Everyone Loves a Parade!!!

Submitted by Bev Skinner

And I’m sure you’re included in that number! So – come join us on Saturday, July 4, in “beautiful downtown Grass Valley” – and help us celebrate EMSHP’s 40th birthday along with your nation’s 239th by walking the Parade route along with a lot of other fellow VIPs from the Park! It starts at 11 a.m. – but I understand that the Nevada County Concert Band will start playing at 10 – and we need all participants to be there between 10:15 and 10:30!

At this point, we don’t know our assigned “number” in the Parade so I can’t tell you exactly “where” to meet yet, but we’ll receive that information in plenty of time for the July issue of the Empire Star and I’ll be sure that it gets in – or, you can always call me at home for that information or if you have other questions.

Empire Mine’s very own energizer bunny – Jack Laird in case he needs additional identification – is heading up the Parade this year and he’s well on his way to making our entry “spectacular!” It will include several antique vehicles with their drivers and any riders in period costumes, EMPA’s mining equipment trailer – and this is where you come in – lots of VIPs walking the Parade route (will take about an hour to walk it) – showing how proud we all are of being part of our outstanding local State Park! Some of us will just “walk” while some can keep extra busy by handing out materials promoting Miners Picnic in August – the choice is yours.

There’s even a 3 or 4-person “decorating committee” in place that is anxiously awaiting for the opportunity to adorn all parts of our entry.

We’re asking that none of our participants wear ordinary street clothes as they walk in the Parade – but there are lots of simple options available. Period costumes, of course, are appropriate. A few might be available at the Cottage – but special arrangements must be made with Suzy Steele, a representative of CLH, ahead of time – call her at 916-764-1722 or email her at suzysteele@gmail.com. However, our good ole gold vests, worn over a white shirt, work just fine too. Or – wear “western attire” – jeans, a shirt, and some kind of a hat – suspenders might add a nice touch. Another suitable option is to dress as a miner might have dressed – simple and appropriate.

Jack’s going to be gone for most of June so please direct your questions my way – but especially call or email me and tell me you think this sounds like a lot of fun and you’d like to be one of those we can count on being there the morning of the 4th!

Bev Skinner: 477-1750 or bev4411@gmail.com

Check out EMPA’s brand new website – it’s cool! – www.empiremine.org.
“It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade ...”

I’m truly not a month early – though the subject of my article this time is 4th of July celebrations. Yes, the July issue of the Empire Star will “probably” be out by July 1; sometimes delays happen though and I don’t want to miss out on the opportunity to share a wee bit about celebrating Independence Day, as we sometimes call it, at the very beginnings of our independent nation. Many of our articles in the Empire Star are historical in nature – newspaper accounts from the glory days of the Empire Mine – or copies of interviews of Empire employees of those days – but I’m going way back – 239 years ago to be exact – if I’ve subtracted correctly – to 1776!

In doing a little research on the idea of “celebrating” the 4th of July, I came across an article researched and written by James R. Heintze about one of our “founding fathers,” John Adams. He’s always interested me and I’ve read a lot about him – and his long-suffering wife, Abigail – and though he certainly had his share of critics in his own day, I’ve always greatly admired him – and his ideals.

Mr. Heintze wrote, “No other family has had a longer legacy of celebrating the Fourth of July than the Adams family” and he followed with these words, “John Adams’ famous letter of July 3, 1776, in which he wrote to his wife Abigail what his thoughts were about celebrating the Fourth of July is found on various web sites but is usually incorrectly quoted. Following is the exact text from his letter with his original spellings:"

From the Adams Family Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society. Not to be reproduced without permission.
As you will note, Adams’s prediction of celebrating our independence from Great Britain was off by two days. From the very beginning, we’ve celebrated independence on July 4, the date shown on the much-publicized Declaration of Independence, rather than on July 2, the date the resolution of independence was approved by the Continental Congress. Another longstanding dispute has been whether Congress actually signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4. Even though Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin all later wrote that they had signed it on that day, most historians have concluded that the Declaration was signed nearly a month after its adoption, on August 2, 1776, and not on July 4 as is commonly believed. However, Congress did formally adopt the Declaration of Independence on July 4 – and the Liberty Bell at Independence Hall (then known as the Pennsylvania State House) sounded and helped spread the word throughout the newly declared independent states.

We support, honor, and celebrate our Park every time we volunteer there – and this is the time of year that we do the same for our nation!
VIP EDUCATIONAL TOURS KEEP “ROLLING ALONG”!

