

Volume 41 No.2

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August 2015

## 6th Annual Grave Occasion Arises on Sept. 19th



Join us on Saturday, September 19, 2015 at the historic Meadow Valley Cemetery as we unearth our annual *Grave Occasion Cemetery Tour and Dinner* for another year. This year's event not only features one of Plumas County's more quiescent cemeteries that has been in continuous use since the 1850s, but also promises to resurrect, in spirit, a multitude of Meadow Valley notables who have gone to the great beyond. Led by Tina Terrazas who also plays one of our characters, local actors will transform themselves into the likes of Alanson Hallsted, Edward Henry Metcalf, Dewey McElroy, Gee & Wong Poy Moon, Andrew & Mahala Robinson, Richard Thompson and his two wives, Sarah Heckle Taylor Atwood, Mathias Kniewel, Thomas & Elizabeth Hughes, and perhaps several others. This pastoral cemetery is largely flat and very walkable.

Along with wine and hors d'oeuvres to start off the evening, and our memorable performances by the undead players, the event will also feature a delicious dinner prepared by Mike Miller consisting of piled-high pulled pork sandwiches on homemade bread, salads, and beverages, a silent auction filled with wondrous specialty items to bid on, and evening musical entertainment by the Retallicks. This year we also have use of the historic Meadow Valley Schoolhouse for our dinner, auction, and entertainment venues.

The pearly gates open at 3:00 and the event continues until the shades of dusk (usually around 7 pm). Be sure to get your tickets now as they tend to sell out quickly, and there are only a limited number available. You can purchase tickets in person at the Museum, by contacting us with a credit card number at 283-6320, or by visiting our Museum Store on our website: [www.plumasmuseum.org](http://www.plumasmuseum.org) and clicking on "Events." Tickets are also available from any of our trusted Museum Trustees (listed on the back of this publication). Members are \$40 each with non-members \$50 each. We encourage you to become a member and save today!



## A Brief History of Meadow Valley Cemetery & Schoolhouse.

Although Robert Hoy, 1828-1855, a pioneer and only 27 years old when he passed is the first burial that has dates attached, it is thought that earlier interments were made here as well. A fence enclosing the graveyard was built chiefly by the Sons of Temperance around 1856; it fell down in 1866 and a new fence was built and painted under the superintendence of Richard Jacks that same year (after over \$300 was contributed by various people). Jacks had deeded the property out of his ranch to the Cemetery for its use. The Meadow Valley Cemetery District was formed on June 20, 1924. Many of Meadow Valley, Spanish Ranch, and the East Branch of the North Fork Feather River's notable pioneers are buried here. It has also become a favorite for out of the area folks because of its beauty and tranquility.

The Meadow Valley School was built in 1912 to replace the original Spanish Peak School, built in 1872. The Meadow Valley School saw almost 60 years of continuous use before it was shut down as a public school in 1971. Sometimes called the "Alcatraz of Meadow Valley" because of the battle put up by parents loyal to the school, it is now a historic building administered by the Meadow Valley Fire Department. They have graciously allowed us use of the building for this event.

# Beckwourth Cemetery Tour

On Saturday, June 13, over 70 people gathered at the Jim Beckwourth Cabin Museum as part of the third installment in our Eastern Plumas Cemeteries tours. As one part of the group toured the Beckwourth Cabin, another part of the group was shown around the original Beckwourth War Horse Ranch by current owner, Gary Bullis. Afterwards everyone met across the street at the Whispering Pines Cemetery and all were treated to historical reenactments by Tina Terrazas and Wayne Bauer of a number of the Sierra Valley pioneers interred there. Museum Director Scott Lawson also gave brief biographical sketches of a number of others, as well. After the history lessons participants enjoyed wine and cheese provided by Don & Nancy Clark. A big thank you to all who participated, to Richard Arnold and Betty Folchi at the Jim Beckwourth Cabin Museum, and Gary Bullis of the Kerby-Ramelli Ranch.



