HI ALL -- hope you were able to enjoy the 119th Annual Miners Picnic! Do you ever wonder what it must have looked like at the first one! It would be fun to bring back Cornish Wrestling -- how about next year, Jack?

Several quick topics to cover this month...

YOU’LL NOTICE a “strange” insert in this month’s Star -- an invitation to join the Nevada County Historical Society! We’ve partnered with this fine organization, in our common quest to better serve our community, using each other’s mailings, -- hopefully to the benefit of both groups! I urge you to read their story, consider joining or contributing, or at least plan to attend one of their very interesting monthly programs at the Helling Library some Thursday evening. You won’t be sorry!

AS YOU’LL READ in Jack Laird’s Picnic recap on page 6, he thanks Jerry and Goldie Levitt, two of our very dedicated EMPA Members, for their very gracious generosity in providing the gold for both the panning operation (always a favorite with our visitors, young and old), and for the very profitable Gold Nugget Raffle. What Jack didn’t mention was the fact that they also participated in the Grass Valley Gold Rush Days in June -- not only providing the gold, but, ‘worked the pans’ as volunteers for the event. I didn’t recognize them, all dressed up in full costume! (Do I ever feel foolish? Yes!) They are the consummate volunteer! Thank you, Goldie and Jerry!

SPEAKING OF the Gold Raffle, here are the results. Congratulations go to:

First prize: 6 oz. gold nugget John Lee Los Angeles
Second prize: 3 oz. gold dust Nick Layshot Grass Valley
Third prize: 2 oz. gold dust Susan Matheson Grass Valley
Fourth prize: 1 oz. gold dust Coy Nit Grass Valley

The winner of the nugget, John Lee, bought his ticket when visiting here during Gold Rush Days, and declared, “This is the first thing I’ve ever won!”

I WOULD BE REMISS if I didn’t say a big and sincere “thank you” to Jack Laird, his Committee members, and to all the Volunteers who worked so hard to put on the Miners Picnic: Your efforts are really appreciated! Hope you had fun, too!

SCHOOL IS STARTING and that means that things will begin to slow down around the Park (except for the School Tours!). We look forward to the Annual Appreciation Dinner, served by Park Staff -- and they do a great job! Hope to see you there!

P.S. Be sure to look on page 4 for some exciting late-breaking news!

Larry Skinner
Now that I’m relieved of most of my responsibilities at the Cottage, I’m ready to move on to some other projects that I’ve been contemplating for a while.

The most major of these is creating a history of our Cottage Living History program at EMSHP. By that I mean a recap of the Program itself – little to do with the history of the Bourn family or of its Empire Cottage on the hill. We have several scrapbooks full of photos taken of our “characters” – in costume and not – but there doesn’t seem to be a written narrative of the beginnings of this important aspect of the Park. I want to fill this need – that, of course, is my interpretation of a need! Others might not appreciate my passion for having written records – not just formal minutes of what action was taken in meetings – but what those decisions resulted in.

I’ve heard many stories of the “start-up” of living history at the Cottage and that’s what I want to have in written form. I already have two or three names of people who might assist me in this endeavor – some are still active docents at the Park if not still at the Cottage – while others no longer have an affiliation with the Park.

Doesn’t this sound like a “winter time” project – it does to me and that’s when I plan to get serious about it. However, before January, I’d like to have “all my ducks in a row” – ready to commence with interviews and other research which will enable me to get it all down on paper (printer of course!).

If you think you could contribute to this – in any way – large or small, I’d appreciate knowing that! Give me a call or send me an email that explains generally what you’re able to offer.

On a completely different topic, I just want to put in an extra plug for the upcoming “Popcorn and Picture Night” on September 17 at the Clubhouse. As you might remember (or not!), Alex Burgh, a grand nephew of Billy Vincent, visited us in April, 2013 and he brought along (clear from Guernsey, one of the Channel Islands) the photo albums of his Uncle Billy’s that were given to Alex shortly before Billy’s death. They looked like any family’s old family albums! He also brought along a CD filled with those same pictures for our use – and this event on the 17th is the time when you’ll be able to enjoy them too.

