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In The Vein . . .

Happy summer to all EMPA faithful!! Well, I hope you all made it to the 4th of July Parade! It was really FUN!! and a GREAT success due to the participation of many VIPs and EMPA Board Members who were all in costume or wearing their gold vests. This was all made possible by a hard-working crew of volunteers, led by Jack and Peggy Laird, our "Masters of Creative Coordination." Together they put in endless hours designing, creating, and coordinating the float which included a headframe replica. There were also antique vehicles carrying Empire Mine owners, William & Agnes Bourn, played by Bill Dempsey and Cicely Brookover as well as their daughter, Maud, portrayed by Haley Dunk (Bill Dempsey's granddaughter), plus EMSHP visionary, Virginia Brunini, and others. I walked as George Starr. It was a magnificent day which I ended by attending the fabulous fireworks display at the Nevada County Fairgrounds.

Oh, by the way, Jack Laird is also putting together the 120th celebration of the Miners Picnic this year on August 29, 11a.m. to 4 p.m. Please don't miss it!

For our "Meeting of the Mines II" on July 13, EMSHP, along with Courtney Ferguson (public relations GURU), and myself hosted a group tour of docents from the North Star Powerhouse Museum. They toured the Mineyard with yours truly, dressed as George Starr (1905 mine Superintendent), then the Clubhouse with Bob Jennings dressed in a period "tennis" costume, and finally the Cottage. All in all I feel these tours were a great success and Courtney and I are looking forward to continuing this program with other museums and associations throughout Nevada County. Come smell the roses!!

See you in the Park, Mark S. Allen

It’s probably past the time that you should have had an update about some of your friends who were former docents at EMSHP. It’s a subject that’s rather delicate – in that we don’t want to leave someone out that you’d be interested in knowing about – so, I’m soliciting your assistance in helping us in identifying any news about our retired VIPs – or friends. Please contact either Lynne Buenz or myself with news that you’d like to share about our former fellow-docents. My email address is bev4411@gmail.com – 477-1750; Lynne’s is la_buenz@hotmail.com - 470-0595.

It’s sad, indeed, to report that Sue Glassco passed away in Pasadena this past spring. Many of you will remember Sue with fond memories as she was an active VIP from about 1998 – 2008 and EMPA Board member as well. She was one of the first VIPs who I remember coming in contact with as she was the Coordinator of the Cottage Living History program the year that I became a docent at the Park – 2008 – and she served as an Interpreter at the Cottage which was one of the first ways that I participated at the Park. Our service only overlapped one year, but it was enough that she became an excellent mentor to me – so much so that I followed her only three years later by becoming the CLH Coordinator myself. I wish I had a photo of her to share here.

Her daughter, Bonnie, with whom Sue resided these last four years (along with Bonnie’s family), requested that any donations in Sue’s name be sent to EMPA. She recalls that her mother’s years at EMSHP were cherished ones, and she often talked about her fond memories of the Park and all the wonderful staff and volunteers there.

Jane Hall, former Park Ranger, remembers that Sue visited the Park after she had moved to So. California while Jane was still working there, and shared news about her new home which she called her “little Cottage in Pasadena” that reminded her of her beloved Empire Cottage. While still living in Grass Valley, Sue’s husband was unable to attend many functions at the Park, but he always managed to accompany Sue to the Annual VIP Dinner – and he would always share how much Sue loved the Park and her fellow volunteers.

On a much happier note, I’d like to share with you that I talked to Tom Stade in mid-August and he’s anxious to share the positive condition of Thelma – whom so many of us know and love! She’s working hard with exercises at home and professional therapy so that one of these days she’ll be able to walk on her own – possibly with the help of a walker – but still independently! And it “makes her day” to receive cards and notes as well as phone calls (after 2:30 p.m. please). A few of our current VIPs have visited the Stades and I’m not sure who enjoyed their visit the most – our docents or the Stades! Visits are definitely in order – just give Tom a call to make a “date” – they would both enjoy it immensely! Their phone is 530-272-8772 – and their address in Alta Sierra is 16147 Tina Court. They’d love to hear from you!
Board Member Recruitment

**EMPA NEEDS YOU!**

to volunteer for a great cause!

Being a Board member is a great way to 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:**

Up to four 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
A Bonanza of Trails
By Priscilla Vanderpas

A BONANZA OF TRAILS is the theme of this 33rd annual convention of OCTA, (Oregon California Trails Association), which will be held at Harvey’s at Stateline, NV, September 21 to 25, 2015. The California-Nevada Chapter is one of 11 national chapters of OCTA. Every year there is a convention in one state along the California-Oregon Trail, from Missouri westward.