*Kerby, later Ramelli, Ranch  
about 1890,  
Beckwourth Cabin in rear*

## News Around The Museum

Part time Museum Assistant Paul Russell made a presentation to the Sierra Ramblers RV group at Pioneer RV Park on August 8<sup>th</sup>. His presentation covered the California Gold Rush and the rambles of Crazy Thomas Stoddard (and his discovery of the Lake of Gold), James Beckwourth and the Beckwourth Trail, and two emigrants whose experience along the trail were quite different, Philip Linthicum and Joshua Variel. The presentation was a huge success and the Sierra Ramblers made a \$100 donation to the museum for his effort.



Museum Director Scott Lawson presented a re-enactment of Frederick King, a 19<sup>th</sup> century mule packer on the Jamison Route from Mohawk Valley to Marysville, as well as an early owner of the White Sulphur Springs Ranch, to the Plumas Eureka State Park Association at their 4<sup>th</sup> annual Dinner in the Park. Scott accompanied his four donkeys, Sierra, Chris, Alice and Bonita, the latter four of whom were a big hit.

*Left: Al Klem, left, one of the participants, and Museum Director Scott Lawson adjust the pack on Donkey Alice on the Jamison Canyon hike.*

## Upcoming Museum Events

Clear your calendars and keep your weekends free, because we have some upcoming events that you won't want to miss!

First in our lineup of events happens on Saturday, August 22, when trains and outlawry collide as Old West expert Lee Dummel presents an afternoon with Andrew Jackson "Big Jack" Davis, the first train robber west of the Rocky Mountains. Dummel will present himself as "Big Jack" and regale the audience with his side of this daring heist. Although Jesse James is often credited with robbing the first train west of the Mississippi in 1873, "Big Jack" Davis had already beaten him to the punch some three years earlier! In 1870, "Big Jack" and his gang struck the Central Pacific Railroad between Verdi and Reno, Nevada, and this entertaining presentation will shed new light on this little-known slice of history that happened in our own backyard! The presentation starts at 2:00 PM at the Plumas County Courthouse in downtown Quincy. As a fundraiser for the Plumas County Museum, donations are greatly appreciated.

Our Donkey Walks of historic Plumas County continue, with Friday, October 16, being our last scheduled hike of the season. Join us and the donkeys for a history-filled adventure along the old Jamison Canyon Emigrant Trail and Wagon Road. Just in time to view the changing fall colors, this walk starts at Jamison Mine in Plumas Eureka State Park and takes us along the Johnsville-Gibsonville Road, a dirt thoroughfare that once provided access to many old gold camps. We then pass along the flanks of Gold Mountain, now Eureka Peak, and make our way out of the State Park. Along the way we will see Native American rock art, old growth timber, mining ditches, as well as examples of rock walls beautifully constructed by early road laborers. Our turn around point at McRae Meadows affords astounding views of McRae Ridge. This 8 to 10 mile round trip walk will last approximately from 9 a.m. to

and is moderately strenuous in nature. Contact the Museum today if you are interested in participating and remember Museum members get a discounted price, but a one-year membership is included in the non-member price!

The Old West comes alive once more on Saturday, October 3, when Old West Historians and Reenactors Lee Dummel and Pete Dryer, along with “seconds” Scott Lawson and Dave Montanari strap on the old black powder pistols and send hot lead flying in a recreation of the August 1852 duel between Plumas County miners, John Morrison and William Leggett, near Rich Bar. This rip-roaring presentation of a classic 15-paces duel on the field of honor will be a faithful recreation of a rare scene in the rough and tumble west and is sure to delight the history lover in your family. At this time the logistics of the event are being fine-tuned, so watch for more information, including venue, in the near future.

