

THE AMADORIAN

A Publication of the Amador County Historical Society

Greetings fellow members:

Thanks to all of you that joined us for our June BBQ at the Museum. What "an exceptional evening" to "learn things about Jackson I never knew" "stated so eloquently by Cedric Clute". Those were quotes from one or more of the attendees. I might add one of my own - "historical and hysterical"! Cedric was kind enough to allow *The Amadorian* to reprint his remarks. I laughed again as I reread the stories. I think you too, will enjoy.

We welcome two new board members to ACHS. Cathy (Picardo) McGowen and Jeanette Garbarini-Walker. They both have hit the ground running to help with ACHS events. Read more about Cathy on Page 3. We'll spotlight Jeanette in our next issue.

We are making incremental progress with the new Livery Building. PG&E has finally given us a date on which they will move the guy pole and ATT will also move their lines on to the new pole. This is tentatively scheduled for Sept. 6.

Please be sure to attend our upcoming event on Sept. 7th at the Museum. We will have a lot of great prizes for the raffle and silent auction. June Somerville will speak about her new book, "Jenny, a Story of an Immigrant Child," It all starts at 5:30 p.m.

I hope to see you there!

Best regards, Jeana Hultquist,

Historian Cedric Clute *"Scarlet Streets of Jackson"*



Chapter 1 - Genuine Female Entertainers

It was a different time, and Jackson was different town in those early years of the 20th Century.

Gold had brought thousands of would be miners to the Mother-Lode during the last half of the 1800's, and these men worked hard - 12 to 15 hours a day; seven days a week. And when they had the chance, they played hard too!

Saloons were everywhere - so were gambling palaces - and when faro proved too slow a game, poker replaced it. Then you could lose your money even faster.

Scarlet Streets of Jackson (cont.)

A woman was a rare sight during those years. Theatrical promoters, like the Chataqua, which boasted 'ge-nu-ine female entertainers', travelled through the mining camps and put on shows, but this only increased, rather than lessened, the miner's natural desire for the company of a woman. So - next door to the saloon and the gambling hall - the bordello found its home.

Today, Fox News and 60 minutes would be broadcasting your sins to the world, but in those days there was no television, and no radio, and the art of 'sensational journalism' hadn't been developed to the degree it is now.

As a result, many rural areas of California did exactly what they wanted to do - and no one was the wiser; other areas of the state had their own problems, so why should they concern themselves with the business of others?

And so California state law enforcement just let the towns and counties police themselves - and that's just what Jackson did.

Time passed. Weeks became months, months became years — and then in 1920 that most wonderful example of government stupidity - the 18th amendment to the constitution was passed - and suddenly everything changed.

Now, in addition to gambling and prostitution, you had to consider the effects of bootlegging - and how these three illegal - but very profitable enterprises - would change Amador County, and Jackson, in ways you could not possible imagine.

Chapter 2 - See No Evil; Hear No Evil.
That Was Their Motto

During the 1930's a friend of mine worked on the PG&E dam project out on Electra Road. His name was William Sprague, and this is what he told me:

"We had a company camp out there. Worked 6 days a week, and usually had Saturday off. We worked like dogs - and every Saturday night we howled. On the weekends guys came to Jackson from everywhere - I drank with some men who came all the way up from L.A."

"But a lot of other guys came to Jackson too, like the politicians in Sacramento, who always wanted to have a good time. That's probably one of the reasons the town didn't get shut down. Those guys knew a good thing when they had it.

"The Kit Carson Club was a favorite - it was located in the Old Globe Hotel above the drug store, but I think it burned down.

"Another real popular spot was the Louve Cafe' - that's where i cashed by paychecks. The police constable would walk through the place and just look straight ahead past the crap tables and roulette wheels - see no evil, hear no evil was the motto! The Louve was under the Wells Fargo Bank - open 24 hours a day, seven days a week - didn't even have a lock on its doors!"

My friend hesitated then, took a long guzzle out of the beer can he was holding, and continued, "There was a bar in the National Hotel, and a bar and gambling hall under the Hotel too. The Wells Fargo Club across the street was another popular place - and remember, all this was during prohibition. The state cops would send in a raiding party once in a while, but everyone knew when they were coming because we'd get tipped off in advance. Still, once in a while someone would get

Scarlet Streets of Jackson (cont.)

caught. This happened so often at the Pioneer Rex that the cops padlocked and sealed the doors. Well, the owners of the Club just build a new front door next to the padlocked one, and opened up again. I think they build 5 sets of doors over the years, and the state never did manage to close'em down!

