

Las Plumas

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Plumas County Museum Association, Inc.

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www.plumasmuseum.org

FREE PRESENTATION ON HISTORIC SIERRA VALLEYS RAILROAD

On Saturday, September 9th, Larry Meeker of Carson City, NV will give a slideshow presentation on the history of the Sierra Valleys Railroad at the Graeagle Community Hall in downtown Graeagle. Larry has studied the SVRR for over

twenty years and has one of the finest collections of photographs of Plumas County's first narrow gauge railroad in existence. He gave a similar show to the Portola Area Historical Society last year, but with the discovery and acquisition of the Vinton Bowen White Collection this year, he has materially augmented his presentation. Vinton was the daughter of the railroad's owner and the namesake of the town of Vinton. Call the museum for more information. We would like to thank Harvey West of Graeagle Land & Water Company for donating the use of the Community Hall.



GUIDED TOUR TO LA PORTE

In 2002 the museum sponsored a bus trip to La Porte to help that town celebrate its 150th anniversary. Many who made the trip expressed their pleasure in having someone else drive the narrow, winding road for them. We are considering offering another such trip this October if there are enough people interested to cover the costs of bus expenses and so forth. The tour will highlight a number of historic sites along the 32-mile route including places like Nelson Point, the Fingerboard, Washington Hill, Onion Valley, Gibsonville, and LaPorte and their cemeteries and more. Please call the museum if you are interested in this event. We will need to know the interest level by no later than September 15th in order to put things in order. 283-6320.



DOCENTS at the MUSE-UM

The museum is happy to announce its newest docent, Cheryl Nielsen, formerly of Willows, California. Cheryl worked at the library there before she and her husband Leif moved to Quincy recently. Leif works at the PUSD bus facility and Cheryl has been donating time on projects at the museum. Carol Paoli is maintaining our bookstore inventory,

XEROX MACHINE

Charles Guenther, CEO of Eastern Plumas Health Care has donated a copy machine from their facility to the museum. We would like to thank them for their generosity, as our old machine was ready for the long term care unit, or even the copy machine graveyard. Thank you!

Art Exhibits on the Stella Fay Miller Mezzanine Gallery

For the months of July and August, Michael Kerby of Meadow Valley exhibited his works dating from 1967 to the present. Michael's outstanding art covers a range of media and subjects and was a popular show with museum visitors. For September and October Bob and Carol Canby of Delleker will be showing their talents with mixed media scenes of Plumas and Sierra counties.

TAYLORSVILLE SCHOOL

For those of you who did not see the story in the local newspaper, a crew of dedicated history buffs spent Saturday, July 15th cleaning up the 1864 Taylorsville School. Two pickup loads of refuse and recyclables were taken out, as well as wheelbarrow loads of dust. A number of really great historical items such as maps, anatomical charts, books and magazines were also found in the attic, none dating later than the 1890s! We also confirmed something vaguely indicated on a circa 1870 photograph – that the original peak of the roof was a flat widow's walk. It was later modified to its present apex. The next work party is scheduled for Saturday, August 26th at 9 a.m. If you would like to help us restore this historic schoolhouse, please call the museum at 283-6320 or Ginger Gramm at 284-6367.

DOCENTS AT THE FAIR

Thank you again to our wonderful docents for their help at the Plumas Sierra County Fair. Lenoard & Deanne Mosley and Don Johns cleaned the 1888 Peppard Cabin, as well as staffed it. Others who kept it open for the public include trustee Ginger Gramm, Diane Lawson, Ray Nichol, Carol Paoli, director John Weddle, and Millie Burris. Mary Bird, Marilyn Britton, director Betty Folchi, Lois Jones, Nancy Pierson, and director Helen Roberti all volunteered to keep students in line at the 1857 Pioneer School. Incidentally, the school now sports a new coat of paint thanks to Quincy Natural Foods. QNF has used the school over the past three years during the High Sierra Music Fest, and so had it painted in return for its use. Working the Spanish Peak Lumber Company Engine booth were Sandy Coots, Len Mosley, Ken Myers, Jay Ricks, and Ken Roller. Be sure to stop by and see the marvelous progress these guys have made on the engine restoration.

