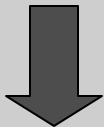


# THE PLACER

A Voice of History

May-June 2013  
Volume 16, Issue 3



## In this Issue

1. Administrator's Notes
2. Care of wooden objects
4. Museums Intelligence
5. PCHS News
6. Historical Organizations/  
Artifact Highlight
7. Calendar of Events

Melanie Barton, Museums Admin.  
Placer County Museums Division  
101 Maple St.  
Auburn, CA 95603  
(530) 889-6500  
[mbarton@placer.ca.gov](mailto:mbarton@placer.ca.gov)

Michael Otten, President  
Placer County Historical Society  
PO Box 5643  
Auburn, CA 95604  
[otten@ssctv.net](mailto:otten@ssctv.net)

Editor and Staff Writer:  
Kasia Woroniecka  
(530) 889-7705  
[kworonie@placer.ca.gov](mailto:kworonie@placer.ca.gov)  
[www.placer.ca.gov/museum](http://www.placer.ca.gov/museum)

## Administrator's Notes

*Melanie Barton*

“History is People”

I've never claimed to be a historian; however I have a love of history and a passion for sharing it with others. At our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner this month, it was very clear to me that my passion was shared by everyone who attended. Museum volunteers are a unique group. They are dedicated to the role they play sharing history with visitors to our museums, answering research requests at the Archives, leading tours, and assisting staff with programs. This year 200 volunteers spent over 15,500 hours providing these various services. In a very real sense, each and every Museum volunteer is making history. For this, I cannot thank them enough.

“I'm History”

Yes, I am retiring on May 31<sup>st</sup> after 11 years at the helm of the Museums Division. It has been an extremely rewarding experience and I feel very lucky to have had the opportunity of a lifetime. I cannot help but be reflective at this juncture. Highlights for me are the growth and expansion of the

Living History, School Tour, and Community Education programs. I've had the pleasure of being involved with the renovation of the Bernhard Winery, building the Summer Kitchen, and a major renovation of the historic Courthouse. The Museum Exhibit Team has done a remarkable job keeping our exhibits 'refreshed' and creating outstanding new ones such as *A Leap of Imagination*, *Fashioning a New Identity*, and *Curves and Compromise*.

We made a bold move six years ago when we launched the first **Heritage Trail** event. This year 19 museums from Roseville to Tahoe will participate in the county wide museum tour. More and more visitors are coming to this area for the two day event and I can't think of a better way to highlight local history and all the wonderful local history museums in the county.

Recently, we relocated the Archives and Collections at the County Government Center in Dewitt. This project was first discussed almost nine years ago and we have spent the last year preparing for the move in earnest. The new location provides many amenities that we needed such as climate and humidity control for the collection, high density shelving

units, and ample research space for staff and volunteers.

Though I am sad to leave, the time is right. We've accomplished much and I have enjoyed every challenge. I know that the Placer County Museums will continue to play a vital role in our community. Museum staff is more professional and better trained than ever before and I am confident that they will move forward in wonderful new directions. Ralph Gibson will assume leadership of the division until a new Museums Administrator is selected.

I am looking forward to spending more time riding my horse Pancho and exploring this beautiful country with my husband in our 5<sup>th</sup> wheel. Now that I'm a Grandma, I can't wait to have more time to visit my three sons and grandchildren.

Thank you all for your support and for sharing my vision!



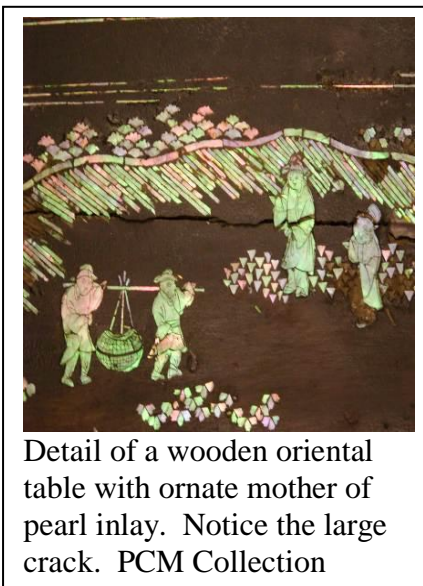
---

## The care of wooden objects

*By Kasia Woroniecka*

Furniture and wooden objects like picture frames, jewelry boxes and even kitchen utensils are part of our everyday lives. If painted, waxed and varnished, or decorated with inlays, metal hardware and upholstery; they become objects that need special care and attention.