There will be many bus trips to various trails, special events, bookrooms, and talks by western trail authorities. The Keynote speaker opening the convention will be Gary Kurtz, from the California State Library in Sacramento, presenting "On the Extremity of Civilization: The Golden Words of the Argonauts." Topics covered by other speakers include the Donner-Reed Wagon Party (and their disastrous results), Fur Traders, Gold Rush Drawings by J. Goldsborough Bruff, Women Pioneers, John Sutter, the Carson River Route, and Native American perspectives of the Gold Rush. Workshops include Native American Baskets, Cooking on the Trail, Researching and Marking Trails, etc.

All day bus tours are to Donner Memorial State Park, Truckee River route, Carson River route, Johnson cut-off loop, Coloma, Placerville, and El Dorado County Museum. Also included are optional pre-convention and post-convention tours, and day hikes.

Anyone may attend all events, either by registering for the whole convention, or coming for a single day's events. You do NOT need to be a member to attend any event.

People come from many states, and even several other countries to these Conventions. Usually several hundred attend, so you need to reserve a spot because some of the bus tours do fill up quickly. It is very interesting to meet so many other people who are interested in how all those people made their way to California, through plains, deserts, and mountains!

You can find out more information at tahoeconvention@gmail.com, or www.canvocta.org. Or call Priscilla Vanderpas @ 530-272-5154, or pvanderpas@juno.com.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wednesday, September 2
Tour at Donner State Park Museum, Truckee
Meet in the Donner State Park parking lot at 9:15 a.m.
RSVP’s are needed:
Call Leanne 273-0704 or contact Bob rw3jennings@yahoo.com by August 27

Thursday, September 17
Coordinator Meeting
10:00 a.m. in the Docent Building

Tuesday, September 15
EMPA Board of Directors Meeting
9:30 a.m. in the Docent Building

Thursday, October 22
VIP Educational Tour of the Mineyard
(see article in this Empire Star)
More about our Park Benches
(and what we learned about Internet protocol)

By Bev Skinner

If you have your June issue of the Empire Star filed away someplace, you can go back to the article in that issue about the “new” Park benches. It was a rather brief article that Marsha Lewis wrote about the five new benches that had arrived just in time for our Mother’s Day visitors. The article also included a photo that was found on the Internet – of one of the older benches.

What we didn’t do was delve deeply enough into the “net” to find that that particular photo was taken by Aiello Fine Photography of Rocklin. We failed to contact Jo Ann Aiello to ask permission to use it in our publication – and did not give credit to the Aiello. We’ve been in contact since then and they’ve graciously granted permission for us to reprint the photograph in question – and Jo Ann has provided a higher resolution copy of it so that it will reproduce better.

Several of us have learned by this mistake that just because you find a photo on the Internet, it’s not necessarily yours to use – not without permission and giving credit for it. So – I hope this information is perhaps valuable to you as well.

And, by the way, the Aiello are relatively new EMPA members and are enthusiastic about EMSHP – and EMPA’s role as an important one in things like funding new Park benches!

On this page you’ll see not only the improved image (that belongs to the Aiello), of an old stone bench at the Park, but I’ve also included a photo that I took myself of one of the “new” Park benches now located in strategic places around the grounds.

Come and “sit a spell” and enjoy our Nevada County fall at the Park!
Smoke from the Forge
by Bill Blount

The Blacksmith Shop and the attending Smiths were honored at our August Hammer-in to have two interesting and informative guests present our program.

Eric Clausen, a long standing blacksmith based in North San Juan, gave us a presentation on the use of fire, tools and steel to produce some very interesting creatures. He brought some very interesting and intricate door knockers, handles, knives and fun little creatures to show what can be done with a chunk of steel. Eric also produces a line of gardening tools that look complex but are actually quite simple to make. (We are not going to tell you how though!!) Some of the items demonstrated will remain in the Smithy and will be mounted on a demo board for all to see. Eric has been associated with the California Blacksmith Association (C.B.A.) almost from its inception serving in many positions including a term as President. The pictures are of Eric and one of his creations. Thanks to Tom Davisson for the photos.

The Blacksmiths were also able to hear from Mark Kochan, the California Blacksmith Association Education Chairman. Mark spoke to us about the educational opportunities available to us and some of the things that he and C.B.A might be able to bring to our shop. Four of the current Smiths at Empire Mine have passed the level one requirements and Mark pointed out how these Smiths could move on and work at passing the level two needs. One of our Smiths would like to work toward getting his instructor credits so that he can bring training into our shop for future development of our Smiths. Mark has offered to return in a month or so and demo the level two project for those working toward that goal and for any who would wish to expand their expertise.

