



2017 January-February Volume 20, Issue 1

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Administrator's Notes

by *Ralph Gibson*

This past year brought us an unusual number of celebrity deaths, from movie stars to musicians, sports heroes, news reporters and newsmakers. This year began with a death that hit close to home for us: Alan Rickman.

On August 27, 2007, we took our volunteers to the Sonoma State Historic Park and to General Vallejo's home (now a museum) for our annual Volunteer Appreciation Trip. While in Old Town Sonoma, we noticed part of the street was blocked off and there were two huge cameras and tall lights next to the street. We soon learned the movie, *Bottle Shock*, was being filmed.

Bill Pullman, Alan Rickman, Rachael Taylor, and up-and-coming actor Chris Pine were starring in the movie.

We got as close as we could to the action and watched with fascination. Rickman, Pine, and Taylor got out of an old truck, walked across the street, and entered a business while people dressed in 1970s clothing walked on the sidewalk. It was a simple scene, but most of us were riveted.

During a break, Pine talked and laughed with the impromptu audience and Rachael Taylor brushed passed me on her way to the bathroom. The crew set up a different scene.

When it was time, Rickman appeared out of nowhere. The three actors walked out of the business, crossed the street, got into the truck and attempted to drive off — "attempted" because the truck wouldn't start. It was not acting.

After the mechanic finished, the truck roared to life and Pine drove down the road about a half block, backed up, and parked where they had started. Everyone then filmed the same scene over and over again. The truck broke down at least two more times but they finally wrapped for the day and we went on to General Vallejo's home.

Alan Rickman passed away on January 14, 2016. He acted in seventy films, including the eight Harry Potter films, *Galaxy Quest*, and the first *Die Hard*. We will always remember him for his role in *Bottle Shock*. Rest in peace, Alan.

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\$300,000,000 in gold hidden in
 Placer County

page 2

hot chicken tamales day and
 night

page 3

much easier with dynamite

page 4

most startling, stupendous
 photodrama ever screened

page 5

Wedding Cakes and Cupids

by Kasia Woroniecka, Curator of Collections

Valentine's Day is just around the corner and a popular



day to “pop the question.” Since decorated cakes are an important part of wedding celebrations, I chose this beautiful cake topper that was used during the wedding of Adeline and Anthony Perry in 1910 to highlight romance-related objects in our collection and set the mood for this amorous holiday.

Decorating wedding cakes became very popular during the 19th-century. Early designs included flowers, bells, or other small objects and were often made of sugar or non-edible materials like glass, paper, wood, or plaster of Paris.

Our ornate dessert-ornament is made of plaster of Paris



with a figure of a cupid blacksmith forging a ring—a symbol of love, fidelity, and commitment. Behind him is a candleholder carved with ornate floral and scroll design.

The cupid blacksmith was also a popular Valentines card theme in the 19th-century.

Here is an intricate pop-up card from our collection showing a similar composition to the cake topper.

The anvil as a symbol of romance was made famous in the Scottish village of Gretna Green, known as one of the world's most popular wedding destinations.

A law enacted in England in 1754 made marriage legal only if

it was performed in a church and with parental consent.



The law did not apply in Scotland where almost anybody had the authority to conduct the marriage ceremony. The blacksmiths in Gretna Green became known as “anvil priests” and are now symbolically

immortalized as the cupid blacksmith.

While the tradition of creating special cakes for weddings can be found in Roman times (made with nuts, fruit and honey), white wedding cakes appeared in Victorian times. A sign of purity, white created a visual link with the bride and became especially popular after



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Queen Victoria's wedding in 1840. Her white wedding cake was covered in royal icing and measured nine feet in circumference.

Decorative cake toppers and the use of figurines of the bride and groom grew more popular after the first World War. This tradition was reinforced by Emily Post, American etiquette expert, who mentioned the toppers in her 1922 best-seller *Etiquette in Society, in Business, in Politics, and at Home*. Soon, American retailers like Sears and Roebuck started to market and sell cake toppers showcasing the bride and groom. The 1927 Sears catalog had an entire page devoted to wedding cake ornaments.

