Dear Members

It has certainly been a winter for us. This has created many a discussion at the Research Cabin regarding snow and water levels, survival methods, new and old, and the perseverance of the human animal.

In this day and age of social media a person can learn a lot of how our society has changed. Not even 30 years ago, if the power went out, the procedure was to get out the candles, lanterns, lamps. You then stoked the fire, brought in the wood during daylight hours; cooked on your wood stove and read books until dark. For me it was a joyful time to go back and live a simpler life. I may have been the only one.

The cabin was closed for three consecutive weeks due to snow levels but once again our volunteers came to the rescue and now we are back in business. We have been busy working on developing a new photo archival program and working with the collections that have been donated. Due to a generous donation, we will be upgrading our scanner for photo processing in the very near future.

Spring is approaching and it will be time for our annual request for docents to help run the old jail, so if you have any time on a Thursday night, Saturday or Sunday please contact Karl Pape, 530-582-0893.

See you all at the Old Timers’ Picnic this summer. Details to come.

Respectfully, Chaun Mortier, President

The Joseph Research Library, February 2017

Photo courtesy Chaun Mortier
Notice to Members

In 2015, the TDHS Board of Directors approved a change in membership renewal to reflect the Society's bi-annual renewal schedule - January or July. For specific details, please visit our website.

QR CODE or the squirley-looking black & white icon on the front page

Some of you may be familiar with these strange looking icons. The black & white cross-hatched icon on the front page represents our new website at truckeehistory.org. If you have a "smart" phone or iPad with a 'QR Reader,' all you need do is scan your device OVER the icon and you should be directed to our website. And what would one use this for? On any printed material, you could 'scan any QR code' and be taken to their website immediately. In our case, you can go immediately to our truckeehistory.org website and see the Calendar for upcoming events.

Recall to members that starting in 2017, with this issue, we will no longer be mailing out our Echoes From the Past Newsletter. Instead the newsletter will be readily available online and accessible on a quarterly basis.

SEEKING SUMMER DOCENTS FOR OLD JAIL MUSEUM

Summer will be here before you know it and starting Memorial Day through Labor Day, Truckee’s Old Jail Museum will be open on the weekends, holidays and Truckee Thursdays. We are looking for docents to give visitors jail tours, tell some of the history of the jail and museum and Truckee in general. You do NOT have to be an expert in the history. The Historical Society trains and mentors docents.

If you are interested please call 530-582-0893 and tell us how to contact you or e-mail the "docent master," Karl Pape at kdpape@me.com.

If you can help us out at the Old Jail Museum, please contact us. We are all saddened at the loss of our Old Jail Museum stalwart Pat McCartney whose shoes will be very big to fill.

Please get involved with your Truckee Donner Historical Society (TDHS). The only way we can offer programs and events is if YOU, as a volunteer, step up and get involved. TDHS is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) organization so any and all donations are gratefully appreciated and tax deductible. Our mailing address is Truckee Donner Historical Society, P.O. Box 893, Truckee, CA 96160.
A Library for Truckee
By Lauri Ferguson

As early as January 1873 the people of Truckee recognized the need for a library. An editorial appeared in the Truckee Republican on January 11th of that year stating: “One of the best moral safeguards to an intelligent community is a reading room and a public library. More especially is such the case in Truckee.” This was the start of Truckee’s quest for a more civilized community through public services.

The movers and shakers of our community saw the value of a public library to make our town great. Also the “idle” young men in the community, who “belong to the intelligent class”, needed an alternative “retreat” from the “saloons and hotels” they were currently attending. “Particularly during the Winter season” these men of all ages “have a large amount of idle time on their hands to while away”. The town fathers saw a library as keeping the population occupied, including boys and girls as well. An advertisement appeared February 5, 1874 listing a news depot and circulating library at #22 Front Street, run by George W. Harrison, Prop.

A few years later, in August 1879, the Odd Fellows established their own library at the Lodge. Their membership donated money to purchase books and accept “such donations of books as Odd Fellows might see fit to make”. By this time the public school did have a library, but no public library open to all had yet appeared. In the next few years many people were using the Truckee library, but only those connected with the Odd Fellows or Masons. During the 1880s, several people, including Mrs. Lewison in 1884, and an editorial in 1887, proposed the building of a public library.

It took another 30 years to rally the community to have a “Free Library”. A 1910 article from the Truckee Republican reported a campaign to try to raise funds for and build a library in Truckee. They may have been hoping Andrew Carnegie might take an interest in the community and fund a library, as he did in Nevada City and Grass Valley.