One of the most important things to remember about wood is that it is hygroscopic in nature and it absorbs and desorbs water as relative humidity rises and falls. Fluctuations in temperature and humidity cause the wood to expand and contract along different grain directions which can cause a lot of damage, especially to objects made of a variety of materials in addition to wood.



Detail of a wooden oriental table with ornate mother of pearl inlay. Notice the large crack. PCM Collection

As humidity changes, these different components are

pushing and pulling against each other causing cracks, deterioration of the coating and even warping. High humidity can also cause mold growth since fungal spores are found in virtually every environment and increase the threat of insect infestation. The recommended temperature and humidity levels for storing wood objects are 65-70F and 45% relative humidity in winter and 70F and 55% relative humidity in the summer. Relative humidity must never exceed 65%.

Inexpensive humidity sensors can be purchased from archival materials suppliers for around \$25.



Temperature and humidity sensor - hygromograph

As it is not always possible to maintain desired temperature and humidity at home, damage can be minimized by avoiding extremes in temperature and humidity. Keep furniture away from fireplaces, vents and direct sunlight. Avoid storing furniture in garages, basements and attics.

The effects of light on wood objects can be dramatic. All types of light cause cumulative damage to organic materials. Low light levels over a long period of time cause as much damage as high light levels over a short period of time.



Faded edge of a melodion that stood next to a glass sliding door before being donated to PCMC.

Most of the time light damage takes the form of discoloration. It can bleach the wood, affect the coating and degrade the upholstery. It can accelerate the aging process and cause the surface to become brittle and unstable. Unfortunately, light damage is permanent. To reduce the risk, keep your wooden objects away from large windows and bright lights. Use window shades and curtains and cover furniture when not in use.

Good housekeeping is essential when dealing with wood furniture and objects. Dust is your enemy. It not only acts as an abrasive but it also attracts moisture. It is important to evaluate the stability of the surface area and identify any areas of damage where a dusting cloth can be snagged or loose parts can fall off. Dust should be removed by wiping with a soft, lint-free cloth or vacuuming using a soft brush attachment. Don't use feather dusters. They scatter the dust and can scratch the surface with broken feathers. You can also

use compressed air on objects with fragile and irregular surfaces, as long as those are stable and in good condition. Limit pressure to about 10 pounds.

If wet cleaning is necessary proceed with caution. On pieces that require the removal of oil and dirt, use a cotton swab dipped in mineral spirits like Stoddard or naphtha, and test a small area to make sure that the finish will not become damaged. A cotton cloth dampened with the mineral spirits should do the trick. On stable surfaces you can also use diluted soap, like Ivory. Make sure that the cloth is not wet but slightly damp and that the surface is dried with another cloth. Veneered or inlaid surfaces should not be moistened.

After cleaning your wooden object consider applying a clear wax. I recommend Renaissance Wax. It can be purchased



where archival supplies are sold. It was developed by the British Museum and we use it on our

collection of furniture as well as some metals and marble. While there are many products on the market for cleaning and polishing furniture, it is difficult to determine long term effects of these products on your collection. That is why you should never use waxes with strong solvents, like xylene and toluene, because they can

damage surfaces. Waxes containing silicone can never be removed, as they migrate into the surface and make conservation treatments difficult if not impossible. Silicone is often used in liquid polishes, so avoid those. Don't apply wax to unfinished furniture because it will penetrate into the wood. Don't wax too often to avoid buildup. Instead buff with a rag to restore the luster. Don't apply wax when it's hot or humid as the wax can turn cloudy.

