

Docents Newsletter

Historical Society of Dayton Valley

May 2014



'There's not a budding boy or girl this day,
but is got up, and gone to bring in May.'

"CORINNA'S GOING A-MAYING."

by Robert Herrick ☺

DOCENT ACTIVITIES FOR MAY:

HSDV Railroad Working Group meeting on first Tuesday of the month, 6 pm at the Community Center. Thank you, Phyllis, and the group!

The Board will hold their meeting on Wednesday, May 14th, at 10:30 AM at the Community Center. All are encouraged to attend.

The General Meeting will be held on May 21st at 7:00 PM at the Community Center. New member, and Civil War Re-enactor, *David Cooper*, will present "The Life of a Union Soldier, Phillip Cooper, 140th Pennsylvania Volunteers, Company C", as well as a Brief History of Fort Homestead, Nevada.

He has wonderful pictures, stories, and artifacts to share to all interested.

Nevada's 150th Birthday

Saturday, May 17th

Old Town Dayton

Next planning meeting in the Museum

May 13th at 11: AM

DOCENT LETTERS

The following by Ruby McFarland

*Clean your fingernails before you point at my spots.
Ben Franklin*

Around this time of year, Emma Loftus started going up to Lake Tahoe, around Glenbrook area, to open the resort established by Chester Barton. Chester was Emma's son who had his finger in many business ventures. Some were lucrative others, others a complete bust. "Whispering Pines" at Tahoe was one of the successful business. Emma stayed there all summer and kept the cottages clean and rentable. She had a regular cliental who came every year. She also had friends who lived nearby and they visited on a regular basis. They were folks who had summer cabins at the lake. Chester's foster children helped Emma make up the beds and clean the rooms. Ursula and Wilma "Sparky" were a great help to Emma. She always praised the people who helped her. She wasn't the kind of woman to speak ill of anyone knowingly.

As always, Emma worked hard at keeping 'Whispering Pines' clean and beautiful. There weren't any shopping areas at Tahoe at that time, so all products had to be hauled from Carson City or Reno. At that time, there was only a small convenience store at South Lake Tahoe, and on some evenings the crew would go the South Lake Tahoe for ice cream.

One of the historic items, Chester took up to Tahoe was the school bell from the Sutro School building. Chester tore down the school for the lumber. The bell found its way to the gateway of 'Whispering Pines.' It hung there for a long time.

Emma liked 'Whispering Pines' and enjoyed having family visit her during the summer months. She made trips to Dayton to check her garden's progress, and to clean her house for Jack, her husband. Jack stayed in Dayton while Emma spent her summers at 'Whispering Pines.'

Ruby's letter continued:

Towards the end of September, she and the crew shut down for the winter. The cabins were shuttered, the water pipes removed from the spring, and all the conveniences, such as the washing machine, were all moved back to Dayton.

The family would have one last fling and dinner at the lake, and then leave for the winter. The cabins were safe from vandals, it seems. There wasn't any worry that they would be broken into. Chester removed any temptations before leaving for the winter.

LAKE TAHOE



"...at last the lake burst upon us - a noble sheet of blue water lifted six thousand three hundred feet above the level of the sea, and walled in by a rim of snow-clad mountain peaks that towered aloft full three thousand feet higher still... I thought it must surely be the fairest picture the whole earth affords."

Mark Twain
'*Roughing It*' 1872

THE DAYTON MUSEUM: A "SPECIAL" PLACE

By Pat Neylan

The most important factor that makes our Dayton museum special is the people who operate it. Week in and week out during the season, and daily during the month of May the wonderful mix of stalwart old timers and enthusiastic new comers keep its doors open and welcome a vast variety of visitors from around the world.

"Special" tours are now becoming the norm for us. Tours for the fourth graders in Dayton, part of our ongoing school program, have already begun with two more scheduled for later this month. Already, in May we have conducted two other "special" tours for people who have come to us seeking out our history. One was for a journalist from Cologne, Germany researching a story on Nevada history along Highway 50. She and her brother spent a couple of hours touring the museum and cemetery while interviewing members of the Society. The second "special" tour was for a group of homeschoolers and their parents from Sparks who were studying important early mining towns of Nevada and wanted hands on experience. This group was about 35 in number and they were guided through the museum, the firehouse jail, community center and other sites around Dayton. Naturally our museum will play a central role in our upcoming Nevada Sesquicentennial Celebration later this month and will help explain "again" Dayton's vital role in early Nevada history.

You can have all the buildings and artifacts in the world on display but it is the people that give them meaning and make them come alive for our visitors. You are what makes the Dayton Museum truly a "Special Place". Thanks to all of you.

Spafford Hall's Station

(At the corner of Main St and Cemetery Rd)

By Margy Bethers

Folks who catered to the miners were also ones to prosper, and Gold Canyon began booming in the early 1850's! Around that time, **Andrew Spafford Hall** from Indiana, made the trip to our area, then partnered with *Washington Loomis and Nathaniel Haskill* who owned a tent at the mouth of the canyon. However, fate took a bad turn in 1852, when *William Byrnes*, the government sheriff, and *W. Loomis* decided to have a "friendly shooting match" in the hills.