The desire to have a library in town came up again in 1936 when the PTA petitioned Nevada County for a library system. In 1940, Mrs. S Marshall Richardson led an effort to secure a county library branch in Truckee. A petition was circulated to encourage the County to provide for the residents on the other side of the hill. Another player stepped up to provide a rental library until a public library could be built. The Wyethia Club, a group of local women founded in 1927 to do good works for and in the community, began this rental library in 1941, which was active during the rest of the 1940s. Anyone in town could use this library for a fee of 10-20 cents per book. By 1943, a membership fee for library use instituted at $1 a year instead of a “by the book” fee. During the 1940s, titles of new books appeared in the Truckee Republican to inform the public of their choices.

After World War II, life changed and people wanted more services in town. The newspaper reported in 1950 that a public library was needed as the population had began to grow. The Tahoe Truckee High School was constructed in 1951 with the school’s library called the “Tahoe Truckee Community Library”. By the late 1960s, movement was ongoing to get library services “at the eastern end of Nevada County”.

Roy Baker, then the high school librarian, [and later to become President of the Truckee-Donner Historical Society on 3 different occasions, including 1975-1978] suggested Marigrey Fish find out if a public library was wanted and needed in Truckee. She began talking with the community which led to State and Federal officials who indicated Truckee could get library services through the Library Services and Construction Act, and Title I would provide federal funds for a bookmobile. It was a success and Fish then spearheaded grass-roots support to create a demonstration project, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors in 1969. Later that year the Truckee Branch Library opened in an upstairs room in the Methodist Church in Truckee. Over the next few
years, the Truckee Branch moved a few times, including a time at the Old Elementary School. It almost ended up in the Old Jail. In 1970, the Friends of the Truckee Library was formed to help secure library services to Truckee. They have been working ever since, helping make the library available to all in the community.

By 1972, a county-wide library system was established. This helped propel the Truckee Branch forward in trying to find funding sources to build a permanent library in Truckee. A new County Librarian, Madelyn Helling, was active in the mid 1970s working with an architect for the new library. In July 1976, the Joseph family donated the land where the Library is currently located. Finally, with a federal grant, Nevada County funds and community donations, the Truckee Library was built in 1976. The Architect for the Truckee Library was Forrest Duranceau of Yuba City’s Gillette, Harris and Duranceau, which firm also did the remodel in 1983. As the town grew so did the building and in 2003 the library was expanded. Ryan Group Architects of Truckee did the 2003 remodel. Voters within Nevada County chose to add additional funding to the County library system with sales tax measures in 1998, 2003, and 2016. Truckee voters helped push the measure over the two-thirds margin every time.

The Truckee community values libraries just as it did in 1873. As the 21st century continues, Truckee embarks on a new era to continue to promote and support our library in bigger and better ways.

(left) Library Dedication Plaque 1976
(below) Partial list of donors whose contributions helped make the Library a reality. Note the first contributor’s name is Dick Joseph who so generously donated the land on which the Library is built.

Truckee Library, 1976

Library article continues on p. 5
The stained glass window on the far left, by Robert (Bo) Boeddiker, and the Indian Woman, above, by painter Raphael Jolly, are on display at the Truckee Library. The legend and dedication plaque for other Jolly paintings currently hanging is noted, above right.

About the Author

Lauri Ferguson was a librarian for 34 years. She was also a researcher for a newspaper and consulting firm, finishing her career as the Truckee librarian from 1999-2012.

Unless otherwise noted, all photos courtesy of the Editor, Heidi Sproat
Historical Artifact Archive Continues to Grow
By Katie Holley

Truckee-Donner Historical Society received numerous new items in 2016: from a souvenir plate with an image of the Rocking Stone to a trove of photographs of winter activities (men clearing snow from rooftops and people riding in horse-drawn sleighs). New documents and artifacts continue to enrich our collection.

TDHS is fortunate to continue to receive such items of historical value from many sources: current and former residents, descendants of early Truckee families, far-flung members of the society, other historical societies, and generous strangers who pass along discoveries made in attics and basements of newly purchased homes. We also sometimes find treasures in storage or in a tucked-away corner, that are new to our eyes, which are recorded as “found in collection,” until more specific documentation can be located.

One value of an historical society is to provide access to the memories of those who lived through events and periods of history, and to the artifacts that evoke those times. It is the closest thing possible to time travel. Artifacts are treasures. Being able to see and handle items that were seen and held by people from decades ago can evoke a connection to the past that enlivens an interest in the lives of those people. This article does not include a comprehensive list of all items donated in the previous year; it is meant merely to highlight some of our new acquisitions. We share with you these items that have been treasured over time, not as possessors, but rather as stewards. We hold them in trust for you and for future historians.