The idea that wood furniture needs to be "fed" to keep it from drying is a myth. No matter what the advertising says your wood objects are not hungry and if your piece has a protective finish, no amount of polish will feed, nourish or enrich it, but it will leave it with a lot of build up instead.

Have a plan and a chosen location before moving an item. Examine it for any structural instability. Make note of and secure any parts that are detachable. Lift only by the strongest areas, like the seat rail of the chair or the apron (not the top) of a table. Sliding or dragging can loosen joints and break legs.

Before you consider restoring anything in your collection consult a conservator. A small water mark or a crack can turn into a big problem if treated improperly. The original timber, finish or upholstery are part of the history of the object, so let them reflect its age.



## Museums Intelligence

### Placer County Museums News

Ralph Gibson

Living History has reached the final spring stretch and everything is running smoothly so far. Staff not involved with Living History has been busy getting the Golden Drift and Forest Hill Divide Museums ready for opening later this month as well as working on an exhibit that will grace the foyer of the historic Courthouse in Auburn.

The exhibit will focus on past efforts by the public to preserve historic buildings in Auburn and will be installed in the current Courthouse case just outside the Treasury.

In June we will begin recruiting new volunteers in earnest. The Burma-Shave style signs will once again grace the Bernhard property and we'll start sending press releases to all local papers. If you know someone who is curious about volunteering, please have them call me at 530-889-6502 or they can stop by any of our Auburn museums and fill out a "Register for Volunteer Training" card.

Preparations are underway for this year's Heritage Trail on August 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. If you haven't marked these dates on your calendar yet, please do. If you volunteer for any of the museums on the trail, please consider taking a shift during

the event. We hope to see a lot of people riding the trail this year and I know every museum will need the help.

#### Community Education

##### Program: Music on the Porch

Join us on the front lawn of the historic Bernhard Museum Complex for an evening of great music, a touch of history, and a few laughs! Coon Hollow, formerly known as Coyote Hill, will entertain and interpret early California history through stories and music from the front porch of the Bernhard Museum on Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 7:30 P.M. Special guest Keith Little will join Coon Hollow on vocals, banjo, mandolin, and guitar. Keith is a careful steward of American traditional music, as well as a well-known performer and recording artist.

Bring your family and a picnic basket dinner and enjoy a relaxed evening in one of Auburn's most historic settings. A few picnic tables are available or you can bring your own lawn chairs or blanket to stretch out on.

#### Community Education

##### Program: Jump into Summer ~ 19<sup>th</sup> Century Kid's Games

It's almost summer! Help us kick off our favorite season with a fun romp through history! Join us at the Bernhard Museum for the next Community Education Program: *Jump into Summer ~ 19<sup>th</sup> Century Kids Games*.

Bring your family on Saturday, June 15<sup>th</sup> anytime between noon and 2:00. We will have period games, Living History crafts, kid-friendly tours of the

Bernhard House, and hand-cranked ice cream.

Take a step back in time with your whole family for a taste of yesteryear's summertime fun!

Both of these programs are FREE! The Bernhard Museum is located at 291 Auburn-Folsom Road in Auburn. For more information about either of these programs, please call 530-889-6500.

#### Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Loomis Veterans Memorial Hall

April 28, 2013



Mary Ford received the 30Years of Service Award.



Bev Jones received the Outstanding Achievement Award.

## Placer County Historical Society News



### President's Message

*Michael Otten,  
President*

Where is the final resting place of Dr. J.C. Hawver? Inquiring minds want to know.

