IN THE VEIN...

Fall has arrived, bringing cooler temperatures and (soon) beautiful colors to the Park. This is a great time for visitors as well as volunteers to visit all of our local state parks.

The 122nd annual Miners Picnic was a delightful and memorable experience for over 900 visitors, despite the extreme heat of the day. The Park was a perfect place to be that day because of all the entertainment and fun events. The gardens were carefully and perfectly groomed by Park Gardener Jennifer Wood working with her staff and garden volunteers, and it provided opportunities for welcome shade.

EMPA is dedicated to making special events at the Park a success for all who take part. Special thanks to Steve Sanchez, who once again chaired this year's Miners Picnic, and all volunteers who contributed in countless ways. The Silent Auction, chaired by Patti Gizzi, with assistance from Jan Sweringen, was a great success, netting the funds needed to cover EMPA's costs associated with recreating this historic event.

At this time of the year, Park staff and the EMPA Board meet to discuss and plan for future maintenance and improvement needs in the Park. Park staff begin the planning process, and EMPA, in turn, begins the necessary planning to secure and provide the needed funds. Supporting the Park is EMPA's main mission, and we are happy to fulfill it.

I am pleased to announce that we have gained a new Board Member. Dan McCarthy, whom you may recognize as a talented Park Tour Guide and Living History Interpreter at the Cottage, has agreed to join the Board. Dan's skills in project management were of great benefit to the “Mine, Wine & Dine” fundraising event held this past June. These skills make Dan a perfect fit for the Board – and he is having fun doing it! The future of the Empire Mine Park Association (EMPA) depends on people like Dan who are willing to lend his or her talents, either by serving on the Board or by directing special projects. There will be at least three openings for 2018.

As mentioned in last month's issue, the EMPA Annual General Meeting is planned for November 2, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. when new Board members will be elected. Also, at this time, the Board is interested in hearing all comments and suggestions from EMPA members. As previously announced, the guest speaker will be Gary Noy, whose topic will be “Cousin Jacks.” Gary's passion is gold mining history and he has written several books. He is the son and grandson of Cornish miners so he is very well informed on the subject.

(continued on page 3).
WHO WAS SCHUYLER COLFAX, AND WHAT DOES HE HAVE TO DO WITH COTTAGE LIVING HISTORY?

By Caryl Fairfull

In Cottage Living History we often talk about the Bourn family taking the Union Pacific train to Colfax and then catching the "Never Come Never Go (Narrow Gauge) Railroad" (NCNG) to Grass Valley. But how did Colfax get it’s name? Answer: It was named after Schuyler Colfax.

Schuyler Colfax, Jr., was born in New York City in 1823. His father died before he was born, and he had to leave school at the age of ten to work and support his family. He never attended secondary school or college. At age 22, he became editor and owner of a pro-Whig newspaper. He was elected to Congress in 1854, and as Speaker of the House by his colleagues in 1863. In 1868, when Ulysses S. Grant was selected as the Presidential candidate, Colfax was placed on the ballot as Vice President, due to his political experience. They were elected on the Republican ticket in November 1868. At that time the Transcontinental Railroad was under construction.

The Credit Mobilier scandal of 1872-1873 damaged the careers of several politicians, including Schuyler Colfax. Major stockholders in the Union Pacific Railroad formed a company, called Credit Mobilier of America, and gave it contracts to build the railroad. Influential congressmen were sold or given shares in Credit Mobilier. It was a lucrative deal for the congressmen, because they were approving federal subsidies to fund railroad construction. Railroad builders made huge profits from Credit Mobilier, and the congressmen also benefitted. When the New York Sun broke the story on the eve of the 1872 election, Speaker of the House James G. Blaine, set up a congressional committee to investigate. The House censured two members involved in this scandal: Oakes Ames of Massachusetts and James Brooks of New York. The careers of outgoing Vice President Schuyler Colfax, incoming Vice President Henry Wilson, and Representative James A. Garfield, were tarnished, and Schuyler Colfax was removed from the 1872 Presidential ticket.

The railroad was one of the most significant technological feats of the 19th Century. There were other transcontinental railroads built later, but the Central Pacific Route is regarded as the most important. The railroad engineer, Theodore Judah, was highly acclaimed. The first train rode through Illinoistown (as Colfax was once known) in September of 1865.