Chapter 3 - It's Also Her Place of Employment

Some people called it "Poverty Hill", and others called it "Poverty Row". Surprisingly, it had a lot in common with another "poverty row" that was located down in Hollywood's movie land.

That "poverty row" was made up of has-been actors and actresses, producers and directors, all of whom had a past, but not future. They worked for Monogram Pictures, PRS, and Grand National - it was the end of the line.

Perhaps the same could be said for the nameless women who worked on poverty row in Jackson. They were actresses too, and their smiling faces and rouged cheeks belied the fact that they, also, had no future at all.

Walk down Jackson's main street at dusk, turn left at the National Hotel and stop when you get to Petkovich Park. Now, blank out the Bank of America and Highway **, and in their places, imagine a long, low building with too many windows — and too many doors. A red lamp hangs above each window, dimly lighting the face of a woman looking out. You're reminded of a passenger train silently passing in the night.

Each tiny room is the home of one girl - it's also her place of employment. The room contains a small dresser, a wash basin, and a bed. In the

evenings customers take a leisurely walk down the dirt street in front of poverty row. They look in the windows and make their choices. Then, window shades are drawn and later raised, and red lights are turned off - and on - and off again - and another evening slowly passes.

So many lanterns are lit in Jackson at night, that a red glow is cast over the entire town.

Chapter 4 - Competition Between the Houses Is Great

"Poverty Row" was located where Highway 88 passes the Bank of America in Jackson. You could stand there in the dusty road that fronted the long, low buildings and look down on a paved main street, with its gambling halls, saloons, and bordellos that catered to a classier clientele.

These businesses were located in two-story buildings - the bar was downstairs, and the bordello was upstairs, and now I'm going to tell you a story about one of those businesses, using the words of a madam who worked there:

"Competition between the houses was great, so you always had to come up with a new gimmick, and Lottie's House was the first one to use special coins. The idea went over so well that all the houses started using them. Usually, the coin got you one girl for the night, but the better places, like mine, gave more to a customer - especially if he was a regular. And here's how it went - I'd sell my coins for 10 dollars. That was a lot of money, but I'd include a bath, shave, a drink and company for the night.

Then the former madam hesitated, opened a drawer, showed me a brass coin the size of a fifty cent piece - and continued her story, "actually, the price of the coin could range up to 25 dollars,

Scarlet Streets of Jackson (cont.)

depending on the girl and the place where she worked. And the shave and bath was as much for the girl as it was for the customer — in those days men and a bath were pretty much strangers, and it was mightily unpleasant to serve someone who'd been digging gold for a week in the hills, if he didn't clean up first!"

The madam came up with a deep laugh - but then the look on her face became deadly serious, as she continued her story.

These miners would come to town every weekend, spend all their money, then go back to the hills - and no one would see them again till the next weekend.

Those guys rarely said a word, cause in those days it was best if nobody knew where you were prospecting!

And for good reason - because there were claim-jumpers all over the place who'd rob you - or kill you - if you weren't careful!"

Chapter 5 - The Daytime was for Normal People, and the Evenings were for Them

Many year ago I talked to a woman who ran a dress shop on Main Street during Jackson's wilder days, and this is what she told me - and I quote:

"I got a lot of my business from the girls who worked the houses. They were all really nice and paid their bills on time. And if they were late for some reason, the madam would pay what they owed!"

Truth be told, these women were rarely allowed to walk the streets of Jackson during the daylight

hours. I was told by one long-time resident that "...the daytime was for normal people, and the evenings were for them!"

But Jackson did accept these ladies, even if reluctantly, because prostitution was big business in the town, and lots of small businesses profited from Jackson's popularity.

"The Scarlet Sisters", as they were called, arrived by train in Martell and were taken to the nearby hotel that's now called "The Sundance." A doctor would be called who would issue each girl a "health certificate", and then the local cab company escorted the girls to the various houses in which they'd be working.

