole, Milbrae.

Patron: Richard Arnold, Portola; Laura Gambel, Lafayette; Syd & Judy Kahre, Quincy; Marjory Salhus, Reno, NV; William & Kathy Schovajsa, Paradise.

Business: Elwell Lakes Lodge, Blairsden; Graeagle Associates, Realtors, Graeagle; Quincy Bail Bonds, Quincy.



Monetary Donations

Up to \$99: Anonymous; Barry & Peggy Bailey; Dorris Beck; Gay Bentz; Marilyn Bergum; Jack & Bernadette Brumit; Raymond & Margaret Chang; Pat & Janna Cook; Leland & Kathy Cotter; Bill & Kathy Davis; Eldora Duniphin; Barbara Ferrerra; Sheila Freed, Nancy Gambell; William & Judith Gimple; Betty Harwick; Debbie Hopkins; Daniel Hoskins; Barry Hutten & Rebecca Deemer; Norm & Diana Jacobson; Leila Jigour; Wilma Jones & Pam Misco; Rick & Cindy Knapp; Rich Knoettgen; Eileen Kortas; Corky Lazzarino; James Magill; Larry & Heidi Marsh; Linda McDermott; Calvin & Nguyet Mehlert; Margo Milliken; B.J. North; Vern & Marilyn Ornbaun; Toney O'Rourke; Susan Payne; Kathy Peters; Maripat Plocki; Kest & Susen Porter; Ronald Rund; John Sheehan; Allan Shields; Kent & Elena Stokes; Janice Thomas; Elmer & Carol Tretten; Tom & Diane Uchytill; Jack & Kiki Voggenthaler; Joe & Heather Way; Phil & Betty Young; Bill & Ann Zeller.

\$100 - \$199: Lucia Biunno; Irene Clark; Jim & Lynn Dow; Dan & Nancy Elliott; John Farris; Rick & Paula Foster; Donald & Davney Gasser; Ginger Gramm; Carl & Barbara Grimes; Ted & Betty Hoskins; Chuck James & Pat Holland; Michael Jackson; Branden Johnson; Karen Kleven; Josh Lawson & Carol Prentice; Keith & Nancy Nicoles; Patricia Paule; Donna Ricks; Helen Roberti; Brita Rozynski; Elizabeth Schramel; Sherilyn Schwartz; Shadetree Automotive; John & Kathy Taylor; Jeff & Lynn Turner.

\$200 - \$499: Leslie Arlett; Pete & Joyce Dryer; Tati Erickson; Norman & Marilyn Owen; Dwight & Karen Pierson; Plumas Bank; George A. Poole; Ruth Reid; George Schuchenzuber; Soper Company; Altalee Stout.

\$500 - \$999: Patrick & Camille Leonhardt.

\$1000 - \$1999: Mooretown Rancheria; James Robbins; William & Jennifer Seibold; Philip Steers.

\$2000 - \$5000: Anonymous; Kay Pierson; Robert Walter; Estate of John Ellison

Memorials

Since our last newsletter we have received Memorial Donations in memory of the following: Andy Anderson, Quincy; George Kidder, Quincy; Bud Markham, Graeagle; DeAnne Mosley, Quincy; Albert "Jay" Ricks, Quincy; Lois Robbins, Twain; Elizabeth Lee Hills Robertson, Santa Barbara; Helen Shaver, Quincy.

Out Of Town Callers



International: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

United States: Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming.

Director's Comments Scott Lawson: Museum Director

I started working part time at the Museum as student help in late 1970. I still recall the awe with which I regarded the facility in those days. Over the years as I became more familiar with the Museum, the awe grew more into respect, not only for the artifacts, but for the donors who presented them. Now, having been employed here full time since 1989, I still feel the respect and at times awe of the collections and the facility. However, it is easy working day after day with these many items to become somewhat inured to them. Then, a visitor makes an especially appreciative comment and it brings back to me what these artifacts represent and how lucky we are as a community (county-wide) to have them and to have the kind of residents who are willing to share them with us. It has always been my creed to take the best possible care of the items entrusted with us and to ensure complete accountability for them. This can often turn into a long, tedious process, particularly as we go back and re-catalog items donated as far back as 1924. I continually tell staff (when applicable) and volunteers that if something is worth keeping, then it is worth taking time, proper care and accountability for the item. I applaud the Museum's Board of Trustees and Board of Directors for their commitment to the Museum and for their efforts to obtain funding from Plumas County. I also thank the Board of Supervisors for listening to them and providing much needed funding.