After his Vice Presidency, Colfax was a popular lecturer around the country and was paid fees of up to $2,500. On one speaking journey, he had to walk between two railroad stations in Minnesota when temperatures were 30 degrees below zero. He made it to the station, but died alone of exposure in a town where no one knew him, at the age of 61. A sad ending indeed.

The Town of Colfax, inhabited by Maidu and Miwok Indians, was originally known as Alder Grove. It became Illinoistown in 1852. After Vice President Schuyler Colfax visited to inspect the progress of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1865, the town was named Colfax. The city was the southern terminus of the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad from 1876 until it was removed in 1942. And so, now you know a bit more about Schuyler Colfax and Colfax, California!
IN THE VEIN (continued from page 1)

Regrettably, I will miss the General Meeting because of a previously scheduled cruise on the Danube River. However, I am sure our gracious Vice President, Troy Hammer, will conduct the meeting with skill and humor.

Finally I want to say I will miss Ranger Greg Sherr as he leaves Empire for the South Yuba River State Park this month. We will all miss his positive influence and friendship, and I wish him well in his change of venue.

JIM COE

COTTAGE LIVING HISTORY (CLH) CONCLUDES SEASON

By Cheryl Balmain, Jane Bland and Nancy Koring, CLH Co-Coordinators

Wednesday, September 20 was the Wrap-Up Potluck for the 2017 Cottage Living History Season, which was held in the Clubhouse. As usual, we had a lovely, friendly gathering and discussed many items. First, we acknowledged all our volunteers for the superb role playing they did during the season. We especially appreciated our new docents who did a great job being part of CLH. We also acknowledged Bev Skinner as she “retires” after seven years of writing articles about Cottage Living History for the Empire Star. Caryl Fairfull (who was unable to attend the potluck) will be assuming this responsibility with this issue. We also acknowledged Lynne Buenz as she turns over her role as Lead Interpreter to Dan McCarthy.

We also acknowledged this year’s schedulers — Arlie Harrell (who also served as Lead Scheduler), Susie Bradinini, Suzy Steele, Barbara Langdon and Martha Rust. These ladies kept us organized and well staffed during the season. There was a total of 1,967 visitors to the Cottage according to Interpreter’s figures — a very busy season! Under discussion is the possibility of expanding the 1905 timeframe at the Cottage to include the year 1906. Dan McCarthy took us through a timeline based on the book, “The Last Bonanza Kings.” This might give us some more talking points, while at the same time, always keeping our focus on the Bourns at Empire Mine and the Cottage.

TALENTED GUEST AND FRIEND ATTENDS MINERS PICNIC

By Courtney Ferguson

For years, award-winning writer and photographer, Diane Covington-Carter, has featured the Empire Mine in The Union, Sierra Heritage Magazine, and, more recently, in an article she wrote for the Santa Rosa Press Democrat. It was a pleasure to welcome Diane to our 122nd Miners Picnic. A local resident, Diane is always curious about the events that EMPA hosts. Her interest in history extends beyond our local lore. One of her books, Reunion, La Réunion, Finding Gilbert (2014) is about how, during the 50th anniversary of D-Day, she found the French orphan her father tried to adopt in 1944 during WWII. The book is available at our local libraries, along with two of her other memoirs. Visit her website at www.dianecovingtoncarter.com.
THANK YOU, THANK YOU . . .

Your generosity has once again insured a successful CAKE WALK event at this year’s Miners Picnic. I don’t hear from many of you before the event, but magically cakes appear, and we are able to make a lot of kids (big and small) very happy.

Thank you for supporting this historic event and the beautiful Empire Mine State Historic Park!

Lise Hinman and her Cake Walk Team.

---

Dates to Remember

| Tuesday, October 17, 2017—9:30 a.m. |
| EMPA Board of Directors Meeting |
| Docent Building |

| Sunday, October 22, 2017 |
| 11:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. |
| Bridgeport Fall Festival |
| (South Yuba River State Park—Bridgeport) |

| Thursday, October 19, 2017 |
| Coordinators Meeting |
| Docent Building |

| Thursday, November 2, 2017—1:00 p.m. |
| EMPA Annual General Meeting |
| Docent Building |

---

Empire Star Editorial Policy — All articles submitted for publication become the property of the Empire Mine Park Association (EMPA) and, as such, are subject to editing and/or other modification. In addition, articles may NOT be published the same month they are submitted due to space limitations.
(Editor's Note: Gage McKinney is the author of No Depression Here and When Miner's Sang. His most recent book is MacBoyle’s Gold, the biography of gold miner Errol MacBoyle of Grass Valley, copies of which are available in the Gift Shop. We are honored and delighted to have Mr. McKinney as a regular contributor to The Empire Star!)

