

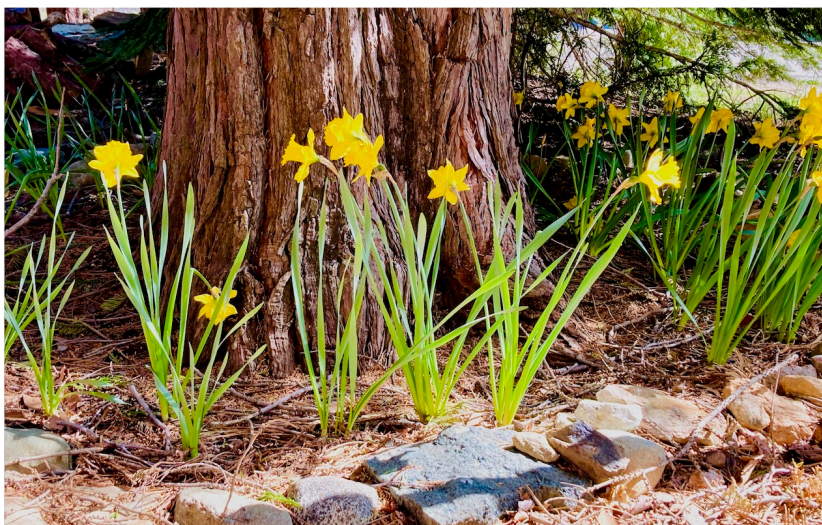
Johnsville Historical Society

A Nonprofit Organization Dedicated to Preserving the
Gold-Mining History of Johnsville, California

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If you'd like to continue
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Historical Society (JHS)
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JHS Treasurer Kim Zwick at
kzwick@pacbell.net.



We Have a Matching Donor!
Donate to JHS Between May 15
and July 1 and Your Contribution
Will Be Doubled

by Kathryn Osher

After our fall/winter 2020 newsletter was published, an anonymous donor stepped forward and offered the Johnsville Historical Society (JHS) a matching \$5,000 grant to help us complete our digitizing project of the JHS historic collection. This is an incredible opportunity for our society to have every dollar donated between May 15, 2021, and July 1, 2021, matched by another dollar—up to \$5,000 dollars. In this era of COVID-19, when



In Memoriam

Ernie Miller Jr.

Ernie Miller Jr passed away on December 9, 2020.

Ernie and his parents were original members of the JHS and supported our organization since its founding in 1983. Ernie spent his summers in Johnsville and could always be found on his front porch watching over our town. We will miss Ernie.

Nancy Fregulia

Nancy Fregulia passed away on April 17, 2021. The Fregulia family goes back to the original settlers of the Johnsville community from the 1880s. The family helped form the JHS in 1983 and have been staunch supporters ever since. We will miss Nancy.

fundraising has been particularly difficult, this generous offer is an extraordinary opportunity to double our donated dollars. We hope all our JHS members and friends will donate whatever they can to take advantage of this matching gift.

During the past year we were able to sort, accession, and store our entire collection of historical items in archival-grade containers. Our very capable intern, Jordan Zwick, accomplished the herculean task of recording all the items on a searchable Excel database.

The work that now lies ahead in the final phase of our project is to digitally scan and photograph the entire collection and upload the digital images to an online site dedicated to the collection.

A Prize for the Top Five Donors

The top five donors to our current fundraising campaign will be rewarded with a historic tour of Johnsville by long-time resident David Daun on July 3, 2021. The winners will be announced at our next JHS board meeting, which is open to the public and will be held in the Johnsville Historical Society headquarters (also known as the



Johnsville church) at 10am on Saturday, July 3. If you would like to make a donation, please contact JHS Treasurer Kim Zwick by sending her an email with your contact information at kzwick@pacbell.net. JHS is a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation and all gifts and donations are tax deductible. Thank you for your support!

Make an Offer! Toledo Cook Stove From the 1800s Is Now Being Auctioned to Raise Funds for JHS

The antique Toledo cook stove pictured below was one of the treasures prominently displayed in Mrs. Pini's house in Johnsville when it was purchased by David and Jane Daun in the 1980s. According to David, "I believe it belonged to the Pieranos, an Italian family that first owned the house in the late 1800s. They had acquired two buildings in Jamison City—the Jamison City Post Office and an old horse barn—and then moved them up to the

Johnsville flat where they hooked them together to form a house. Recycled buildings!"

David donated the cook stove to JHS shortly after he and his wife bought Mrs. Pini's house. It can be yours if you make the highest offer! **Bidding starts now at \$500.** If you're interested, please send an email with your bid and contact information to Kim Zwick at kzwick@pacbell.net. The bidding will close on July 1, 2021.