Besides receiving these guests, the Smiths have been working to stock up for coming and recently-past events. We have been holding "production" days that have helped raise stock levels and allow some of the newer Smiths to experience this type of effort. Our new "mister" is working out quite well even to the point that it has caused traffic jams in the entry with people just stopping to enjoy it. That's OK; that's where the product offering counter is located. Come on out and see us any time you wish; we promise not to put you to work!

Mysteries of the Mineyard ...

Thursday, October 22, 2015, is the date set for the next VIP Educational Tour. The subject of this tour – the final one to be scheduled in 2015 – is the Mineyard. As with previous tours, subject matter experts will serve as guides, and will shed light on several areas, which together comprised the “heart” of the working mine in its “hey day.”

As a reminder, the VIP Educational Tour Program is a partnership between the Empire Mine Park Association (EMPA) and Park Staff, and is intended as a “continuing education” program for active docents, so that they might broaden their working knowledge of the Park.

Group size for this tour will be limited to 40 persons. Advance reservations are required, and may be made by calling the Visitor’s Center at 273-8522 no later than Monday, October 19.

In the meantime, if there are specific areas of the Mineyard that you would like to know more about, please let me know, either by e-mail (la_buenz@hotmail.com) or by telephone (470-0595). See you on October 22!

Lynne Buenz, Coordinator VIP Educational Tour Program
This is the 100th Tales from the Tapes article that I have written for the Empire Star over the last five years. This might be a good time to reveal just how these articles come about.

A number of different Empire Oral History volunteers recorded over 240 interviews between 1975 and 2003. These interviews are mainly of people who were involved with Empire Mine when it was in operation. Many of the interviews are very interesting and informative and give a first-hand account of what life was like at that time. Unfortunately some of the tapes are of no value due to recording problems.

I spend approximately eight hours each month researching and compiling the two articles. I try to do one article which involves the people of Empire and the other article is sometimes more technical. My goal is that the articles will be of interest to most everyone.

Some of the interviews will give me several articles, while there won’t be anything useful from others as they can include things that I don’t believe to be factual. I try not to let them pull anything over on me.

I don’t make up anything. I just make it readable. I hope you will continue to find these interviews as informative as I have found them to be.


When I was working in the office in 1969 was when they blew the head frame down. I was standing on the balcony with my daughter and the manager. The maintenance man was the only employee still working. They told him not to push the plunger until we gave the signal so the photographers and TV crew were set up.

He immediately walked over and pushed the plunger. He was going to do it his way. The camera men jumped up so they were still able to get some pictures.

The preceding recollections are believed to be true; however, we are relying on the memory of the individual who had such a recollection.
FUN FACTS FROM THE PAST
From Barbara Jarvis, Research Coordinator

Cave on Mill Street

Yesterday afternoon quite a big hole appeared on Mill Street, south of Neal, and in front of Cook’s fireproof brick building. The hole would easily take in a buggy and a span of horses, and there is danger that the cave will extend across the street. The cause of it is an old tunnel of the Essex, or “Frank Morse” mine. The timbers in that tunnel have rotted and let down the surface ground. Many wells above the cave have been drained of water, including the well at the High School and at Hoyne’s corner. About two years ago a similar cave occurred near the scene of that of yesterday, and one wall of Cook’s building was damaged. It will take pretty good work to make complete and safe repairs of the street.

PS: Damages repaired and everything safe. Road Commissioner Brady and Marshall Collion had the thing fixed.

Grass Valley Daily Morning Union, 14 Nov 1875, Pg. 3 Col. 3

Part of Shaft Caves

A serious cave-in occurred in the Empire Mine about 10 o’clock Friday night, but fortunately nobody was injured. The main shaft caved in just below the 2100 foot level, breaking the pump-rod, water column and air pipe, but did not cause a suspension of operation. Ever since a large crew has been at work shoveling the loosened earth into cars and it is being hoisted as fast as possible. Repairs have been made to the pump-rod and pipes.

Grass Valley Morning Union, 16 Sep 1906, Pg. 2 Col. 5

A New Book in the Smurf Room Library

The World Rushed In

By J. S. Holiday

Book Review: by Larry Skinner

..... This is a very comprehensive and well-documented story of the Gold Rush Days, from 1849 through early 1851, relying on diaries and letters, making it an easily believable read.

..... It was a real “eye-opener” to me as it covered, in minute detail, both the trip to California and their trials and tribulations once they got to the gold fields.

..... I found myself skipping many sections that were repetitive – especially the letters (interesting at first) to and from the family members.

..... All in all, this book added a lot to my understanding of the hardships and experiences as related through the true life story of William Swain.
Empire Mine State Park
Volunteer Coordinators

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| 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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Empire Mine State Historic Park
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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