Lise Hinman and I are planning the early evening (5:30) affair – as well as freshly popped corn, we’ll also have some fruit, veggie, and cheese nibbles available plus beverages. There’s no admission fee involved, but donations will be happily accepted to help defray the costs involved – which EMPA is financing. There are two things that you need to do very, very soon: (1) call Lise to tell her you’d like to attend (we’re limited to 49 in the Clubhouse) and (2) call or email me if you’d like to assist by providing some of the nibbles I’ve mentioned above – or to help serve that evening. Park Ranger Michele Green will be “at the ready” with the golf cart shuttle for those who’d like a little assistance that evening.

Both of our email addresses and phone numbers are on pg. 9 of this newsletter.
MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Meet new people:
Network with others interested in Nevada County History

Learn about our area:
Our programs feature knowledgeable speakers who have studied and/or lived Nevada County history. Our quarterly Newsletter/Bulletin feature articles about people, places and events of Nevada County past. We have a vast amount of resources available to you in our four free museums and various publications (10% discount to members) covering all aspects of Nevada County's history.

Help a worthwhile cause:
Your contributions help preserve our history for future generations.

Volunteer:
You can enjoy volunteering to work side by side with our talented, dedicated, long-time members. There are many opportunities to get involved in whatever interests you have.

Business members:
Enjoy all the benefits mentioned above and also have an ad in our quarterly newsletter and receive an attractive certificate, suitable for wall hanging.
You can also have a link to your business website from the Nevada County Historical Society website. www.NevadaCountyHistory.org

NEVADA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

I/we wish to join the Nevada County Historical Society, whose membership privileges include free admittance to the Society's museums and monthly programs, a subscription to the quarterly newsletter/bulletin and a 10% discount on publications.

Individual membership dues (Jan 1 - Dec 31):  □ $25.00 General  □ $50.00 Business
In addition, I wish to make the following contributions:
$___ Administrative Fund  $___ Firehouse Museum  $___ Mining Museum
$___ Scars' Library  $___ Sears Building Fund  $___ Railroad Museum

Enclosed is my check for $________

☐ I would like to volunteer
☐ I would like to make a tax-deductible donation.

My Name
Address
City/State Zip
Phone (____) Email

www.NevadaCountyHistory.org  •  info@nevadacountyhistory.org  •  PO Box 1300, Nevada City, CA 95959

Firehouse No. 1 Museum  •  Scars' Historical Library
NCNRR Museum  •  North Star Mining Museum
Multiplying Cakes Rather Than Loaves

The Miners Picnic Cake Walk was another success this year thanks to the donations of cakes, sweets and goodies from our faithful volunteers. The miracle was the number of donations considering that we had only one offer after my first Star article. Thank you for those of you who made the cakes divide and multiply and assured our success!

EXTRA EXTRA EXTRA!!!

After completing the basic training required by and provided to all volunteers (aka docents) by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, most individuals select their particular areas of interest and concentrate on learning as much as they can about them. However, within the boundaries of the Empire Mine State Historic Park, there is a whole “world” just waiting to be discovered.

Toward this end, EMPA is embarking on a new program to help cross-train interested Park Volunteers!

As a kick-off for this program, Parks is allowing us to organize a very special tour for the first 60 VIP’s (aka docents/volunteers) to sign up. (Additional tours of this area will be scheduled at a later date if necessary.)

Tour #1: Hardrock Interpretative Area

Station 1: Hardrock Center: building “history,” OTHG interior, mannequins
Station 2: Maintenance Building: trammers and cars
Station 3: Electrical Building: portal, history of the “dig,” Cyanide Plant

When: Thursday, October 2, 3:00 to 4:30
Where: Meet in the Main Parking Lot
Sign up: Call the Visitors Center at 273-8522

Additional information will be posted in the Visitors Center or emailed if necessary. If you have any questions, please contact the Tour organizer, Larry Skinner, by phone or email.