TRUSTEES	DIRECTORS	STAFF
Ken Barnard, Graeagle	Tandy Bozeman, Chester	Scott Lawson, Director
Charlie Brown, Quincy	Marjorie Clark, Quincy	Lori Simpson, Assistant Director
VACANT, Indian Valley	Betty Folchi, Portola	Laure Gage, Registrar
Don Clark, Graeagle	Ann Harrigan, Taylorsville	
Patrick Cook, Graeagle	Don Johns, Quincy	www.plumasmuseum.org
Marc Eastman, Quincy	Norman Lamb, Greenville	530-283-6320
Bob Edwards, Quincy	Doug Miller, Chester	
Ginger Gramm, Greenville	Helen Roberti, Beckwourth	
Jerry Holland, Quincy	George Ross, Graeagle	
John Larrieu, Portola	Nat Snyder, Cromberg	
Gaye Porter, Quincy	John Weddle, Quincy	

Please check your mailing label for your membership **EXPIRATION DATE**. Due to increased printing and postage costs, we cannot send newsletters to non-renewing addresses.

Individual \$25, Family \$35, Patron \$100, Sustaining \$1000, Corporate \$150

SIGN UP NOW FOR PREPUBLICATION DISCOUNT ON IMPORTANT NEW BOOK!

For the past year and a half, Plumas County Museum Director Scott Lawson has researched, annotated, and compiled information supplementing the book *“Recollections of a ‘49er,”* first published in 1908. It is the story of Edward Washington McIlhany, a Virginia ‘49er who traded his gold pan for pack mules, and a life of relative comfort in Maryland and Virginia for the rough and tumble life as a Californian. His story covers much of what is now south-central Plumas County where he owned several stores to supply the gold miners. He relates his experiences as a practical muleteer, a prospector, and later, a livestock broker. After spending seven years in California McIlhany took up farming in Missouri, only to quickly fall for the siren call of Colorado when a gold rush sent many scurrying there in 1858. Following his time in Golden as a rancher and sheriff, McIlhany returned to Missouri where he made his home, raising a family and entering into the livestock business. His style is homespun, easy to read and entertaining. The addition of biographies of eighty of McIlhany’s compatriots from Virginia and Maryland recount their activities and lives back home, in Missouri, California, Nevada, and elsewhere.

Of this exciting new work, famed author and Librarian Emeritus of Sutro Library, Richard H. Dillon, writes:

McIlhany’s memoir transcends its local importance because the narrator managed to participate in three of the major adventures of the 19th Century West – the California Gold Rush of 1849; Colorado’s Pike’s Peak Gold Rush of a decade later; and the now-legendary post-Civil War cattle trade from Texas to Kansas and Missouri. Moreover, McIlhany was a natural writer and a fascinating yarn spinner, as well as a *wander Vogel*, a rolling stone.

McIlhany’s story began with the emigration of his Charlestown Virginia Mining Company over the plains to California in ‘49 ... where he spent most of his time in what we might call the Far Northern Mines, where the Sierra Nevada yielded to the Shasta-Cascade area of the state.

Most familiar to the Virginian were places like Bidwell’s Bar and Rich Bar, the latter made famous by Dame Shirley’s letters, both on the Feather River. His favorite was Onion Valley, almost forgotten today. It became his headquarters when he was in the mountains.