It seems that everyone wanted in on the act. I was told that some Jackson business owners who knew the warden at Preston, made a deal that would benefit them all - the older prisoners, who had a good record and played musical instruments, would be given a ride to Jackson to play music in the houses, then, 8 hours later, they'd be given a ride back to the prison, just in time to meet the morning roll call.

The United States Army even played a part. Boot camps were located all over central California, and the soldiers worked hard during those months of training — no leave, no pay, no play — but they were rewarded. At the end of boot, the army paid the men for the first time, loaded them all on busses, and drove them straight to Jackson for a night on the town.

Chapter 6 - "The Guy Just Disappeared in a Cloud of Smoke!"

Because Amador County in general and Jackson in particular, we considered wide-open, you might logically think that they'd also be lawless. But this was hardly the case with County Sheriff

Scarlet Streets of Jackson (cont.)

George Lucot on the job. I knew the sheriff's nephew, Ernie Locos, quite well, and this is what he told me about his uncle:

“only 2 law enforcement officers worked for Amador County in those days - my uncle and a deputy. But the towns usually had a constable working for them, and ya' know, there were so few people in law enforcement that everyone had to get along and work together. Also, time didn't mean much back then - it was seven days a week for Uncle George.

But folks were more public minded in those days; uncle George even deputized my dad several times. Once was in the mid-1930's during the longshoremen's strike in San Francisco. Well, these city guys decided to come up here and unionize the mine workers. Two of 'em just walked into uncle's office one day and told him they were taking over the town. They said they had several hundred longshoremen who would come up if they were needed.

Well, Uncle George politely listened to them, and they told him to just keep out of the way and he wouldn't get hurt. Then Uncle George got up, locked the office door, and beat them hell out of both of 'em!

But the next day these guys went and started a big brou-ha-ha up at the Kennedy Mine. Uncle knew he could handle the outsiders, but he wasn't sure of his own town folk.

Anyway, he headed up to the mine standing in the back of an open truck, with a tear gas gun under his arm, and his deputy driving.

Well, these San Francisco guys tried to stop the truck, so uncle hefted his tear gas gun, let go from about 50 feet, and hit the ringleader right in the

stomach with the shell. The guy just disappeared in a cloud of smoke - and that was the end of the trouble!”

Chapter 7 - “Not That I Know Of!”

Remember Edmund G. (Pat) Brown, Governor Jerry Brown's Dad? Back in 1956, when he was attorney general of California and Goodwin Knight was Governor, he decided to close Jackson down.

Did he object to prostitution on moral grounds, or did he want the Governor's job? Who knows the answer to that one. What's fact, is that Brown hectored the town of Jackson with the tenacity of a bulldog, sending undercover agents snooping all over the place looking for working bordellos.

Not surprisingly, the owners of these establishments proved to be just as stubborn as the attorney general - and the agents reported back to Sacramento that business was busier than ever! And no one had closed down.

Then Brown asked the Jackson City Council to fire the police chief. They did as requested, and a new chief was hired - but the houses still stayed open.

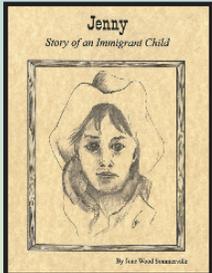
A week later the Attorney General sent in undercover agent H.J. Cauther. This time Cauther located the bordellos on his own, and discovered that they were, indeed, in full operation. Agent Cauther then went to the police station and asked the new police chief if any houses were operating in Jackson. “Not that I know of”, replied the chief. So Cauther went out and counted 15 doing business in the middle of a weekday afternoon!

Finally, Pat Brown had enough, and he took action. In a series of raids that took place on March 23rd, 1956, the full power of the California State Police descended on Jackson and, both literally and figuratively, nearly destroyed the town.



WINE & CHEESE TASTING

4th Annual
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2018
AMADOR COUNTY MUSEUM 5:30PM - 8:30PM
\$30 PER PERSON



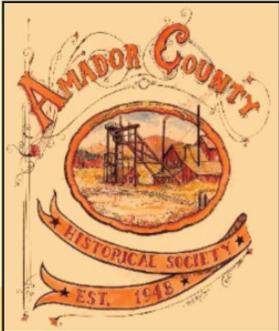
Jenny
Story of an Immigrant Child
By June Wood Summerville

Special Guest Speaker
JUNE WOOD SUMMERVILLE
Speaking on her new book
"Jenny" Story of an Immigrant Child

LIVE MUSIC
Rodger Faddis
6-8pm
Live Auction & Raffle



**225 Church Street,
Jackson**
Funds to be used for
new Livery Building



Tickets available online at
amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org
or call 209-223-6386 or 209-257-1485

ACHS 2018 - Board of Directors

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Board Meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. at 225 Church St. (Amador County Museum)

Members and friends are invited to attend.