Today, there are practically no rules about wedding cakes. They can be of any color, flavor or shape and

the possibilities are endless. All we can hope for is that they taste good!



Unnamed couple feeding each other wedding cake. Circa 1950. Placer County Archives Photo Collection.

Jail Break in Auburn, October 4, 1860

by Bryanna Ryan, Curator of Archives

The Archives preserves a variety of records that document early criminal activities in Placer County. Of particular interest are the Court of Sessions case files that range from 1851 to 1863. This was a period of dramatic growth throughout the area. Communities were quickly developing and citizens hurried to establish and maintain a sense of law and order that would transcend to even the most remote reaches of the county.

The case files include locations like Mendenhall's Corral, Salt Spring Ranch, El Dorado Saloon, Illinois-town, Whiskey Bar, and Mad Canyon.

Throughout this time period, the Court of Sessions heard 364 cases covering crimes including: theft, bribery, fraud, swindling, being a cheat, peddling without a license, keeping house for playing games of chance, keeping a house of ill fame, dueling, larceny, arson, assault, murder and mayhem (among others).

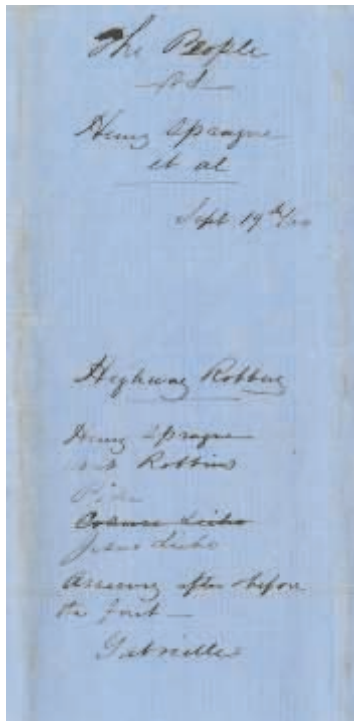
More Thieves, and more Arrests.

Placer Herald 7/28/1860

In the year 1860, thirty-five cases were heard and they were overwhelmingly for crimes involving theft. On the night of October 4, twenty inmates were serving time in the Auburn jail.

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Court of Sessions Case No. 295

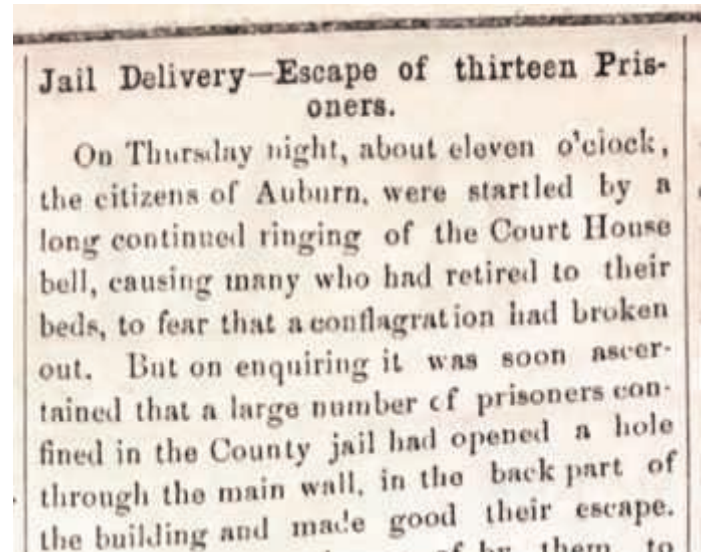
Among the prisoners that night were an assortment of burglars and robbers—including a gang of four men arrested for highway robbery.

Using their distinctive skillsets, thirteen of the twenty inmates made a daring escape—one that had been developing for several days and which bought the fugitives a 3-hour head start.