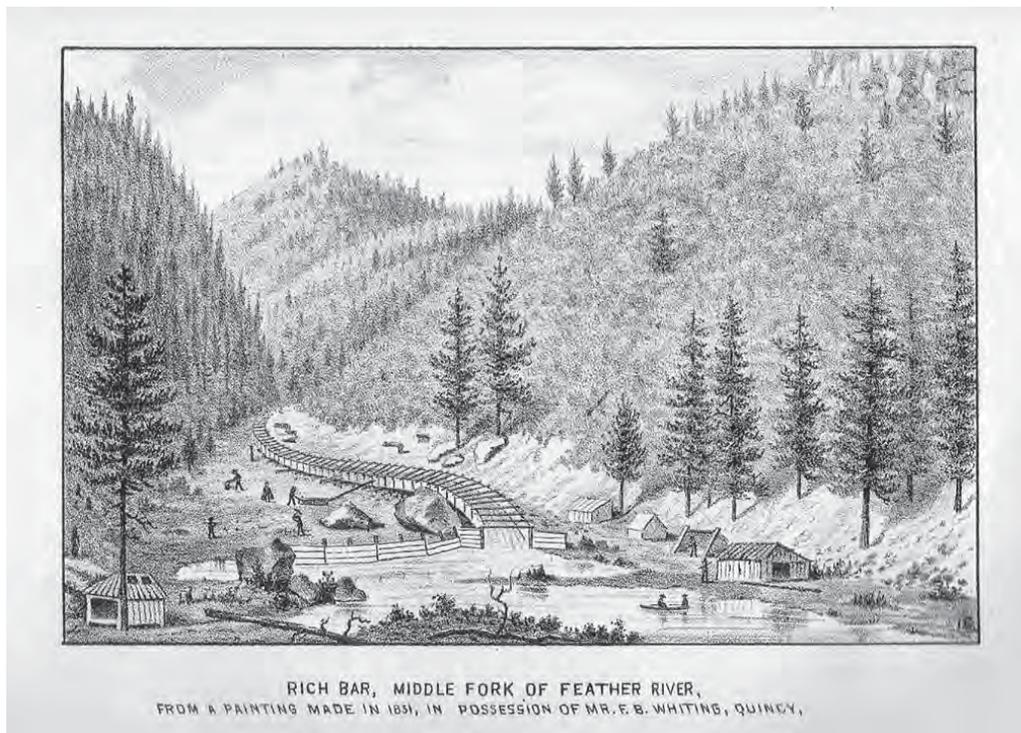


What most distinguishes McIlhany’s story from run-of-the-mine accounts is that he was a jack-of-all-trades as well as a rolling stone. McIlhany’s is one of the few, rare detailed accounts of mining camp transportation that we have.

From Marysville McIlhany drove wagons to the mines and even ran a short-lived Concord stage-coach line. But his real passion was in prospecting



The book is 576 pages in hardcover, with a full color dust jacket. It is lavishly illustrated with four pages of color images, over 100 vintage black and white photos and various maps depicting the Overland Trail and McIlhany's travels. It is supplemented with extended biographies of over 80 of McIlhany's compatriots that crossed the Plains with him, as well as a full index, and bibliography. This is a numbered, limited edition, available only from the Plumas County Museum. Numbered copies are on a first come basis. List price is \$36.95 but if you order now and pay now, you will receive it before the Christmas holidays for only \$31.50. This will be the only time this discount is offered! Fill out the attached form, or call 530-283-6320



today to place your order. Don't miss this opportunity to own an important work on the California Gold Rush and the American West. Look below for advance reviews of this new book:

McIlhany was a colorful and integral part of the California Gold Rush and the concept of Manifest Destiny. This is an invaluable addition to the shelves of any Western America history collection.

Andrew Hammond, Chico, CA, co-author of Following the Beckwourth Trail, contributor to Overland Journal, a magazine of the Oregon California Trails Association

This obscure recollection deserves a new edition as first hand accounts from this region are as scarce as a pan full of gold nuggets. Places like Onion Valley and Nelson Creek and other mining camps along the Middle Fork of the Feather River roared with excitement as men scrambled to make their fortune. Moreover, Lawson's well researched and beautifully written biographies of McIlhany and his fellow gold seekers make this an invaluable contribution not only to the history of northeastern California but also to our understanding of the most compelling event in Western American history.

Gary Kurutz, Curator of Special Collections, California State Library, Sacramento, CA and author of The California Gold Rush: A Descriptive Bibliography

Recollections of a '49er brings a superlative insight into the history of pioneer Colorado, when perhaps at no other time in its history did the ideals of individual liberty and political sectionalism flourish to such a degree. This exceptional biography of Edward McIlhany—frontiersman, merchant and sheriff—is a boon to the scholarship of this country's social history.

Dennis L. Potter, M.A., Adjunct Professor, Metropolitan State College of Denver, CO

Scott Lawson's expertly annotated edition of McIlhany's 1908 *Recollections of a 49er* brings back from oblivion to our awareness a classic account of an unusually successful Gold Rush trek across the Plains. To those of us still left back in the eastern states these miners departed a century and a half ago, this account of their trip and subsequent life in California has an immediacy that makes it almost as exciting as if we were ourselves joining them in their adventure. Highly recommended.

John A. Washington, Washington Family descendant, contributor to California Historical Quarterly, Chevy Chase, Maryland

Clip along line and return with payment, or call (530) 283-6320 to order by credit card.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A '49ER PREPUBLICATION ORDER FORM

I would like to take advantage of the prepublication price of \$31.40 for the new book *Recollections of a '49er*. This is a limited edition with each copy numbered and if requested, signed. This offer is good only through November 30, 2006. Please make