Dr. Hawver is one of our most celebrated residents. Gene Lorance, the Hawver Cave Project manager and society's keynote speaker at the annual meeting in April, knows more about Dr. Hawver and the caves that bear his name than anyone else. Yet even he, along with Dr. Hawver's descendents, can't find where he is buried. The popular presumption is that Hawver was buried at the Old Auburn Cemetery in the Odd Fellows section as one obituary reported. Today, no marker can be found. Lorance said it appears Hawver had purchased two gravesites and it is possible his first wife, Mary, was buried there in 1911. John Christor Hawver was born Oct. 4, 1854, in Nevada County. He died May 15, 1914, at the age of 59 of a heart attack. Lorance said the Auburn cemetery has probed for Dr. Hawver's remains without success. Lorance is working with the Auburn State Recreation Area and "Cave Keepers," an offshoot of Canyon Keepers, in hopes of leading Hawver Cave tours this fall. To learn much, much more check out [hawvercave.org](http://hawvercave.org)

\*\*\*

On March 26<sup>th</sup> the Placer County Board of Supervisors presented a commendation to Robin Yonash and Nancy Hagman of Colfax and Glenda Ragan of Auburn for their volunteer work with the Colfax, Weimar and Auburn cemeteries. Supervisor, Jennifer Montgomery made special note of "The Weimar Joint Sanatorium and the Weimar Cemetery," a pamphlet that now puts names to the numbers on the wooden markers at the grave sites. Research reveals 29 military veterans were buried there. Hagman said cement markers will be in place for the first known Memorial Day services on Monday, May 27, at Weimar. Colfax VFW Post 2003 plans to install a plaque and flagpole with materials donated by Hills Flat Lumber.

\*\*\*

Welcome PCHS newest officer, Bill George of Granite Bay, who was elected Secretary at the annual meeting in April. He succeeds Jane Misphey, who had been acting Secretary since the resignation of Bonnie Parodi. Reelected: Michael Otten, President; George Lay, 1st Vice President; Addah Owens, 2nd Vice (programs); Al Stoll, Treasurer. Jean Allender, Karen Bleuel and John Knox, return to new two-year board terms. One year remains on terms of board members Karri Samson, Sherri Schackner, Penny Watson and Walt Wilson.

\*\*\*

Please salute life member Mike Lynch on his selection as President and CEO of the California State Park

Anniversary Committee, a registered nonprofit organization busy putting together next year's 150 State Parks anniversary observance. The Placer County Historical Foundation has nominated Lynch for a Conference of California Historical Societies' certificate of merit for all his work in the Centennial of the Mountain Quarries Railroad and Bridge last year. The Conference will be observing its 60th anniversary at its annual meeting June 20-22 in Sacramento. PCHS members can receive a special rate for registering.

[otten@ssctv.net](mailto:otten@ssctv.net)

---

### Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting

*Addah Owens,  
Vice President*



**When:** June 6th

**Time:** 6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Program

**Where:** Veterans Memorial Hall, 100 East St., Auburn, CA

**Cost:** \$14 per person

**Menu:** BBQ chicken and ribs, macaroni salad, green salad, dinner rolls and strawberry shortcake.

**Mail Check to:** PCHS, c/o Betty Samson, 8780 Baxter Grade Road, Auburn, CA 95603.

**Program:** presentation by Eric Peach of *Protect American River Canyons*. He will discuss "walking on the wild side" observing newts, rare butterflies and migratory birds.

## **Placer County Historical Organizations**

---

---

Colfax Area Historical Society  
Helen Wayland,  
(530) 346-7040  
[www.colfaxhistory.org](http://www.colfaxhistory.org)

Donner Summit Historical Society  
Bill Oudegeest, (209) 606-6859  
[www.donnersummithistoricalociety.org](http://www.donnersummithistoricalociety.org)

Foresthill Divide Historical Society  
Sandy Simester, (530) 367-3535  
[www.foresthillhistory.org](http://www.foresthillhistory.org)

Fruitvale School Hall  
Community Association  
Lyndell Grey, (916) 645-3517

Golden Drift Historical Society  
Jim Ricker, (530) 389-8344

Historical Advisory Board  
Glenn Vineyard, (916) 747-1961

Joss House Museum and  
Chinese History Center  
Richard Yue, (530) 346-7121

Lincoln Area Archives Museum  
Shirley Russell, (916) 645-3800

Lincoln Highway Association  
Bob Dieterich, [bobd@iname.com](mailto:bobd@iname.com)  
[www.lincolnhwy.org](http://www.lincolnhwy.org)