The escapees included:

- Henry Sprague, N.A. Robbins, Lawrence Sumsall, and Gabriel Rocus—Iowa Hill Stage Robbery (Wells Fargo treasure box of \$11,020)
- William Dixon and Monroe Croyer—The “Mountain Springs Robbers”
- Artemarano Okaner and Aystube Tomline—Horse Thieves
- Thomas King, Daniel Gray, Ah Bow, William Wild, and Thomas Lawrence—Burglars

The October 6, 1860 *Placer Herald* published many of the details of the escape gathered in the aftermath.



Someone had smuggled in a Chilean crowbar, the steel hoops from a fellow “China woman” prisoner were manipulated into lock picks and chisels. A hole was carved through the jail wall and concealed under a piece of muslin whitewashed with lime.

All of the cell doors had been either picked or broken open. Thirteen men were gone.

Seven inmates opted to stay behind, having been arrested for lesser crimes. As witnesses, they divulged details of the sensational event. According to one, on the evening of October 4, 1860, the prisoners were “in quite a jovial mood, singing and hallooing,” a device discovered was cleverly used to drown out the noise of their work.

The *Placer Herald* rightly observed: “From their number, and the known proficiency of some of them as old rascals, there would appear to be a want of proper vigilance on the part of the officers.”

The Scoop

by Beth Rohlfes, Curator of Education

There is no bad time to celebrate volunteers, but this is a particularly wonderful and unique time of year to recognize those who donate their time and talents to Placer County Museums.



Wendy Burgess, (me), and Daphne Lake

Bolstered by holiday spirit, we gathered staff and docents for our annual Holiday Luncheon in December to honor seasoned volunteers for their commitment of, collectively, 26,550 hours!

As we celebrated these dedicated individuals, we also welcomed docents who just completed their New Volunteer Training Classes and will begin volunteering in January.



Cindy Combs

Nine new volunteers are now inducted into our ranks. Look for them in

our museums and please congratulate them: Wendy Burgess, Paul Clement, Cindy Combs, Terry Davis, Marti Jamison, Diego Ortega, Lisa Paulson, Doug Reagin and Sherry Rodriguez.

We also honored eighteen docents for their accumulated volunteer hours. Archives volunteers John Knox and April McDonald-Loomis have given an exemplary 5000 hours each!

Others also logged impressive time at our museums and archives: Chris Francee (4,500); Frank Hampton and Ron Petersen

(3,000); Fran Hanson (2,500); Daphne Lake (2,000); Addah Owens (1,500); Carmel Barry-Schweyer, Barbara Hydinger, Margie Raymond and Mary Williams (1,000); Kim Hemmer, Linda Kreuger and Terry Rose (500); Bhakti

Banning, Muriel Davis and Carol Shepard (300).



Addah Owens & Bettie Klopotek

News from Placer County Historical Society

by Michael Otten, immediate past president

otten@sscto.net or call (530) 888-7837

Please see our blog, avoiceofhistory.blogspot.com, for upcoming events and news from the Placer County

Historical Society. Also, mark your calendars for an exciting presentation at our February 2 dinner meeting.