Amador County Historical Society

Member Events for 2018

Sept. 7 - Wine & Cheese at the Museum

Speaker - June Somerville

Music - Raffle - Silent Auction

5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

For ticket information call:

209-223-6386 or 209-257-1485

Also available online at

www.amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org

November 4 - Annual Membership Dinner at
Teresa's Place

Amador Central Railroad

Events & Run Dates for 2018

Second Saturday - Ione Station

Run times: 10am - Noon - 2pm \$10/seat

For more information, contact Grant Vogel at
(209) 221-5418 or grant@amadorcentral.com



Kennedy Mine Model Tours

Tours of the Kennedy Mine Model are on-going every Friday, Saturday and Sunday in the building adjacent to the museum.... come on down, bring your friends, see how the “Hardrock Miners” brought the gold up from more than a mile from under the earth.

See the headframe, the Stamp Mill and the Wheel in action with mechanized motors.... it is like a little show lasting about 45 minutes, with live narrative and tape presentation. Exhibits refurbished earlier this year!

Tours are at noon and 1:00 p.m. or by appointment any day or time (subject to docent availability). Group tours, schools and organizations welcome! Located at 225 Church Street, Jackson Mine Model building in parking lot next to museum.

For more information, call the Amador County Historical Society at 209-257-1485.

Meet New ACHS Board Member

Cathy McGowen



What brought you to Jackson? All of my family that were born and raised here and the closeness we have had all of our lives.

Tell us about your family connection to Amador County.

Family roots here. Both sides of my fathers family, the Piccardos and the Casassas, arrived in Amador County between 1868 and 1878. On my mother's side the first Dottas came to the Clinton area in the 1850s. Her father was a Serbian from Dalmatia and was a newcomer in 1911 and worked in the gold mines.

What inspired me to volunteer for ACHS? My fascination for the gold rush history here and my own family history in this county. The fact that my cousin, Jeana Hultquist, is president at the moment also helped my decision. My family has a lengthy history of volunteering in this community and I want to keep the tradition alive.

What have you enjoyed about volunteering at ACHS?

Working at the museum and meeting and talking to people from all over California and other states. Promoting the various events for the ACHS and meeting many people in the community is very interesting and fulfilling.

Thank you Cathy for your interest in ACHS!

About the Amador County Historical Society

The Amador County Historical Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the research and preservation of Amador County heritage and history.

The organization brings together people from diverse backgrounds to work towards these goals. We invite all interested persons to attend our monthly meetings and encourage your suggestions and active participation in Society events and endeavors.

We also welcome guest articles for our newsletter. Unfortunately, due to limited space we can accept only those pertaining to local history. If you have any questions regarding ACHS please contact the office at (209) 257-1485.

If you would like to become a member of the Society, please fill in the membership form below and mail along with the appropriate dues to the Amador County Historical Society, P.O. Box 761, Jackson, Calif.

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please check one of the following Membership (**PRICE CHANGES EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2019**):

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|
| ANNUAL | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20.00/ \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family (2 or more) \$30.00/ \$40.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Students \$15.00 |
| LIFETIME | <input type="checkbox"/> Family (2 or more) \$400.00 | SPONSOR | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor (\$1,000 up) |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron (\$500 to \$999) |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Associate (\$250 to \$499) |