Plumas–Eureka Museum’s Disappearing Collection

by Don Moulds

It happened on a smoky day last August. As a number of smaller wildfires merged into the menacing North Complex Fire, and with the now-larger fire threatening Plumas–Eureka State Park, a team of officials from the State of California arrived at Plumas–Eureka’s historic museum to secure its treasured collection of artifacts. In a little over a day, they were gone. Gone with them was an assortment of historical items that have resided at the state park since the Gold Rush: the large bellows adorning the park’s famous blacksmith’s shop, skis from the famed longboard races that miners once conducted after a good winter snow, and myriad other treasures that have resided in Plumas–Eureka for more than a century.



The events of that day have been shrouded in mystery. Who were the officials who came to Plumas–Eureka State Park that day? Why did they empty the museum and its surrounding historical landmarks of their 19th century treasures? Will the artifacts ever be returned to Plumas–Eureka?

The answers to those questions should come as a relief to the many fans of the Plumas–Eureka Museum. The state officials in question were from the California State Department of Parks and part of a cadre of officials who are charged with securing museum collections endangered by wildfires. In 2020, as historic museums across the state were imperiled by wildfires in record numbers, the department sent teams across the state to secure irreplaceable historic artifacts.

And where did the Plumas–Eureka artifacts go?

According to Plumas–Eureka State Park Ranger Tim Quandt, many of the items are being housed at McClellan Air Force Base, where they are undergoing a “deep-freeze” and cleaning. “They deep-freeze the items to avoid transporting harmful parasites back to the museums,” reports Quandt, and in the process, they are able to do restorative work that

returns them in better shape than when they left. “It turns out to be a good story,” says Quandt.

Indeed, some items have already been returned. The rest are likely to reemerge in Plumas–Eureka over the summer, though as Quandt notes, the museum continues to be closed because of the state’s COVID-19 restrictions, so the exact timing will likely depend on the state’s reopening timeline.

With destructive wildfires becoming more and more common, the Johnsville Historical Society’s Board of Directors has been researching ways to better protect its own small collection of historic documents and artifacts. More on that effort will be shared in the next JHS newsletter.





Winter's Past

by David Daun

Winter in Johnsville is a very special time. Things quiet down to an impressive cold and crystalline whisper. When a deep blanket of “white stuff” softly falls and covers the village, a new level of quietude reigns over all. It forces mind, body, and soul into a beautiful stillness not often experienced in our busy lives.

I think the old-timers tasted this on an even deeper level. In the late 1800s, when our forebears lived here, there was no escaping winter’s grasp. One could not leave town in the comfort of a heated automobile or step into any of the other multitude of distractions we have at our disposal in the modern world. Folks were essentially prisoners of their winter landscape and longboard skis (pictured above) were their primary mode of transportation.

All this reminds me of a story relayed to me by Norman White, one of the early pioneers who grew up in our village in the latter part of the gold-mining era. He and his brother, Samuel,

were both carpenters and sharpened tools for the miners in this area. Their wooden carpenter's chest, complete with all their tools, has been donated to the Johnsville Historical Society's collection by the White family. The two brothers were avid longboard skiers and enjoyed moving about on the powdered "white stuff" as both sport and transportation. During the winter season they were hired for \$5 per trip (to split between them) to supply the Four Hills Mine with cooking staples, such as flour, sugar, oil, and dried beef.

The Four Hills Mine operated year round and was about five miles southwest of Johnsville, higher up in a remote and rugged mountainous area. Norman and Samuel had the job of packing in these supplies every two weeks. They would travel on snowshoes up Florentine Canyon, with heavy packs and longboard skis strapped to their packs, and arrive at the mine before dark. They would spend the night and return the next morning on their longboards for the downhill trip to Johnsville—weather permitting.

I cannot think of any task I have ever had to do in my entire life that would come close to the journey these two men would make twice a month in the challenging winter landscape of the Sierra Nevada mountains that surround our village of Johnsville. They were indeed hardy and determined fellows!



In early spring, the trail to Plumas-Eureka State Park's Upper Jamison Creek Campground is blanketed with Utah Serviceberry flowers instead of the other "white stuff."



1917 magazine from the JHS collection

Don't Forget to Renew Your JHS Membership

Springtime is the season for renewing annual memberships to the Johnsville Historical Society. To renew or start a new membership, please send a check made out to **JHS Membership** to:

Johnsville Historical Society
260 Colfax Avenue
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Annual Membership Fees:

\$25 Individual * \$50 Family * \$100 Patron * \$150 Business * \$250 Founder

Questions? Please contact Kim Zwick via email: kzwick@pacbell.net.

Thank you! We greatly appreciate your support.



JHS Board Members

Kathryn Osher, President

Kim Zwick, Treasurer

Katie Agnew, Board Member

Rebecca Forée, Board Member

Don Moulds, Board Member

David Daun, President Emeritus

*All the spring wildflower photos
were taken in Johnsville by
David Daun, Mary Anne Moore,
and Rebecca Forée.*

1898 San Francisco Examiner Sunday magazine cover from the JHS collection