Folks say that while *Byrnes* was unloading his gun, *Loomis* decided to unload his gun on *Byrnes*, and leave him for dead. Before the miners could find and hang *Loomis*, both he and *Haskill* fled the scene.

William Byrnes recovered, but obsessed until he would later find and kill *Washington Loomis*. Then, *Nate Haskill* was hanged for shoplifting. This left **Andrew Spafford Hall** to take full possession of the tent trading post. In 1852, he built the first “substantial log store” and this would become Dayton’s first business. He hired *James and Alice McMarlin* to help him run the store with a wage of \$60 a month. For a time, Dayton was ‘**Hall’s Station.**’

As **Gold Fever** continued its fervor, along came the GROSCH BROTHERS! Soon, Thomas Page Comstock arrived, then Pat McLaughlin, Peter O’Reilly, Sandy Bowers, and hundreds of others, including Eilley Orrum, who later became Eilley Bowers. She operated a boarding house in Johntown, about four miles up from Hall’s Station. Many of the miners ate at her table, and although, they dined with Eilley, they ‘squandered their gold dust’ at Hall’s Station!

From the ‘History of Nevada: Early Emigrants’ by Sam P. Davis:

“Spafford Hall had established a trading center at Gold Canyon on a site occupied by ‘Douglass and Company’ and the place was known as “Hall’s Station.” Providence has been liberal with Dayton in matter of names, for it has been known as Gold Canyon, Hall’s Station, McMarlin’s Station, Chinatown, Mineral Rapids, Nevada City, and Dayton. It officially held the first dance, marriage and divorce.”

That first dance was held on New Year’s Eve, 1853 in the room above Hall’s Station!!

When *Andrew Spafford* was injured while hunting, he sold the store to *James McMarlin*, and returned to Indiana. It then became McMarlin’s Station. James sent for his brother, John, to help

A few years later, *John McMarlin* was killed by Indians in the mountains at Slippery Ford, and later broken hearted James sold the store to *Major William Ormsby* around the middle 1850’s. (Major Ormsby was the one who gave Princess Winnemucca her first home and education.)

In 1859, there were 2500 people living in Dayton such a prosperous town with its Pony Express station. Hall’s/McMarlin’s Station was the first Pony Express

site, then in 1860 it stood at the Union Hotel. Sadly, *Major Ormsby* was killed in the Pyramid War and the Pony Express was halted and later closed with the rise of the telegraph, and also being unsafe.

I find no mention of ownership of McMarlin’s Station, after Major Ormsby death, however there were new stores, saloons, hotels, and restaurants to take its place. I did read that mining caused its demise in the 1930’s and it’s now a borrow pit☺

I often drive by that gravel pit wondering what it must’ve been like to live in the heyday ~ the dancing, the music!! 150 men to nine women on New Year’s Eve, 1853?? *Sweet Betsy from Pike, Skip to my Lou, Oh Susanna!!*” It may have been bitter cold, with a smattering of snow on the ground, yet with a million stars over the hills, & a promise of a glorious sunrise on the first day of **1854!**



A much more “refined affair☺”**The Buckland Ball.**

“Another announcement tells of a ball given at S. Buckland's, now Towles', at the time when the Fort was still occupied. The managers of the dance were the officers at the Fort, citizens of Dayton, Walker River, Big Bend of the Carson, Silver City, and Virginia City, to the number of twenty. **The date is September 20, 1864.** Assurance was given that supper would be provided for all.” (From HISTORICAL SKETCH AND REMINISCENCES of Dayton, Nevada. Fannie Hazlett)



I’ve heard rumors that the “End of the Trail” is the oldest bar in Nevada, and that it used to be called the “Utopia.” Can anyone comment on the claim?



The Minor family opened their hearts and their gates, once again, to Dayton kids for the annual Egg Hunt, last month! Our new member, Levi, was a lucky participant. He's shown here with Del Minor. Thanks to Del, Levi and the Coopers for the picture!

COME ONE ~COME ALL!!



Our NV 150 Committee has been working overtime to bring to Dayton the finest event ever to grace our streets!

So many visitors are interested in our stove with its "sad irons" ('sad' in sad iron, or sadiron, is an old word for solid or heavy). Del Minor included an explanation which I encourage all docents to read. Thanks to Del, and many others, our museum will forever prosper☺

"You'll find your happiness lies right under your eyes back in your own BACKYARD!"

I find our museum fascinating, not only for the displays, but for the books, newspaper clippings, articles, files, hats, costumes, and pictures I find in the back room. There are also a variety of DVD's made by our members for your enlightenment. Jack has his pictures on the computer, and I'm certain he will help you learn how to browse. I could spend hours in our museum and never see it all. So if it's a slow day on your docent shift, or if you need to gather information, or just for fun, plan to pack a lunch and spend some time at the Historical Society of Dayton Valley Museum on Shady Lane~"back in our own backyard!"