Lynne Buenz

VIP Tour Coordinator

Thursday, April 16, was the date of the third VIP Educational Tour, and featured a “grand” tour of the Empire Clubhouse, including two of the three guest rooms upstairs, and the bowling alley on the lower level -- areas that are not open to the general public. Eighteen VIPs participated. Dressed in period costume, tour leaders Bob Jennings and John Lucas also provided tidbits of history and dispelled some of the common myths about this impressive structure. “Bonus” features of the afternoon’s tour activities included a presentation on women’s suffrage by docent Marsha Lewis (aka Ellen Clark Sargent), and a peek into the gardener’s cottage, which was once the home of the Oyung family.

Next on the tour schedule is a walk through the historic gardens and the areas on the perimeter of the landscaped areas of the park. Docents will have the opportunity to learn about some of the most significant (and historical) plants and trees, as well as some of the lesser known structures on the immediate Park grounds. This tour is scheduled for Thursday, July 23, from 3 to 5 pm. The group size will be limited to no more than 30 persons. Interested VIPs may make reservations by contacting the Park Visitor’s Center at 273-8522, no later than Monday, July 20. A reminder will be published in the July issue of The Empire Star.

New Garden Benches!

submitted by Marsha Lewis

There are five new garden benches in our beautiful grounds, arriving just in time for our Mother’s Day event. Three benches were placed north of the cottage adjacent to the perennial beds and two were placed in "maple lane." Folks have been enjoying a pleasant respite as they wander through these areas of the gardens. Much gratitude goes to Ranger Greg for supporting and facilitating this project and to EMPA for the funds to make this much needed purchase possible. So take a few moments and sit a spell – our gardens and majestic trees are a treasure!!
A Sweet Mother’s Day

Mother's Day has become a wonderful tradition here at Empire Mine State Historic Park. The Park's gardens are usually lush and in beautiful color, the lawns green and inviting, and the weather sunny and warm. This year did not disappoint anyone! Children at the Kids’ Potting Bench created exquisite creations and cards to gift Mom or Grandma. Over 180 little folks kept our hard-working docents busy. These women deserve our enthusiastic gratitude and a long rest. The music was charming with the Lake Wildwood Barbershop Quartet entertaining visitors outside the Cottage. Carol Meals and Heather MacAdam entertained us all with their period music and entertaining style. Vendors were present with delicious choices. Many families chose to picnic which proved both cost effective and fun.

The docents in period dress in the Cottage, Clubhouse, and Mine Yard exhibited great knowledge and energy as they relayed the mine's history to all interested. The Park comes alive due to the dedication and efforts of these enthusiastic folks. The prairie diamond rings proved especially memorable for many!

New this year was the Tea in the Garden event: tea and cookies available on the lawn surrounded by our beautiful grounds. The tea was served to seated guests by docents representing the Nevada County Woman Suffrage Association - a group active in our County from 1869 to 1920. All seemed to enjoy this lovely respite in a busy day.

Our security team is always essential at large events and, as usual, did an outstanding job. The circulating docents and the parking lot team created order and safety for all our visitors. We extended the parking into the back area this year thus eliminating the need for a costly bus.

Courtney Ferguson worked tirelessly prior to the event with multiple avenues of publicity. This created an awareness in our extended community that brought over 1,000 people to our park to experience the history, beauty and fun that the day offered.

Park Aide Ehren Pelonio and VIP Bob Jennings would like to thank each one of you in your own special role – docent or park aide – for your willing participation in creating another very successful event. We hope you had fun too!!
DATES TO REMEMBER

Tuesday, June 16
EMPA Board of Directors Meetings
9:30 a.m. in the Docent Building

Thursday, June 18
Coordinator Meeting
10:00 a.m. in the Docent Building

Saturday, July 4th
4th of July Parade in Grass Valley
11:00 a.m.

Thursday, July 23
V.I.P. Garden Tour
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
(reserve a spot at the Visitor’s Center)
The preceding recollections are believed to be true; however, we are relying on the memory of the individual who had such a recollection.

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**Tales from the Tapes**
by Jack Laird

**From an interview of Robert Cannon, Engineer and Geologist. Interview date: 2/5/81.**

One night my wife and I went out. We came back home about 7:00. I had to take the babysitter back home to Nevada City. I came back over Town Talk and saw this glare in the sky. At first I thought it was the moon coming up.