THE SLOVENIANS WERE GOLD MINERS, TOO

By Gage McKinney

Much has been written about Cornish miners, their ancient mining heritage and proverbial “nose for gold.” The Irish proved themselves in gold mines such as the Allison Ranch and the North Star. The Chinese made a livelihood as placer miners, finding gold others had left in the riverbeds. But this familiar list of immigrants who settled around the Grass Valley mines overlooks some later arrivals.

Beginning in the 1870s, uprooted central and southern Europeans streamed into America. Fifteen million arrived between 1900 and the outbreak of war in 1914, often to take dehumanizing mass-production jobs.

Two examples were Joseph and Annie Pirtz from Slovenia, then part of the tottering Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Slovenians could claim a mining heritage dating to Roman times, but whether Joe descended directly from miners isn’t known. He was born in 1888 and followed a string of others from his homeland across the ocean and continent to Roundup, Montana. Near a town known for cowboys and herds, Joe mined coal to feed the locomotives of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad (the Milwaukee Road).

In the coal camp Joe met Annie Rezek, a young woman working in the boarding house. Though still a teenager, Annie was determined to marry one of the boarders, and she thought Joe was the best of the lot. “I didn’t marry for love,” Annie used to say. She married for a better life.

A better life began when Joe and Annie moved to Grass Valley about 1920 with their four young children. Joe’s steady employment at the Empire Mine, and Annie’s determination and drive, lay behind the couple’s subsequent success. Their descendants doubt Joe and Annie had any schooling in the old country, but in America, Joe read the newspaper every day and Annie managed the couple’s finances, having a head for math.

Saving from their modest earnings, the Pirtz’s acquired the Pacific Hotel on the corner of Main and South Auburn streets. Annie ran the place, putting her boarding house skills to use, and kept the books. She complained her husband drank the profits at the hotel bar, but the complaint was at least partly in jest. Annie had made a good life with Joe, and she respected and even came to love her husband of more than 60 years.

The family valued education and their oldest son, Joe, Jr., put himself through the University of California at Berkeley by working during the summers at the Empire Mine. He later became a manager with PG&E in San Francisco. Joe and Annie’s youngest son, Dave, who worked on the Panama Canal and Oroville Dam, became a professor of civil engineering at the University in Berkeley.

My friend, Linda Frisch, told me about the stunning rise of her Slovenia forebears as we stood by Joe and Annie Pirtz’s graves in the Roman Catholic Cemetery on West Main Street. Surrounding us were other Slovenian graves bearing the names Cukjati, Astesana, Gliko and Zupan. They had all come to Grass Valley via Roundup, Montana. It goes to show the Cornish weren’t the only ones looking out for their “Cousin Jack.”
A CHANGE OF SEASONS
By Ranger Greg Sherr

With my last day as the Park Ranger at Empire Mine quickly approaching, I wanted to thank all of the volunteers, EMPA members and other people who have been such an important part of both Empire Mine State Historic Park and my life during the past five years! The time has gone by very quickly, and I have thoroughly enjoyed being a part of this great California State Park.

There have been so many highlights during the past five years that I have a hard time listing them all. So, I will try and list my favorites. Seeing my first bear at Empire Mine was a thrill. The bear was making quite a racket near the Upper Union Hill Trail and did not sense my presence for about ten minutes as I watched it search for food. Meeting Santa was also a thrill. It’s not often that you can meet a “true legend” at your workplace – and it happened every year! Going through the Blacksmith training was amazing. I consider it one of the best trainings that I have ever attended! The field trip to Filoli was also a memory that I will cherish. I was able to visit with quite a few volunteers on the bus and field trip and learned something about each person that I did not know before. Running into a long-horned steer with a rider (and English saddle) on the Hardrock Trail with its companion goat was an unexpected bonus! Contacting my first naked, Tuvan throat singer on the Memorial Park Trail was also something that I did not plan for. And finally, hearing every possible excuse as to why “my dog is not on a leash” will entertain me during moments of quiet reflection and solitude.