Let’s begin our time travel:

From railroad history we received a color scan of a business card for Samuel R. Cupples, Roadmaster, Coast Division, Southern Pacific Company, and the June 1987 Central Pacific Railroad (CPRR) Southern Pacific Railroad (SPRR) Property Transfer HR711.

Another historical museum sent us two postcards that they appropriately determined belonged in our collection: one shows the Southern Pacific Railroad Ogden Route going past Donner Lake, and the other shows the Truckee River Dam [now known as the Derby Dam], which is part of the Truckee-Carson Irrigation Project.

Art is also history. We received note cards and pen and ink drawings by local artist Dan Goeschl showing Commercial Row and the Train Depot, and from another donor, a framed photo print of downtown Truckee from the late 1800s that once hung in OB’s bar downtown.

Among many personal items of family history, one large collection given to us included the following: a letter dated 21 January 1943 to Mr. and Mrs. George B. Waters in appreciation of their five sons, who “have entered the armed forces of the U.S. during the current war:” as follows: Edwin R. Waters AUS, Orlin O. Waters AUS, Erving D. Waters AUS, Roy F. Waters AUS, William G. Waters USNR. The letter was signed by Henry L. Stimson, 45th U.S. Secretary of War. With this collection were numerous World War II Navy service medals and family correspondence, and the following: USN Sailor Middy top, wool, navy blue, in excellent condition; one USN uniform patch for Navy E-5, gunner’s mate rating badge; one WW II USN Shore Patrol armband in blue material with a yellow SP on it.

From the domestic sphere, we now have a collection of eight salt dishes and matching spoons, from an era in which each place setting at a formal dinner included individual supplies of salt.

The catalog of items entrusted to the Society is extensive. We take seriously our duty to protect and preserve the items in our care, and gratefully acknowledge every donation with a personal thank you. It is because of the generosity of countless individuals that we have so much material available in our museum and in our research library for researchers, historians, residents, and visitors.

Future issues will highlight other items in our collection.

Collections article continues on p. 7
Update to Steamer TRUCKEE

(September 2015 Echoes From the Past article about the Steamer / Schooner TRUCKEE, pp. 5, 7). Looking for something else, we came upon two references to the Steamer TRUCKEE about ship movements in the San Francisco Chronicle. We thought you might be interested in seeing these two references. Steamer TRUCKEE 16 March 1894, arrives from Portland and Astoria. And another entry, Steamer TRUCKEE departing for Coos Bay, June 25, 1896, San Francisco Chronicle, 22 June 1896.

TRUCKEE LUMBER COMPANY (“TLC”) RECORDS

By Heidi Sproat

One of the benefits of serving as editor of our quarterly newsletter, Echoes From the Past, is the opportunity to write an article about appealing subject matter. I was privileged to grow up in California, and lest I reveal my true chronological age, suffice it to say that I still have a few exceptionally vivid memories that now, as an adult, I can revisit childhood moments and try to put them into perspective with some historical background.

Several of these “Polaroid” memories involve railroads, farm markets, lumber mills, V-flumes, the “Bonanza” movie set (1959-1973), and my distinct recollection of the name of Truckee and one of the early business owners of the TLC, George Geisendorfer. Geisendorfer was a partner of E.J. Brickell who built and operated the lumber mill which eventually became the Truckee Lumber Company. While there are many articles and books about the Truckee Lumber Company (“TLC”) and its place in Truckee's history, I want to focus attention instead on early established companies in the greater Truckee area in the 1890s and very early 1900s. (Jan. 1885 Sanborn Map, population 1,500). We were kindly granted access to review historic records – affording them the archival care they deserve – at two separate venues, the Gatekeeper's Museum in Tahoe City, California and Donner Memorial State Park’s archive collection. So this is how this article came about.

Recollections

I recall going to Oakland, California's farm market with my father in the wee hours of the morning, picking out fresh vegetables and fruit. I distinctly recall the wooden crates into which the succulent food was packed. Each crate was stamped with the name of a specialized producer but as a young girl I paid no heed other than to observe the pretty colors of the orange fruits etched on the sides of the crates. I also recall the market was very near the railroad.