I drove up the road and realized it was the Starr House on fire. It was burning from one end to the other. There was not a soul around.

They had these monitors to aim at the fire to put it out. I tried to open the valve but it wouldn’t budge. I called the fire department. It was an awful feeling to watch the house burn and I couldn’t do a thing about it.

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**From an interview of Emil Raetz, Miner. Interview date: 9/17/93.**

The miner made the decision on the placement of the holes where he was drilling. As long as the miner was breaking a lot of rock, they left him alone.

When you got a drill steel stuck and couldn’t get it out, you just drilled a new hole next to it rather than working 2 or 3 hours trying to get a bit out that you might never be able to get out. With the kind of rock I was drilling, I would probably get a drill bit stuck each day.

They were complaining about how much steel I was blasting. I asked them if they wanted me to spend all day trying to get a stuck bit out or if they wanted me to drill holes so the rock could get blasted. The result was that I could get in 15-18 holes in a day.
Fun Facts From the Past
By Barbara Jarvis, Research Coordinator

“Today gold mining is a question of economics,” said Arthur De Wint Foote. “Many of the mines in CA have been abandoned because the machinery which has operated them have proved too expensive or inadequate—the mines no longer paid. Many of these mines that have been reopened are first-class paying mines with better machinery and improved methods. The North Star consequently has installed the most economical operating plant possible—from the water reservoir to the last motor.

The Union has made mention that the power for running the machinery for the North Star will be generated by compressed air. The water for this purpose is conducted in twenty-inch pipes from the Empire mine, which, when it reaches the power house on Wolf creek, is under 775 feet of pressure. The pipe line was built by the Risdon Iron Works of San Francisco and made to stand a pressure of 400 pounds to the square inch on the lower portion.

The pipe is taken across Wolf creek on a strong, substantial aqueduct, and being embedded in the masonry is “bottle tight.” The water costs the company but one cent per thousand gallons.

From the Grass Valley Daily Morning Union, 14 Nov 1875, pg. 3, Col. 3.

Board Opening – a Special Need

When polled earlier this year, Jim Ward, the current Membership Chairperson, indicated he didn’t intend to continue on the Board beyond the end of his current three-year term that ends in December of this year—a total of four years on the Board. Consequently, the Board is looking for his replacement somewhat early to ensure there is adequate overlap to be prepared for the dues solicitation effort in January.

EMPA uses a database created with Microsoft Access to maintain the membership records. Although familiarity with Access is not a requirement, some exposure to Access would be helpful. Jim said that shortly after the inauguration of the Park’s Timesheet computer, he met a Park Volunteer who had some familiarity with Access, but he can’t recall her name. Please give Jim a call or email him if you would be willing to consider supporting the Association as the Membership Chairperson. Give him a call at 273-3671—or send him an email at drawj@suddenlink.net.
Empire Mine State Park
Volunteer Coordinators

Interpretative Coordinators

Tour Guides          Terry Armstrong    271-0126   terryrarmstrong@gmail.com
Tour Guides          Charlene Bumgarner 272-5767   tombumgarner@att.net
School Tour Guides   Ehren Pelonio     273-8522   empiremine@parks.ca.gov
School Tour Guides   Marilyn Sakowicz  272-5507   emsako@sbcglobal.net
Blacksmith Shop      Marilyn Sakowicz  272-5507   emsako@sbcglobal.net
Blacksmith Shop      Bill Blount        477-0317   willie5311@gmail.com
Cottage Living History Cheryl Balmain    273-6087   balmainiacs@gmail.com
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Mine Yard Living History Vince Seck       273-4574   vinceseck@yahoo.com
Mine Yard Stations   Vince Seck         273-4574   vinceseck@yahoo.com
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Nursery               Troy Hammer       575-9155   rajotom@fsaccess.net
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Security              Bob Jennings      274-2834   terryrarmstrong@gmail.com
Security              Terry Armstrong    271-0126
Rose Garden           Angie Slicker     272-5009   slickerangie@gmail.com
Rose Garden           Ellen Hamlin      272-3248   ellen@hamlin.net
Garden Tours          Jeanne Powell     271-2138   jpowell1st@msn.com
Trails                Lianne Werner     273-0704

www.empiremine.org
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!

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Appointed Position

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Holiday Event, Bob Jennings / 274-2834 / rw3jennings@yahoo.com
Hospitality, Sean Gilleran / 477-1700 / gilleran@hiexgrassvalley.com
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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