But most of all, I will miss the volunteers, EMPA members and people associated with this incredible Park. The time, love and passion that you all have for the Park is inspiring and admirable. I hope to see all of you again in the near future and hopefully our paths will cross again. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.
From an interview of Phil Keast, Master Mechanic and Mechanical Engineer, Empire Mine 1920-1957. Interview date 11/10/80

I started working at the Empire on July 20, 1920. I worked at Taylor Foundry during WWI. I was out of a job when the war was over. I went up and rustled Knobbs up at the Empire.

I worked at Taylor Foundry as an apprentice and finished my trade in the Empire Mine shops. After 43 years I was classed as a mechanical engineer and master mechanic at the mine. That included the Ziebright Mine, Browns Valley, Empire and Pennsylvania mines. The 4 mines were under my jurisdiction. 90% to 95% of the mine workers in the 1920’s walked to work because there were very few automobiles. So you had to gauge when you had to leave your house in the morning to give you time to walk the 3 or 4 miles to get to the mine on time.

There was an old saying that if you had a horse and cart you were out of the class of a miner, but there were some there. They used to have horse barns for the men to put the horses in.

My father used to walk clear up to the mine on Osborn Hill. That’s approximately 3 miles each way. I walked to Empire right up to my last day in 1967.

The preceding recollections are believed to be true; however, we are relying on the memory of the individual who had such a recollection.

From an interview of Doris (Hooper) Sheridan, daughter of Albert Hooper, Empire Master Mechanic. Born at Empire 1909. Interview date 3/8/96.

The cascades of water were there. I used to go out and play because there were lovely little pollywogs in those little places. That was not a swimming pool.

When we lived there the reflecting pond had just a dirt bottom. There wasn’t much water in it. It would be dry because there were big cracks in the dirt. You could see the big bull frogs down there.

We lived at Empire when Mr. Starr’s first house burned. I remember the fire. They had a black man that was their cook. His name was Rufus. He used to play with my brother. He was a nice man. He cooked for Mr. Starr for years. He was just our friend. Then Georgie Sing came. His mother and dad were there and Georgie was a little boy. I went to school with him.

We never thought to go up to the cottage when the Bourn’s were there. We just didn’t do it. We knew when Mr. Bourn was coming because at the mine they would get everything ship shape. Everything was painted green.
FACTS FROM THE PAST

By Barbara Jarvis

Timelines

1885  William Bourn, Jr. forms Grass Valley Water Company to bring water to the Idaho-Maryland, Empire, North Star, and Allison Ranch Mines.

1888  Miners earn $3.00 per day per 10 hour shift.

1898  Electricity and central hot water heating system installed in new office building.

1899  Mules introduced into Empire Mine.

1922  Wages: Miner—$4.25/day. Timberman—$5/day. Muckers—$3/day (approximately).

1930  Engineers’ Office completed.

1933  Sale of 10 acres of Bourn property to Empire-Star Mines Company, Ltd. — consisting of Cottage, Clubhouse, tennis court, swimming pool, courts, walks, lawns. Two acres of gardens, section surrounding the George W. Starr home not included, and remains in the possession of Mr. Starr.

1934  President Franklin D. Roosevelt sets price of gold at $34.00 per ounce.

1934  34 mules in mine.

1936  Wages: Miner—$5.28/day. Muckers—$4.80/day.

1938  Work started on Model of Empire-Star Mines by Robert Cannon, geologist and mining engineer under Fred Nobs. Initial work takes one year, then continued update.

1939  Fred Nobs retires. Jack Mann becomes Mine Manager.

1942  Mine closed by War Production Board, Order L-208.

1945  July 1—mine reopens. Labor shortage, long-shut-down and poor profits delay operations.

1947  Company resumes full operations on a lessee operated basis.

1949  Company has 125 lessees and 200 employees.

1953  Map room and window, main floor of Office Building made in 1953, not 1942/43.

1956  Strike called by Mine Workers Protective League.

1957  Newmont begins liquidation of assets as strike continues.

1969  Empire headframe destroyed as safety hazard and insurance liability.

1975  State of California purchased Empire Mine to create State Historic Park.

Above information compiled from various sources.
Empire Mine State Park
Volunteer Coordinators