In closing, I would like to wish you all happy holidays and happy new year and please come visit YOUR Plumas County Museum.

President's Message Don Clark, President PCMA

As you are all aware, the past five years have been very trying for the Museum financially. I would again like to thank all of our members who have shown such solid support over these tough times. I would also like to heartily thank the Museum Association Board of Trustees and the Museum Board of Directors for stepping up to the plate, particularly this year, when we asked the Plumas County Board of Supervisors to consider restoring funding to the Museum. We were successful in part in our endeavor, and are grateful to the Supervisors for their consideration. The County was able to fund our operational expenses with \$15,000. This will help cover utilities and other services necessary to keep the doors open. They also allowed us another \$15,000 for extra help. With this funding we can maintain our Saturday hours as well as hire a person to assist with the many special projects we have needing attention. While we truly appreciate the support of the Supervisors, we still need your support to continue our efforts to preserve and present Plumas County's rich history. Thank you again and on behalf of the Museum boards and staff I wish you all happy holidays and a happy and prosperous new year.

Shop The Museum Gift Store!



New Books

As Old Man Winter approaches, and the weather gets gray and gloomy outside, what better way to while away the time than relaxing by the fire and losing yourself in a good book. As luck would have it, we have several new titles in our Museum Store for your reading enjoyment!

You don't have to know who Queen Calafia is, nor know all the verses to "I Love you California," nor be a certified cartophile to enjoy *California: Mapping the Golden State* which takes you on a stirring trip through the history of California in more than fifty full-color gloriously detailed rare and unusual maps from the Library of Congress, but by the time you're finished with this wonderful book, you'll certainly be inspired to find out.

Life and adventures during the California Gold Rush are the themes of *Life on the Plains and Among the Diggings* by Alonzo Delano whose incredible 1854 account of his journey across the plains and life as a miner in California is filled with humor, optimism, and keen observations, and *Mountains and Molehills*, another first-hand account of the California Gold Rush by Frank Marryat first published in 1855, which recounts this sailor, artist, and author's trek across Panama and living among French, Chinese, and English miners in California, while *The Rush*, by Edward Dolnick, tells a fascinating and rollicking story of America's fevered quest for fortune, 1848-1853, that is more intimate and engaging than any previous account of this great California event.

The pioneer spirit shines through in several of our new titles including *Isaac Julian Harvey: California Pioneer* written by his granddaughter Florence Baker, which tells the wide-ranging story of this Indiana farmer and businessman, who came west and was for a time owner of Spanish Ranch, and who later became the first mayor of Salinas City, California. Likewise, *Crossing the Plains* recounts the pioneer story of Mary Alexander Variel who left Indiana and embarked on the long and perilous journey west with her husband and two children. Settling first in Camptonville, and later in Plumas County, the house they built, The Variel Home, is now restored and part of the Plumas County Museum. Compiled by her son from Mary's diaries, this is a story of triumph and family. In *Plumas Eureka on Glass* author Bruce MacGregor gives us the first comprehensive history of the famous Plumas Eureka Mine, exploring the rise and fall of the fourth-largest hard rock gold mine in California and the diverse pioneer communities that supported it. This gorgeous book is available in both hard and soft cover.

Native American history, ethnography, and art can be found in titles such as Beverly Benner-Ogle's profusely illustrated, *The Ethnography and History of the Mountain Maidu People of Tasmam Kojòm* (also known as Humbug Valley) which not only covers the indigenous Mountain Maidu and their way of life in that lush and history-rich Plumas County valley, but also looks at the later European families that moved into the area. In *The Red and the White*, scholar Andrew Graybill presents an absorbing and intimate story of three generations of interracial marriage in the American West that blurs the distinction between American Indians and white Americans, while Brian Bibby in *Essential Art: Native Basketry from the California Indian Heritage Center* presents a book of beautiful photography, deep scholarship, and inspired storytelling all working together to pay homage to one of the world's great artistic traditions.

Our bookstore offers hundreds of titles geared for the nature lover, trail hiker, or local history buff in your family, as well as a variety of other unique gift items, including jewelry made from placer and specimen gold, and Plumas County Museum mugs, hats, and polo shirts - so visit today. Remember, Museum Members get 10% off most purchases. Visit our online bookstore @ www.plumasmuseum.org.



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A Message From Your Dedicated Museum Staff

Following recent tradition, the Museum will be closed for the months of January and February 2017 to allow staff to inventory and catalog collections, make exhibit renovations and address issues we cannot pursue when open to the public.



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