ACHS Lifetime Members

Kathy Allen & Frank Axe - Richard & July Allen - Joseph Aparicio Family - Ed & Mary Lee Arata - Caryl Arnese - Michael Bell - Heidi Boitano - Mark, Lorie & Matthew Bowlby - Ray & Barb Brusatori - William Burger - Paul & Claudine Burnett - Jerry Cassesi - Robert J. & Susan L. Chandler - D.E. Collins - Thornton & Paula Jo Consolo - Robert M. & Lorraine M. Cooper - Mary Cowan - Jeannine & Patrick Crew* - Jean Louise Dahl - Robert Davis - Kathleen Du Bois - John Ellyson, MD - Carol Emerson - Katherine Evatt & Pete Bell - Robin Field & Carol Mischer - Wayne Garibaldi - Phillip & Jenny Giurlani - Ray & Cheryl Herndon & Bobby Keeling - Curtis & Denise Hollis - Patricia Huberty - Jeana (Cova) Hultquist & Marshall Cova - Ida Ruth Johnson - Marilyn Jones - Richard & Pat Jones - Gretchen Kingsbury - George & Joan La Ponsie - Gary & Jaimie Little - Stan Lukowicz - Allen & Karen Martin - Jeremy & Shirley McCarty - Frances Melusky - Marshal Merriam - Joe & Alicia Miller (Giurlani) - Jean Mueller - Ron Oliverro - Katherine & William Orescan - Hazel, Jeffrey & Amy Powell - Marian & Leonard Randolph - Jeanne C. Russ - Martin Ryan - John H. & Patricia Scott - Norm Seid - Beverly Smallfield - George P. Smith - Rose Marie Smith - John Solaja* - Marie-Louise Solaja - Audrey Souza - Charles J. Spinetta - Ray Stacey* - Steve & Linda Stocking - Suzanne Erickson Stroy - Ed & Margaret Swift - Russell & Mary Beth VanVoorhis - Violich Farms - Grant Vogel & Pam Sharp - Sutter Creek Promotions Committee - Volcano Community Services District - Fraser & Teddy West

www.amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org

*Benefactor

Scarlet Streets of Jackson (cont.)

It should be noted that right behind the State Police, a convoy of reporters and photographers from the Sacramento Bee also motored into town. It was good press for Attorney General Brown.

From that moment, change would come quickly to Jackson. It was the end of an era - and the beginning of a new one!

Chapter 8 - "I'll Prosecute to the Fullest Extent of the Law!"

According to the Amador Ledger, 12 prostitutes, 2 madams and 38 male patrons were arrested on that black Friday, March 23rd, 1956. The women were booked into the county jail and held "in quarantine" for 3 days - all the men were released.

Anthony Caminetti, the District Attorney, said he intended to prosecute to the fullest extent of the law, with the idea in mind to padlock the houses in question for not less than a year. Caminetti also insisted that the raid was the action of the State Attorney General's Office, and that neither he nor any Jackson officials knew of the planned raid, and that it was carried out without the County's knowledge. District Attorney Caminetti also stated that the only complaints he knew about were anonymous in nature, and that they had been mailed directly to Attorney General Brown's office in Sacramento.

Well, Judge Begovich and the Jackson Courts wasted little time dealing with the women involved. Were the sentences harsh? You be the judge.

Nine of the women were fined 50 dollars — two were released on bail of 200 dollars — The

madams were each fined 150 dollars and a 24 dollar fine was levied against a maid at one of the houses.

And now, because of continuing pressure from the entire law enforcement department of the State of California, the Amador County Grand Jury was forced to get itself involved.

They were summoned into session on April 23, 1956, one month after the original raids at the request of District Attorney Caminetti. It was to be a closed session, but after the Amador Ledger took an editorial stand against the closed hearing, and complaints flooded the D.A.'s office, the decision to open the hearings was made.

And so the date was set. Hearings into "malfeasance and connivance on the part of local officials and police officers in the matter of prostitution in Jackson" was scheduled to begin in May of 1956.

Chapter 9 - "I've Been Held Up, Robbed, Kidnapped and Shot At!"

Three nights of grand jury investigation on vice and corruption in Jackson began on Monday, May 14, 1956, and the testimony rambled in strange directions to say the least.

A witness for the State recounted events that led up to the March 23rd raid, this is what he told the court:

"One madam was operating a bordello with 3 girls and had set up tin barriers to obstruct the view from District Attorney Caminetti's office, should he happen to look out his window in the Court House and into the bordello window next door. Hell, he knew what was going on."

AMADOR COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY — MUSEUM — ANNUAL REPORT**July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017****By Judy Jebian, Director**

The Amador County Museum continues to contribute to the County's reputation as a tourist destination and is an important resource for people who want to learn about the early history of California and especially its mining history. Our visitorship is fairly constant throughout the year and averages about 100 each month from 18 of the 50 states as well as the UK, Germany, British Columbia, Bulgaria and Korea, not to mention all parts of California. We also host occasional tour groups which included a special group for a paranormal investigation last year which was very interesting. Visitor donations brought in over \$5,500 last year and our museum funds continue to grow.