Loomis Basin Historical Society  
Karen Clifford, (916) 663-3871  
<http://www.ppgn.com/loomishistorical.html>

Maidu Museum & Historic Site  
Glenie Strome, (916) 782-3299  
[www.roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum](http://www.roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum)

Native Sons of the Golden West, Parlor #59  
Dave Allen, (530) 878-2878  
[dsallen59@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dsallen59@sbcglobal.net)

Newcastle Portuguese Hall Association  
Aileen Gage, (530) 885-9113

Old Town Auburn Preservation Society  
Lynn Carpenter, (530) 885-1252

Placer County Genealogical Society  
[www.pcgenes.com](http://www.pcgenes.com)

Placer County Historical Society  
Michael Otten, (530) 888-7837  
[www.placercountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.placercountyhistoricalsociety.org)

Placer County Museums Docent Guild  
Sandi Tribe, (530) 887-9143

Rocklin Historical Society  
Jean Sippola,  
(916) 652-1034  
[www.rocklinhistory.org](http://www.rocklinhistory.org)

Roseville Historical Society  
Phoebe Astill, (916) 773-3003  
[www.rosevillehistorical.org](http://www.rosevillehistorical.org)

North Lake Tahoe Historical Society  
Javier Rodriguez, (530) 583-1762  
[www.northtahoemuseums.org](http://www.northtahoemuseums.org)

### **Artifact Highlight**

#### **Trinket box**



This trinket box with a picture of a Chinese boy on the lid is an example of Tramp Art. It was made in 1916 out of wooden cigar boxes by a Chinese prisoner at Folsom Prison. This form of folk art was popular in the period from 1870-1930. The artists utilized recycled materials to create picture frames, lamps, jewelry boxes and other objects with ornate layers and chip-carved decorating style.

## 2013 Calendar of Events

### May

- May 14<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm** Roseville Historical Society meeting at Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln Street, Roseville.  
Contact: 916-773-3003
- May 20<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 pm** Forest Hill Divide Historical Society business meeting at the Forest Hill Divide Museum.  
Contact: 530-367-3535.
- May 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm** Rocklin Historical Society meeting at the Old St. Mary's Chapel, 5152 Front Street, Rocklin.  
Contact: 916-624-3464
- May 22<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis Library.  
Contact: 916-663-3871.
- May 25<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm** Community Education Program: *Music on the Porch* presented by Coon Hollow.  
Bernhard Museum Winery, 291 Auburn Folsom Rd, Auburn.
- May 23<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm** Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library.  
Contact 530-885-2216.

### June

- June 6<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm.** Placer County Historical Society Dinner meeting at the Auburn Veterans Memorial Hall, 100 East Street, Auburn. Contact: (530) 885-5074
- June 9<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm** Roseville Historical Society meeting at the Carnegie Museum. 557 Lincoln Street, Roseville  
Contact: 916-773-3003.
- June 15<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 pm** Community Education Program: *Jump into Summer-19<sup>th</sup> c. Kids' Games.*  
Bernhard Museum Winery, 291 Auburn Folsom Rd, Auburn.
- June 17<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 pm** Forest Hill Divide Historical Society Dinner meeting at the Foresthill Memorial Hall.  
Contact: 530-367-3535.
- June 19<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 pm** Historical Advisory Board meeting at the Bernhard Museum Winery, 291 Auburn-Folsom Rd., Auburn.  
Contact: 530-889-6500.
- June 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 pm** Loomis Basin Historical Society meeting at the Loomis Library.  
Contact: 916-663-3871.
- June 27<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm** Placer County Genealogical Society general meeting in the Beecher Room at the Auburn Library.  
Contact 530-885-2216.

**Placer County Museums**  
**101 Maple Street**  
**Auburn, CA 95603**