Do You Know These Miners?

You are actually looking at Billy & Rose Vincent (William Bourn’s grandchildren). Come see these pictures and more in a slideshow chronicling parts of the Bourns’ rich life.

Where: The Clubhouse
When: September 17th
Time: 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.
RSVP: Lise Hinman

(Also see information in CLH article, page 2)
Our annual Miners Picnic was a tremendous success! We had over 850 paid visitors and almost 100 children under the age of 6 enjoying the festivities! Living History, ice cream cones, children's games, gold panning, a reenactment of a mine yard accident and antique cars and engines were just some of the highlights at this year’s Miners Picnic. Thank you to all who helped make this a memorable day for those who visited our beautiful Park. I had numerous visitors compliment the event and commented that they really enjoyed the day at the Park. A special thanks to Jack Laird for his tireless dedication and work on this event!

In addition to the Miners Picnic, our annual Nevada County Fair was a success. We had many fairgoers stop by our State Park booth and gold pan, get information on the local Parks or just visit. Senior Park Aide Lori Spencer coordinated the State Park booth and the Over-the-Hill-Gang set up and took down the booth – a tremendous amount of work!

Our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner will take place at the Empire Mine Clubhouse and is a time when we honor our amazing volunteers who contribute so much to this Park. Volunteers who have contributed at least 40 hours in the past year receive an invitation to the dinner and can bring a guest. A donation is suggested for guests to help offset the costs of the event. I am constantly amazed at our volunteer dedication, professionalism and willingness to pitch in. A special thanks to the Empire Mine Park Association for their help with this event!

As fall arrives, we hope to see everyone at Empire Mine State Historic Park!

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**As Summer Fades**

By Park Ranger Greg Sherr

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—I like the Empire Mine because my Grandma and Grandpa volunteer there. When I’m there I feel like I’m in a whole nother world because of the wonderful of the Gardens.”

Reid Brear
Second Grade

Note: Though EMPA Vice President Jim Coe’s grandson was too young to enter this year’s Miners Picnic “Gold, Grit & Glory” writing challenge, he wanted to give this to his grandpa who passed it on to me. It is just too cute.
What a Great Day for a Picnic
By Jack Laird, Chairman

What a terrific group of volunteers we have who worked to see that the over 1,000+ visitors enjoyed themselves at the Miners Picnic on August 23. You absolutely cannot believe all of the wonderful, positive comments I have received!

From Pat Speer, Nancy Koring and Cheryl Balmain, who handled the Clubhouse and Cottage Living History people, to Howard Steele, Bill Blount and Vince Seck who lined up the blacksmiths and the rest of the mine yard volunteers who put on a terrific mine rescue along with interesting mine yard interpretation – it was all great!

Bob Jennings again handled the food vendors and the security along with Terry Armstrong. Carol Bordeau did a masterful job bringing in over one thousand dollars with the Silent Auction. Also masterful was Lise Hinman in running the Cake Walk while Jane Bland and Troy Hammer served up the pasty lunches.

I heard many good comments about the way Lyn Muth and Mike Tracey handled the children’s games. William Silva put together a fun ring toss challenge and newcomers, Kathy and John Field, did a superb job of running the new metal stamping activity. Every time I looked over there, their tables were full of happy kids pounding away.

I don’t know how he did it, but somehow John was able to work both the metal stamping and the gold panning areas. Perhaps John has a twin! Speaking of gold panning, Steve Grevstad and his team brought in $380 which is a lot of $3 pans of gravel! Way to go, Steve. And then we get to Jerry and Goldie Levitt who generously donated the gold for both the gold panning and the gold raffle. We’re very grateful for their generosity!

Jim Coe took on the Gold Raffle project with gusto. Unfortunately, he did too good of a job! People at the Picnic were asking where they could purchase raffle tickets, but we had to tell them that all 1,000 tickets that were printed had already been sold prior to the Picnic. Live and learn!