**Interpretative Coordinators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Tour Guides</strong></th>
<th>George Sanford</th>
<th>274-1646</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Tour Guides</strong></td>
<td>Park Staff</td>
<td>273-8522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Tour Guides</strong></td>
<td>Marilyn Sakowicz</td>
<td>272-5507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blacksmith Shop</strong></td>
<td>Marilyn Sakowicz</td>
<td>272-5507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blacksmith Shop</strong></td>
<td>Bill Blount</td>
<td>477-0317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cottage Living History</strong></td>
<td>Cheryl Balmain</td>
<td>273-6087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cottage Living History</strong></td>
<td>Nancy Koring</td>
<td>273-5510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clubhouse Living History</strong></td>
<td>Betty and John Lucas</td>
<td>679-0310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mineyard Living History</strong></td>
<td>Vince Seck</td>
<td>273-4574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mineyard Living History</strong></td>
<td>Frank Hamlin (Intern)</td>
<td>268-5672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mineyard Stations</strong></td>
<td>Vince Seck</td>
<td>273-4574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mineyard Stations</strong></td>
<td>Frank Hamlin (Intern)</td>
<td>268-5672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Luncheons</strong></td>
<td>Jane Bland</td>
<td>274-2440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Luncheons</strong></td>
<td>Troy Hammer</td>
<td>575-9155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Administrative Coordinators**

| **Research**                | Barbara Jarvis       | 477-1557 |
| **Oral History**            | Lise Hinman          | 273-8266 |
| **Gift Shop**               | Jennifer Greenfield  | 205-7469 |
| **Nursery**                 | Troy Hammer          | 575-9155 |
| **OTHG**                    | Tom Newmark          | 265-3848 |
| **Security**                | Terry Armstrong      | 271-0126 |
| **Rose Garden**             | Carol Terrell        | 368-0047 |
| **Rose Propagation**        | Troy Hammer          | 575-9155 |
| **Garden Tours**            | Marsha Lewis         | 274-2834 |
| **Trails**                  | Lianne Werner        | 273-0704 |

Note: Changes in directory listings on this and the following page should be sent to Lynne Buenz, Editor/Publisher, at la_buenz@hotmail.com
Empire Mine Park Association

Thanks to these folks for taking the lead in making the Empire Mine State Historic Park such a unique and enjoyable experience!

EMPA Board of Directors

President, Jim Coe / 274-2675 / coejim@sbcglobal.net
Vice Pres., Troy Hammer / 575-9155 / troypheus@yahoo.com
Secretary, Brianna Pacillo / 559-7468 / bpacillo@gmail.com
Treasurer, Betty Lucas / 679-0310 / blucas1208@gmail.com
Director, Jack Conner / 477-5225 / connergy@pacbell.net
Director, Sean Gilleran / 477-1700 / s.gilleran@goldminersinn.com
Director John Lucas / 679-0310 / blucas1208@gmail.com
Director Steve Ruble / 650-773-0160 / Steve.ruble@gmail.com
Director, Steve Sanchez / 273-8235 / snakeandflower@gmail.com

EMPA Administration & Committees

Assistant Treasurer(s) / Evelyn Allison / 274-1878
   allisont141@theunion.net and
   glora_kenny47@gmail.com
Gloria Kenney / 477-8783 / gokenney47@gmail.com
Elections, Troy Hammer / 575-9155 / troypheus@yahoo.com
Holiday Event, Steve Sanchez / 273-8235 / snake and flower@gmail.com
Hospitality, Sean Gilleran / 477-1700 / s.gilleran@goldminersinn.com
Membership (Vacant)
Nominating, Troy Hammer / 575-9155 / troypheus@yahoo.com
Miners Picnic, Steve Sanchez / 273-8235 / snakeandflower@gmail.com
Newsletter: Editor/Publisher—Lynne Buenz / 470-0595 / la_buenz@hotmail.com
Gift Shop, Jennifer Greenfield / 205-7469 / jgardens2@att.net
Sunshine, Pat Coe / 274-2675 / patcoe@sbcglobal.net
Webmaster, Brianna Pacillo / 559-7468 / bpacillo@gmail.com

Empire Mine State Historic Park
10791 East Empire Street
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Return Service Requested

THE EMPIRE STAR

This Newsletter is a Cooperative venture between the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the Empire Mine Park Association.

On the web at www.empiremine.org