We had one unwelcome visitor last winter who had made a home for himself under the summer porch on the south side of the museum. After we became aware of his presence, the Jackson police were called and came up and inspected the encampment from the outside. The man was given 2 warnings to remove his belongings and vacate. When he failed to do that, we removed a pile of stuff one Saturday morning which included a refrigerator that he had jury rigged into museum wiring. Most of the pile of stuff, including the little refrigerator was gone the next morning and we hauled the rest of it away.

Dedicated volunteers have logged over 1,200 hours both in hosting visitors and working to improve exhibits and general appearance with paint, mowing & blowing, hedge clipping and sprinkler repairs. It is a large and beautiful property and the Historical Society wants it to remain an asset worthy of pride. Recently, however, we have had 3 major sprinkler repairs, one of which flooded the yard on the north and then into the basement before Thornton Consolo got the water turned off at 3:a.m. in the middle of the night. Simmons Landscape conducted those 3 big repairs at our expense. That whole system is probably about 50 years old and really should be replaced. Maintenance of such a large property is a big effort which has mainly been carried on by Thornton and his two sons plus an occasional boy scout.

We were disappointed when our application for capital improvement grant to the state for \$125,00 was denied, but the livery project is still moving forward, although more slowly. The Board has decided that we will undertake putting a foundation under the pole barn and apply cedar siding to the outside as a first stage to provide a safe and protected space to store the items that are now in the old livery. That work should commence in early November. Cost projections for that project are in the neighborhood of \$50,000, but that enclosed space could eventually become additional exhibit space as well as storage. We continue to host 2 primary fund raisers, a BBQ in June and a Wine & Cheese event in September as well as an annual membership dinner at Teresa's Place in November and these events continue to support both the Museum and the Amador Central Railroad.

Our collection also continues to grow with a number of interesting and beautiful artifacts brought in over the past year, including a sheared beaver jacket in pristine condition that belonged to Lily Howell who was born and raised in Sutter Creek. Another interesting item was a children's rocking horse with a "Tobe's Toys, Made in Jackson" label which was a business enterprise of Lester Cook who graduated from Amador H.S. in Sutter Creek in 1940.

Visitors to the museum frequently tell us what a nice collection we have and how much they enjoy our tours. It is a pleasure to make this treasure-house of local history available for others to enjoy and appreciate, and it gives all of us pleasure to share the special place that Amador County has in the early history of California.

Scarlet Streets of Jackson (cont.)

Then, the new Chief of Police of the city police force, who could add little to the story being unraveled, but who stated that in the past year and a half he had been held up, robbed, kidnapped and shot at, and he wouldn't venture into the dark alleys of Jackson - in his words - "for nothin!"

Then the Mayor of Jackson was called to the stand and asked about the firing of the previous chief of police. He answered the the City Council decided to fire the Chief because he was too strict - too "G.I." in the matter of parking enforcement on main street.

Finally, one of the madams was called to the stand. She told of trying to make a go of an up-country restaurant, but was refused a liquor license because of her past. So she decided if she couldn't run a legitimate business, she'd come back and open — in her words - a whore house. She then told the jury of observing Jackson Police Officers sitting in front of her business, telling prospective patrons not to go in, and directing them to other establishments.

Asked if any of these officers asked for a payoff, she replied, "Not from me, but maybe they were paid off at the other houses to put me out of business!"

Chapter 10 - "Hell, The Town Can't Run Unless There's a Payoff!"

On May 24, 1956 the Amador County Grand Jury issued three indictments in what had become the famous - or infamous - Jackson vice case. A case, the Sacramento Bee reported with tongue in cheek, that has received more front page coverage than the "great Yuba City flood"!

Like it or not, the town of Jackson was being pulled kicking and screaming into the media maelstrom - and this was helped a great deal by the testimony of various witnesses who were - 2 ex-madams and a former chief of police. Charges of taking money were advanced on the one hand and denied on the other, and one witness gave a description the use to which his rented property was put - namely, as a house of prostitution for 36 years. He said he had rented to families a few times, but received only 75 dollars a month - which was small potatoes compared to the 225 dollars a month he usually received renting to a bordello. Asked if he had to pay anyone off, the man replied, "Hell, the town can't run unless there's a payoff!"