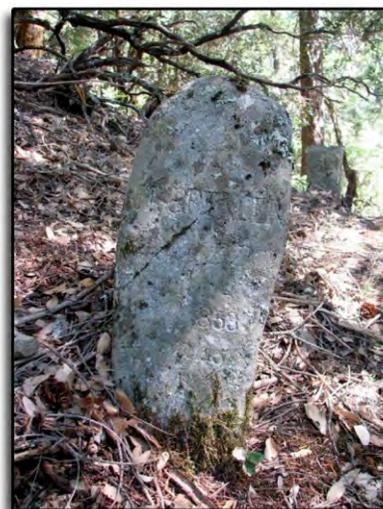
Rafael Blanco will be showing his work on the Stella Fay Miller Mezzanine Gallery for the months of August and September. His work focuses on the Red, White & Blue and the misuse of our proud flag in merchandising and advertising. Rafael, a native of Spain, is the Art Instructor at Feather River College.



*H. Spence tombstone and footstone, taken in 1927.*

## The Grave On The Hillside

On April 21, 1853, a gold miner named H. Spence died at Butte Bar on the Middle Fork Feather River. His comrades buried him in a lonely spot on a remote hillside along the Onion Valley Trail, where he was soon forgotten. About 1927, V.A. Miller and Bill Morris located the grave, cleared the brush and photographed it. Once again, it was soon forgotten. Years later, a framed photo display was donated to the museum depicting Miller and Morris's work. In August 2007, Plumas County Museum Director Scott Lawson decided to attempt to find the grave and re-photograph it. After several hours of working up and down the mountainside through thick brush and live oak, the grave was located. The grave was still intact and in good condition and no brush was cut for the re-photography.



*H. Spence tombstone and footstone in 2007.*

## Thank You Volunteers

Our volunteers and staff have been keeping busy this summer, starting off by hosting our annual 4<sup>th</sup> grade Pioneer Living History Days back in May and several RV group presentations during the summer. Denise Russell has given several group tours of the Variel Home and has learned several stories concerning the house by those who used to live there. Pete Dryer and Charlie Brown have been busy sprucing up and enclosing the back porch of the Goodwin Law Office and on June 6th, George Schucehenzuber III raised \$137.75 for the Museum at the County Fair by giving buzz cuts to patrons. Our yard volunteers have been keeping our gardens looking good, Sam Lawson worked to keep our exhibit yard clean and free of debris and weeds, while John Walker has built a new fence using some old materials between our exhibit yard and the Variel gardens. Linda Wallace has not only been keeping the Museum open on Sundays, but has also been processing all our membership, donation, and memorial thank-yous, and even found time to crawl inside one of our display cases to give it a thorough cleaning! Thank you to all our volunteers!

## Memorial

We are sad to announce that one of our long-time volunteers, Virginia “Lee” Williams passed away recently. A lifelong teacher, Lee was always willing to help out whenever and wherever possible, and she was a staple figure at our 4<sup>th</sup> grade Pioneer Living History Days and enjoyed volunteering at the Pioneer Schoolhouse during the County Fair. We will miss her and we extend our condolences to her family.

# From The Museum's Past



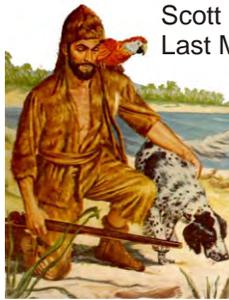
The Alfonso Ramelli Ranch, formerly the Beckwourth, then Kerby Ranch, about 1910.

Photo Courtesy:  
Jan Buck & Sierra Booster

## TRUSTEES:

Ken Barnard, *Graeagle*  
Charlie Brown, *Quincy*  
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Pete Dryer, *Twain*  
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Linda Wallace, *Quincy*  
Jerry Thomas, *American Valley*  
Diane Uchtyl, *American Valley*

## STAFF:



Scott Lawson,  
Last Man Standing

## DIRECTORS:

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Appointed by the Board of Supervisors

**Hours: Sunday 11:00-3:00, Tuesday-Saturday 10:00-4:00**  
**closed Monday & Holidays**

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