

# Docents Newsletter

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Historical Society of Dayton Valley

June 2012

## Docents program

By Ruby McFarland

“They are dead, but they live in each patriot's breast, and their names are engraved on honor's bright crest.”

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1857-1882)

We have a historical cemetery that we all should explore and note the number of veterans who find Dayton Cemetery home. One would think that a small town like Dayton wouldn't have that many. However, on Memorial Day the number of American flags posted on the graves of vets is apparent.

Since Dayton Cemetery is the oldest in Nevada you might be surprised to find a Civil War veteran. I haven't researched it but I wouldn't be surprised if you would find veterans from all the wars the U.S. Has been engaged in.

Being a veteran myself, I'm always surprised to see so many veterans at the program honoring our soldiers on Memorial Day, lest we forget. Our cemetery is a wonderful place to have the ceremony. This year the weather was perfect and at 9:00 a.m. almost too warm. Each time I attend it makes me think how close I am to my own mortality closure.

But let's make it a brighter side. Our cemetery is historic. The people who stayed in Dayton thru history are honored in the cemetery. People who made history and are acknowledged on the head stones are there for us to see. These folks are in history books and were instrumental in mining, ranching, refining gold, and everyday things like teaching. You need not go too far to find folks of all walks of life spending eternity overlooking

Dayton Valley. Not so bad a place to spend that time.

I just want everyone to be aware of all our historic places and how important they are to our area. We always get the best comments about our museum. We should be sure we send our visitors to see all there is to see in the Dayton area.

## Docent doings

By Patrick Neylan

Mission impossible? Not for the HSDV. In reviewing our Society's Mission Statement recently it occurred to me that as a group we are doing a pretty darn good job! Especially on the part that says “preserviing and promoting the Dayton Museum,” not to mention the part about “the education and enjoyment of present and future generations.” My experience so far this year indicates a major increase in the traffic at the museum, including many locals who had never been there before plus an increase in inquiries for special private tours. The wonderful new look of the museum is a major plus for those who re returning visitors and it creates a very impressive impression on the first timers. The look and presentation in the “new” gift shop has led not only to an increase in sales but better awareness of the variety of historic items we have available. We can proudly say to each guest, “please come back, because soon there will be additional exhibits such as farming and ranching in the “new” old barn out back.”

As to the educational part, over the last few years the visit of our pioneer ghosts to the local

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grammar schools has grown into a major all inclusive educational experience for the students, teachers and parents. The pre-planning, preparatory classroom visits before the “ghosts” appear, the actual appearances and the incredible follow up, day long walking tour of Old Town add up to an educational tool the school system could not replicate at any cost, and its impact is immediately noticed in the kids' participation, questions and recognizing of the “ghosts” in their current “life” at the museum or even on the street. The reaction of kids is the best payback the Society could ask for, and conclusive proof that our efforts are “preserving and promoting Dayton area history, historic integrity, heritage and culture”!

In keeping with the educational theme but expanding on the audience, our May Lecture Series has been a big hit for several years. The variety of topics and quality of speakers has attracted a diverse cross section of residents from all over Dayton Valley. The presentations have been both educational and entertaining, resulting in universally positive comments from our guests.

These examples only illustrate part of what we as a group contribute to our community. Everyone involved in the work of the Historical Society of Dayton Valley should be very proud of the impact we are making. As to the future, we are on a “Mission,” so just keep doing what you are doing! There is no doubt that it is working!

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## Book notification

By Jack Folmar

On April 28, 2012, we had a young lady visit the museum and she had nice things to say about the displays she was viewing. She introduced herself as Caroline Lawrence and informed Tom Parcels and I that she was an author of some children's books and that she just stopped in after leaving a book signing in Virginia City. She mentioned that she had stopped several times before but the

museum never happened to be open when she decided to stop. She donated her latest book, “The Case of the Deadly Desperados,” to the museum and autographed it, “To the Dayton Historical Society, enjoy the ride.” She told me that she had lived in California but was now residing in London, England. I looked up her bio on the Internet and was very surprised to find out that she has been published since 2001 with a large number of books and also in many different languages.

Ms. Lawrence is the author of the juvenile fiction series *Roman Mysteries*, which has been made into a CBBC TV series in the UK. The thrilling book series has won several awards and has been published in many languages worldwide. The *Roman Mysteries* series consists of 17 different novels.

Her latest novel, *The Case of the Deadly Desperados*, Book #1, is the beginning of her new *Western Mysteries* series and is set in 1860s Nevada Territory. By the time the reader reaches page 25 the toll is paid to cross the Carson River wooden bridge in the town of Dayton. This mystery takes place in between the Pine Nuts and Virginia City and I think desired reading for our school children. I defer to Marty Lewis to see what our local library and schools might do with this book.

Seems we are soon to be contacted by another author that is writing another book that has its beginnings in our area. This person's trip to Dayton was postponed by an assignment to jury duty. More about this when a new schedule is made.

With the books that are being published and the filming that has taken place, word is becoming more available about the place many of us now call home.

A sign-out sheet will be assigned to our Book Display area in the museum so that the book can be shared with all.

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**Dayton, where Nevada history begins**

## Closing notes

By Bob Wallace

Following up on a thread in Patrick Neylan's column, while sitting the museum over the Memorial Day holiday on Monday, May 27, one of the visitors for that day included a young man and his son from Carson City who, after several other attempts to visit Dayton's historic museum, finally found it open. After signing the guest register, they made their way around the museum for perhaps a half hour or so, the young father relating that he found Dayton's museum to be one of the best he and his son had visited, that the various exhibits to be found in our museum represented a good cross section of small town life across Nevada going back to the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Quickly explaining to them that what they were seeing during their visit on a holiday Monday was the result of many hours of work by a number of docents during the winter months to present a more logical arrangement of various parts of the museum's exhibits, including combining the Abner Blackburn and John Orr gold-related items in the first case inside the museum, sprucing up the signage for a large number of exhibits and adding others not previously identified for the benefit of visitors to the museum. Our thanks to everyone involved this past winter in making the Dayton Museum even better!

Another month, a somewhat lengthy list of dates for the month of June. This first weekend of the month finds Oodles of Noodles taking up Saturday and Sunday, the HSDV's tent once again placed adjacent to the Firehouse/Jail on Pike Street in Old Town, parking available at the depot site at US Highway 50 East and Main Street, providing a space to park one's vehicle with only a short walk to Pike Street's vendors.

Meetings for the month get started with the Depot Working Group on Wednesday, June 6, at the museum; the HSDV general meeting on the third Wednesday of the month (20th) at the library

on Old Dayton Valley Road, followed one week later (27th) by the docents meeting at the museum.

Docents made it through the month of May with its full month of keeping the museum open daily during the week from 11:00 to 3:00 each day, in addition to the usual weekend hours on Saturdays from 10:00 to 4:00, Sundays from 1:00 to 4:00.

We may not be as busy this month for open hours, as it's back to the typical Saturday and Sunday schedule. In addition, the three Thursday nights of lectures at the Senior Center made for a very busy month in May ... again!

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## June schedule

**June 2 and 3:** Oodles of Noodles, Pike Street in Old Town Dayton.

**June 6:** Depot Working Group at the museum.

**June 20:** HSDV general meeting, 12:30 at the Library on Old Dayton Valley Road.

**June 22 and 23:** Rummage sale at the Depot.

**June 27:** Docents meeting at the museum.

**Museum schedule for June:** Saturdays, 10:00 to 4:00; Sundays, 1:00 to 4:00.