Then ex-mayor Tom Jones was asked about an ad he had run regarding the sale of his home, in which he had mentioned a bordello that was next door to his house. The Mayor told the jury the whore house was getting just too big, that customers were coming to his house by mistake - that all the hassle was interfering with his home life, and that he was selling out and moving.

When the dust had settled, 2 Jackson constables were indicted on charges of perjury, bribery and willful and corrupt misconduct, and the chief of police was also indicted.

To add to this confusion, Angelo de Paoli, Jackson City Attorney, resigned his office when the City Council refused to fire the indicted men.

It was as if Lewis Carroll had written a chapter about Jackson's misadventures and included it in "Alice in Wonderland". Nothing made any sense. Everything going on was bad publicity that nobody wanted - no one was in control - Jackson was being made the butt of countless jokes in the newspapers and on the radio — and the quicker

Scarlet Streets of Jackson (cont.)

this situation came to an end, the better it would be for all concerned.

Chapter 11 - "They Were Puppets Who Danced, When Others Pulled The Strings"

Finally, the Jackson vice scandal was drawing to a close, and October 2, 1956 was set as the trial date for the indicted policemen.

In preparation for the trial, a jury list of 80 names was drawn, but after trying all morning and getting nowhere, the attorneys agreed to let the court - that would be Judge Ralph McGee - make the final decision and render just verdict.

It took Judge McGee nine days to decide the case - and this is what he told the court,

"At all times persons other than the defendants made the decisions about when the town was to be opened or closed, those defendants were, in effect, simply puppets who danced, when other pulled the strings.

A vital element of bribery is that money is paid to influence official action. And here the record is plain - that these defendants had no influence to sell.

Throughout the entire period, when this sordid business operated on a hit and miss basis, the defendants simply carried out orders, implied or direct.

And as for the perjury charge - the officers swore they took no money and the madams swore they did. But perjury can be proven only by the testimony of two witnesses. Here the payments, if they were made, were made by the 2 madams separately — neither of them could swear to the

other having made a payoff. So, for the reasons stated above, I find the defendants not guilty of all the charges set forth". Signed - Ralph McGee, Judge, October 10, 1956.

That was it. No climatic finish — just a couple of cops found not guilty of anything - it was "not with a bang, but a whimper".

And it sure want't back to "business as usual" either - because prostitution, Jackson's main business enterprise, was padlocked tight, never to return.

And even though gambling continued for another year, it was the beginning of the end for the roulette wheel and blackjack table, too.

Looking back, now more than 60 years, its interesting to reflect on the fact that during that tumultuous time and even before, there were not letters of complaint sent to City Hall or found in the newspapers, and no one urged the closing down of Jackson's illegal businesses. All the bordellos and gambling halls in question were locally owned and operated, and the town of Jackson and the County of Amador prospered.

Today, fast food outlets like McDonalds and Burger King have replaced the Louvre Cafe' and the Pioneer Rex — and Wal-Mart and Lowe's have replaced Spinetti's Hardware, Casinelli's Grocery and Jackson Dry Goods.

As Bob Dylan so ably put it, "The times they are a changin'".

All I know is, the machine and the politics that so drastically changed Jackson more than 60 years ago are long gone - and so is Pat Brown.

But Jackson? Jackson is still here — re-inventing itself even day.

*Scarlet Streets of Jackson (cont.)*The Final Chapter - "My Trade Was Old
When the World Was New"

Even though more than half a century has passed since Jackson and state law enforcement tangled, people still talk about "those wild days in Amador County". They talk about the police and the bartenders, the clubs and the gambling, the madams and the whore houses - but rarely does anyone take about the hundreds of nameless women who plied their trade here in Jackson, and then quietly moved on.

I've talked to people who told me when a known prostitute passed them on the street, they would just look straight ahead - acknowledging their presence in on way. These "scarlet ladies" were faceless then, just as they're faceless and forgotten today.