Placer County Historical Organizations

Colfax Area Historical Society,

Chris Miller (530) 346-8599

colfaxhistory.org

Donner Summit Historical Society,

Bill Oudegeest, (209) 606-6859

donnersummithistoricalsociety.org

Foresthill Divide Historical Society,

Sandy Simester, (530) 367-3535

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 Highway Association,

Bob Dieterich bobd@iname.com,

<https://www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/>

Lincoln Area Archives Museum,

Elizabeth Jansen, (916) 645-3800

laamca.org

Loomis Basin Historical Society,

Karen Clifford, (916) 663-3871

Maidu Museum & Historic Site,

Mark Murphy, (916)774-5934

roseville.ca.us/indianmuseum

The Museum of Sierra Ski History and 1960 Winter Olympics,

David C. Antonucci, (775)722-3502

<http://tahoemuseum.org/>

Native Sons of the Golden West, Parlor #59,

Dave Allen, (530) 878-2878

dsallen59@sbcglobal.net

Newcastle Portuguese Hall Association,

Mario Farinha (530) 269-2412

North Lake Tahoe Historical Society,

Rebecca Phipps, (530) 583-1762

northtahoemuseums.org

Placer County Historical Society,

Walt Wilson, (530) 878-6640

placercountyhistoricalsociety.org

Placer County Museums Docent Guild,

Tom Innes, (530) 888-8969

Rocklin Historical Society,

Kathie Nippert, (916) 624-2355

rocklinhistory.org

Roseville Historical Society,

Phoebe Astill, (916) 773-3003

rosevillehistorical.org

Old Town Auburn Preservation Society,

Lynn Carpenter, (530) 885-1252

Placer County Genealogical Society,

Toni Rosasco, (530) 888-8036

pcgenes.com

Roseville Fire Museum,

Jim Giblin, (916) 538-1809

rosevillefiremuseum@gmail.com

rosevillefiremuseum.org

Roseville Public Library,

Christopher Webber (916)774-5239

www.roseville.ca.us/library

Placer County Historical Society Dinner Meeting

By Addah Owens, Program Chair

When: February 2, 2017

Time: 6:30 Dinner, 7:30 Program

Where: Veterans Hall, 100 East St, Auburn

Cost: \$16 per person

Menu: Chinese New Year buffet by Lisa Bloom, owner of A Window Opened in Meadow Vista.

Program: "Hidden History Beneath Folsom Lake: Hiking Across a Dry Lake Bed in Time of Draught."

Kevin Knauss of Granite Bay will PowerPoint his historical trek through time. A must-see presentation. Books available.

For a downloadable preview, click "Kevin" at

www.insuremekevin.com.

Mail Checks to: PCHS

c/o Jane Hamilton, 1871 Crockett Road, Auburn, CA 95603.

(530) 885-7839 or

hamiltonjane1@me.com

DO NOT BRING ALCOHOL. County directives prohibit it, and, we can't get liability coverage.

Calendar of Events

January



3 4:00 pm

Roseville Historical Society
Board of Directors meeting,
Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln
Street, Roseville. (916) 773-3003

5 2:00 pm

Placer County Historical Society
Board of Directors meeting, Room
10, Auburn City Hall, 1225 Lin-
coln Way, Auburn. (530) 878-6640

9 6:00 pm

Rocklin Historical Society Board
of Directors Meeting, Old St.
Mary's Chapel, 5152 Front Street,
Rocklin. (916) 624-2355

16 6:00 pm

Forest Hill Divide Historical
Society business meeting, Forest
Hill Divide Museum.
(530) 367-3535

26 7:00 pm

Placer County Genealogical
Society general meeting, Beecher
Room, Auburn Library.
(866) 894-2076



Pincushion, circa 1849.
PCM Object #: 1965.24.10

February

2 2:00 pm

Placer County Historical Society
Board of Directors meeting, Room
10, Auburn City Hall, 1225 Lincoln
Way, Auburn. (530) 878-6640

2 6:30 pm

Placer County Historical Society
dinner meeting, Veterans Memorial
Hall, 100 East Street, Auburn.
(530) 878-6640

13 6:00 pm

Rocklin Historical Society Board of
Directors Meeting, Old St. Mary's
Chapel, 5152 Front Street, Rocklin.
(916) 624-2355

14 4:00 pm

Roseville Historical Society
Board of Directors meeting,
Carnegie Museum, 557 Lincoln
Street, Roseville. (916) 773-3003

15 5:30 pm

Historical Advisory Board Meeting,
Bernhard Winery, 291 Auburn-
Folsom Rd. Auburn.
(530) 889-6500

15 6:00 pm

Loomis Basin Historical Society
meeting, Loomis Library.
(916) 663-3871

23 7:00 pm

Placer County Genealogical Society
general meeting, Beecher Room,
Auburn Library. (866) 894-2076



PLACER COUNTY MUSEUMS

101 Maple Street
Auburn, CA 95603



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