You see, my father was raised in Minnesota, and met my mother in Oakland. As a young family of six, we would often make the trek to the mountains during the winter.
to learn to ski – yes with cable bindings – and during the summer to hike the areas around Donner Lake and Donner Summit. As an outdoorsy kid, I loved exploring. I remember driving in the old pink and white station wagon down Old U.S. 40, Lincoln Highway, where it hugged the steep granite over Donner Summit and descended into the then tucked away sleepy town of Truckee – you had to know Truckee was there. This was before Interstate 80 was built, and yes, even before the 1960 Olympics at Squaw Valley. Back then, Old U.S. 40 led you directly into town (now Donner Pass Road), and ended at a huge railroad presence and lumber mill which swallowed the entire area. Huge cut timber logs were everywhere, and sawdust was flying all over the place. The din of immense gang saws abounded. What was this place I wondered? Forests were all around but there were thousands of cut logs as well.

And then there was Bonanza, near Incline Village, the movie stage set of the one of the most successful and longest running Western serial television shows. If we were really good, on Sunday evenings when it aired at 8 pm, as long as our chores were done, we could watch the hour long western.

In the summer months, I explored all kinds of areas and came across remnants of “flumes” that were scattered about. What were these things? Dad hauled redwood lumber in his early years so he explained what the flumes were for – lumber – how they operated, and how they served as an easy and economical way to get the product – wood – to market, just like the farm market was on the railway tracks in Oakland.

My maiden name is Lindorfer, pretty close to Geinsendorfer you may think. “Dorfer” means village. And Geisendorfers lived in Oakland in the early 1900s. Although no apparent relationship exists between these two names that I have yet to determine, it all seemed very interesting and a bit coincidental.

I grew up. Life took its various turns, in different states and various stages. In 2015, as a volunteer researcher for the Truckee-Donner Historical Society, I, with several other volunteers, ventured down to the old McClellan Air Force Base in the Sacramento area to see what was being housed at the California State Parks Archives. During that visit we learned that any records housed at the “old” Donner Museum in Truckee would continue to be held there. What records?

Returning to Truckee after the McClellan visit, I stumbled on information that the new Donner Memorial State Park’s new museum would not house the TLC records. Huh? Again, WHAT records? One inquiry led to another, and with my colleague researcher Barbara, we honed in on visiting the TLC records that remained in the “old” building.

In the meantime, I took a chance at visiting the Gatekeeper’s Museum in Tahoe City to see if they had any TLC record. A long shot for sure, but why not try. Bingo. They had old 100 year old paper-thin invoices, (that needed to be treated with Tender Loving Care!!) that were available to view by appointment. I did just that and found some real gems. Although the bulk of the items dealt with the more local Lake Tahoe businesses, they helped to put in perspective lumbering and railroading in the late 1890s – early 1900s.

Coincidentally, while waiting for appropriate coordination to view the TLC records at the Donner Memorial State Park (“DMSP”), Barbara and I are pursuing an application for National Historic Status for the Truckee Veterans Memorial Building and Rocking Stone Tower. (Article, p. 3). This intensive research project further fueled the desire to examine the TLC records to search for any documents relating to the building of an enclosure for the Rocking Stone in 1893, on the same site and adjacent to the current Veterans Hall. In a June 1, 1893 front page article, 3rd column, in the Reno Gazette Stockman, reference is made that the owners of the Rocking Stone were so impressed with its [the Rocking Stone’s] archaeological value, that they were going to erect 14 round columns filled by glass. The roof was to be 20
feet above the top of the Rocking Stone and would command an excellent view of Truckee. Stairs were also built to ascend to the roof so that it could be used as an observatory. This site was the home of Charles Fayette McGlashan, one of Truckee's most influential citizens and prominent “founders” and author of the definitive history of the Donner party. But I digress.

We were hoping to find an 1893 TLC order for the lathing of the 14 columns erected around the Rocking Stone, apparently the largest and heaviest ever turned at the lumber company, but could not locate that order. *(Reno Weekly Gazette and Stockman, May 17, 1893 issue, p. 2, “The columns for the Rocking Stone Tower are being turned this week. They are the largest and heaviest ever turned in the Truckee factory.”)* We assumed this meant the TLC “factory.” While hunting down this order, however, we certainly discovered a lot of other very interesting facts.

So what on earth does all this have to do with the opening paragraphs about fruit boxes and Geisendorfer? Having been granted access to view the over-a-century old TLC records at both The Gatekeeper’s Museum in Tahoe City and the Donner Memorial State Park archives, several of the items stood out which I now share with you.

* W.R. Strong Company letterhead, Fruit & Produce Dealers, Sacramento, Cal. To Truckee Lumber Co., Truckee dated July 30, 1890 with a stamp marked “Penryn”. Looking at the 1912 logo of Penryn Fruit Co., if memory serves me, it is the fruit logo image I recalled seeing as a child on the fruit crates at the farm market.