Again, Frank Hamlin wore many hats. Besides spending a great deal of time with me on the schedule and the activity map, he also put together a trail walking map that was very popular. Then the day of the Picnic he was involved with running the equipment trailer and who knows what else.

Can you believe that Evelyn Allison and her little 8-year-old neighbor girl attached all 2,000 wooden 50-cent coins to the cards that were handed out at Grass Valley events prior to the Picnic?

The last two people we absolutely could not do without: Courtney Ferguson is unbelievable! Publicity, interviews, stage entertainment, roving entertainment, writing contest, lining up the burros – all were inspired by Courtney! The other person is my wife, Peggy. You have no idea how many hours she puts into this event using her computer skills. Then she spends the day there helping me cover all the bases. Thank you, Peggy!

And thank you everyone who helped put this event on!!!!

In closing, I would like to quote Ray Ray the clown to whom I offered some money to pay for the balloons he used that day. In refusing the money, he told me his pay, “is seeing the smiles on the faces of the visitors.” I think that is something we can all agree with.
From an interview of Fred Whitford, Senior Empire Engineer. Interview date: 7/12/90.

Just the engineers had access to the mine model. I really caught hell one time. We were looking for new places to diamond drill that hadn’t been looked at before. Between 1950 and 1955 we were doing raw exploration drilling 2000 feet per month. What’s out there? Diamond drilling was the cheapest way of exploring.

I brought Brokenshire from the Empire, and Wales from the Pennsylvania, in for a meeting. They were both underground foremen. We looked at the maps, but it was difficult because they are one dimensional.

So I made the horrible mistake of taking them back into the model room. You want to see the scars on my butt from the chewing out that I got? The model is about 1-1/2 years behind. There is work that was never put on there.

When a man skip was stopped at 4200 it meant the down skip was at 1400. It was so flat there that you would often have to get out and push it to get it started again. When it got to 2000 it rolled down very steep. From 3400 on down it went the rest of the way at 45 degrees.

From an interview of Phil Keast, Master Mechanic and Mechanical Engineer, Empire Mine employee 1920 to 1957. Interview date: 7/7/76.

After the beginning of WWII, the management told me to order steel, parts for the rock drills, and whatever other things I thought might be necessary to keep the mine going for two to three years. So I ordered a lot of stuff. I sent the list over to the office. What did they do? They doubled it!

The Union Lumber Company at Ft. Bragg took out the rails when they went to using trucks. They brought all their old rail here for us to use. Tons and tons of it.

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

Dates to Remember

Friday & Saturday, September 5th & 6th - Mansion to Mine Tours

Friday, September 12th - Volunteer Appreciation Dinner
5:30 - 8:30 pm on Clubhouse Patio

Tuesday, September 16th - EMPA Board of Directors Meeting
9:30 pm in the Docent Building

Wednesday, September 17th
Picture & Popcorn Night 5:30 at the Clubhouse
(see details on pgs. 2 and 4)

Thursday, September 18th - Coordinator Meeting
10:00 am in the Docent Building

Thursday, October 2nd - First VIP Tour, Hard Rock Mining Center
3-4:30 pm
Board Member Recruitment

**EMPA NEEDS YOU!**

to volunteer for a great cause!
Being a Board member is a help the Empire Mine State Park.

to volunteer for a great cause!
Being a Board member is a help the Empire Mine State Park.

All you have to do is bring your wisdom to a monthly meeting and then get involved from there on as your talents lead YOU toward a positive and rewarding public service experience!

**EMPA NOW NEEDS:**

President
Secretary

Up to 3 board members at large

Pick up a Board Member application today at the Park Visitor Center
or
call me at 530 274 2675.

Submitted by Jim Coe, EMPA Vice President
**Empire Mine State Park**

**Volunteer Coordinators**

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[www.empiremine.org](http://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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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