Sometimes, I'm told, the meetings seem endless, but in the end they will have been worth every single minute spent! We thank our brilliant leaders, Laurie Emrich and Laura Tennant, for keeping the group moving along. Thanks for the members of our society for the contributions, as well as the community. Please plan to attend the last meeting this Tuesday at 11AM for the final touches, and as always, there will be preparation the day before. We need contributions of **red, white and blue** decorations beautiful.

<http://daytonnvhistory.org/history.htm> (a great site to see before our NV 150 event on May 17th!)



On May 17th 2014, the streets of Dayton will be filled with people celebrating our NV 150 event! Wouldn't the ones in this buggy & on the streets love to peek into the future to witness such wonders in their town on these very spots!



This was just sent from our travelling member, Bob Wallace! He and Lois are now in Fort Worth, and wanted to share a little of his travels. We will miss you on May 17th, but promise to take lots of pictures!



Better late than never? Here's a "stock" picture of the historic Fort Worth Stockyards Station where longhorns walk twice each day for visitors. Friday and Saturday evenings will find modern cowboys doing their thing of riding and roping at the Stockyards Championship Rodeo at Cowtown Coliseum



Mary Anne Sichak is on board with the Oodles of Noodles which will be held June 21 and 22 on the streets of Old Dayton.

Vickie Kinney is now the chairman of the annual Rummage Sale. Stay tuned for dates and time!

Thanks to the Railroad Working Crew for their travels to Fernley to gather up some treasures for the Depot. More next month!

I found this on my email. Thanks Mary Ann, and the NV 150 Events Committee! Margy ☺

DISCOVER GOLD IN DAYTON, AGAIN!

Official Nevada 150th Celebration!

Saturday, May 17
9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Opening Ceremonies 9:00 am at the Community Center

19th CENTURY COMES TO LIFE AGAIN IN OLD TOWN DAYTON!

Look What's Coming to Old Town!

Pony Express, Gold Panning, Blacksmithing, Wagon Rides;
Tours of Historic Buildings and Historical Photo Exhibits;
Hayride Tours to the Cemetery, Gold Canyon and Dredging Pit;
Single Jack, Spike Driving, and Bucksaw Log Cutting Demos;
Old Fashioned Kids' Games and Horseshoe Toss;
Quilting and Handiwork Demos; Socialize with Adolph Sutro
... come in period dress and join the fun!

Participating Organizations: Historical Society of Dayton Valley, Battle Born CWR, Nevada Civil War Volunteers, Knights of Columbus, Mason Valley Boys and Girls Club, Wild Horse Association, Virginia City Gun Singers, Lyon County Sheriff's, M.C. Silkweaving

775-246-8216, 775-246-3256 or maschick@gmail.com www.daytonhistory.org

9AM: As a special tribute to Armed Forces Day, we honor our veterans and those who serve, with the Lyon County Sheriff's Honor Guard, the Dayton Area Elementary School Choirs, a black powder salute by the Nevada Civil War Volunteers and a message from Sheriff Veil.

WHERE

HISTORICAL PRESENTATIONS / DEMONSTRATIONS

Pony Express Mochila Handoff – History and Story Telling and four mochila handoffs throughout the day.	Main Street
Adolph Sutro talks about his history and the Sutro tunnel	Community Center
Blacksmithing at the JohnD Shop	Schoolhouse Museum
Single Jack Drilling	Railroad Depot
Bucksaw Log Cutting	Corner of Hwy 50 and Main
Railroad Spike Driving	
Civil War Camp – Nevada Civil War Volunteers and Battle Born Civil War Re-enactors	

Quilting and Handiwork	Community Center
Dutch Oven Cooking (Tasting - \$2)	Next to Community Ctr.

HANDS ON ACTIVITIES

WHERE

Gold Panning (for real gold!)	Pike St. and Gold Creek
Old Fashioned Kids Games with Boys and Girls Club	Pike St.
Horse Shoe Toss – Try your hand at tossing horse shoes	Railroad Depot
Wagon Rides – Take a ride around town in horse drawn grain wagon. (\$1 donation requested)	Pike St. and Tyler St.
Hayride to Cemetery, Gold Canyon and Dredging Pit	Court House Parking Lot
Socialize with the folks of 19 th Century Old Town Dayton as they go about their busy day. (Re-enactors and Historical Society volunteers in period costume, including Mark Twain!)	All Around the Town

BUILDINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC WITH TOURS AND RE-ENACTORS

Community Center –Historical photo display, Old High School Tour , Adolph Sutro
Blue Stone Building (Courthouse) – Judge Vecchiarelli and historical photo exhibit
Firehouse / Jail – Historical photos, artifact displays and re-enactors
Railroad Depot – Historical photos, artifact displays and re-enactors
Schoolhouse Museum – An extensive collection of Dayton-area historical exhibits

FOOD

Big Nick's Ice Cream Parlor – Hear the story of Big Nick's Bar turned Ice Cream Parlor for the town's kids' party and enjoy a tasty ice cream, drinks and tri-tip sandwiches.
Knights of Columbus offer Polish sausages, hamburgers, chips and soda
Soroptimists will be street vendors selling muffins, cupcakes and water.