* Truckee Lumber Co. letterhead (manufacturers & dealers in windows, doors, blinds, mouldings, pickets, shingles, fruit & packing boxes, a specialty; Depot & Factory 243-251 Berry Street, San Francisco, CA); E.J. Brickell, W.H. Kruger; note the stamp date of Aug 14, 1890, Washoe Co., Nevada.

* S.H. Marlette & Co., Wood Camp Incline, Nevada, dated Nov. 1, 1889, to Truckee Lumber Co. I had learned that Marlette & Co. operated in the general vicinity of my nostalgic *Bonanza* characters. All this was making sense now. History was coming alive! From my memories as a very young girl to trying to understand the relationship among lumbering, railroading, log and water flumes, produce delivery, and the ice industry’s place in the transportation of foodstuffs. It was slowly all coming together.

Another gem was an F.M. Webber, Sierra City, signature for delivery of goods by stage.

I have been involved with Truckee-Donner Historical Society for 3 years, so seeing some of the business names on these paper-thin invoices, orders, and letterheads were familiar:

* a December 1889 Brickell and Kruger letter; Boca Mill Company;
* an August 1890 Essex Mill Company in State Line Nevada entry;
* a November 1889 inquiry about ice skates from the Huntington-Hopkins Company in Sacramento;
* a November 1889 invoice for Floriston Ice Company, Bronco, California;
* a Rocky Run Ice Company invoice, also in Bronco;
* July 1890 Sisson, Crocker & Co. invoice; and
* a July 1932 Truckee Soda Works Coca Cola invoice. The relationships started to become clearer.

In the DMSP records we also found very interesting items.

* an invoice dated November 19, 1889 for C.F. McGlashan, listing an incredible number of foodstuffs. It must have been one heck of a party! [In the introduction to *Nona McGlashan’s book, Give Me A Mountain Meadow*, Nona’s grandfather Charles had an “omniverous and ever-changing interest combined with [an] innate generosity.” [Introduction to book, Richard E. Oglesby, Head of the History Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara];

* a December 1889 Verdi Ranch entry in the Truckee Lumber Company records with noted lumberman Elle Ellen’s signature;

* a June 1900 Frank Morrissy Railroad Camp entry;
* a shopping list for “saw sets, tacks, nails, rivets, spool wire, hitching rings, halter chains, shells and cartridges, saw handles, calipers, swivel pullups – not your typical hardware store shopping list;

* a 1902 San Francisco Levi, Strauss and Co. entry;

* a 1903 H.S. Crocker & Co. ledger entry

* a 1902 A.S. Hopkins Sacramento entry,

* an 1887 Elle Ellen ledger entry;

* Deer Creek Camp* 1887 entries;

* an 1887 Mrs. Keiser entry; and

* 1887 entries for J.H. Pomin, Qwong Sing Lung, Geo. Schaffer, and J.B. Whitney – Big House entry. [*Deer Creek Camp area, possibly near today's Alpine Meadows, was recently the site of a nasty avalanche in January 2017.]. [A brief review of our notable Truckee townspeople on our Truckee-Donner Historical Society's website would help to familiarize you with some of the more recognizable company and individual names.]

So the adventure continues exploring old maps, records, and other items as we walk back in time. Thanks go to the staff at both the Gatekeeper's Museum and the DMSP who were so accommodating in allowing us to review their archived records. Take a peek with me at the following images of some of these journal entries and step back in time as we continue to explore our history. Yes, Truckee History IS Alive!
(Above) July 30, 1890 letter from W.R. Strong Company, Fruit & Produce Dealers, to Truckee Lumber Co.; note Penryn stamp (DMSP 7568)

(Below) Note the address for TLC - Berry Street in San Francisco. (DMSP 7582)

Following are a few samples from the DMSP TLC Ledger books dating as far back as 1887.

F. M. Webber, Sierra City; goods delivered by stage

TLC article and images continues on p. 12
Echoes From The Past Newsletter

(TLC article and images continues from p. 11)

(Above) Sanborn, Vail & Co. 1905; link to information on Sanborn

(Above) December 3, 1889, entries for Elle Ellen, "Per Henry", "2 Horse Blankets"; and further down, a J.B. Whitney entry

TLC articles and images continues on p. 13
We have also updated our Index to our TDHS Newsletters to include articles from 2016 so that articles may be located by subject matter/title, author, and image references. Once opened, our Newsletters are full text searchable.

(Above) TLC invoice for Alder Creek Lumber Co. (DMSP 7411)

We hope you have enjoyed some of these images as they are "windows to our past."

We have also updated our Book Index online at this link.
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