I imagine some of the women expected this to be their fate, but others looked at themselves, and their profession, in a much different light - one of these women even wrote a poem expressing her views, and i'll end this story of "the scarlet streets of Jackson" by reading it to you now:

***"My trade was old when the world was new, before
caesar ruled in Rome.***

*To spend their gold in a harlot's cell patricians
quitted home.*

*And high-born dames since the world began have
learned to sit and to sigh,
and to patiently wait for their lords to leave
the woman that you pass by.
You give your all, and you slave your life
in a struggle to hold one man;
you think you're paid if he calls you wife
and is true to you for a span.*

*You keep his house and you bear his child
and you walk with your head held high.*

*But most of his love, and his kisses go
to the woman that you pass by.
So I follow the old dishonored trade,
bedecked in garments fine.*

*And the cream of the earth is saved for me
in clothes - and food — and wine.*

And life to me is a merry game.

Tho, sometimes I wonder and sigh.

*for deep in your heart, don't you envy me?
The woman that you passed by.*

Thank you very much - Cedric Clute

ACHS Takes 3rd Place at County Fair Window Contest

The theme was "Win, Place or Show, off to the Fair We Go!" Our window featured the ribbons, trophies, awards and photos of Mari-Catherine (Hunt) Guidi. Mari-Catherine was born and raised in Jackson and won awards in all levels of FFA competition, including national awards.

Thank you to the Guidi Family for putting the display together.

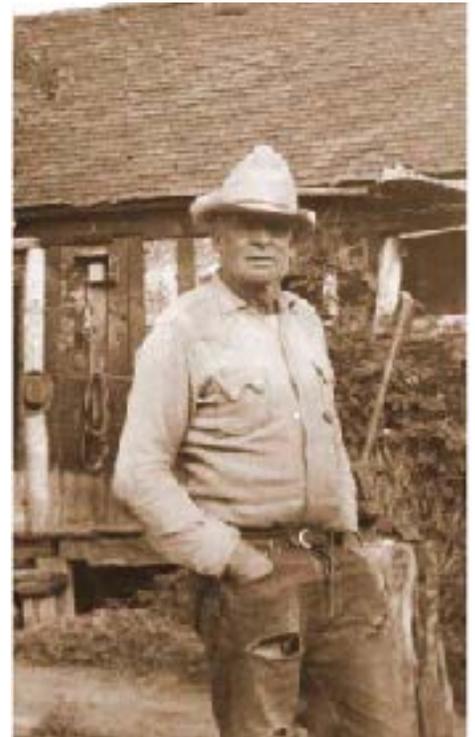


Earl Lessley: The Flying Cowboy

He died over half a century ago. But tales live on about the "*flying cowboy*"!

Earl Lessley was born in 1889 in Drytown, California. His parents, Mary and Samuel Lessley, had crossed the plains from Missouri by covered wagon. (The family evidently moved around a bit; a second son, Ray, was born in nearby Volcano in 1892.)

Just how Lessley happened to arrive in Carson Valley is unknown. [Locally, his name was often misspelled "Leslie."] But by 1918 he began working for Dangberg Land and Livestock; he would become a "veteran and respected employee" for the next 37 years. (Younger brother, Ray, also worked for Dangberg from 1919 to 1937, later moving on to work for George "Bim" Koenig at the Swauger Ranch at Topaz.)



Rough-and-rugged cowboy Earl Lessley, in his signature hat. (Doesn't he look like a movie should be made about him?!) (Photo courtesy of Judy Wickwire)

Earl's prowess as a horseman was legendary. Riding a horse named "Fighting," Lessley took first prize for best rider in the finals at the American Legion rodeo in Carson Valley in June, 1928. As years went

Flying Cowboy (Cont.)

by, he would become a well-known “old vaquero” at Vaquero Cow Camp, the summer range for Dangberg cattle in Bagley Valley.

But what Lessley was *most* famous for was his passion for airplanes! Given the difficulty of accessing Bagley Valley, one winter he decided to *fly* in John Dangberg, using a rented WWI biplane. Lessley had carefully cleared a primitive landing strip on a low ridge south of the camp. But when he tried to maneuver in for a landing on this dirt strip, the plane came down nose-first. (Luckily, Lessley and his passenger both survived!)

Despite this inauspicious beginning, the landing strip at Vaquero Camp continued to be used. When a second plane also crashed there, Lessley simply scavenged parts from the wreck to use on the ranch. A third pilot, too, is said to have crashed, escaping with only a broken arm.

Nevertheless, Earl continued to fly, owning several airplanes throughout the years. He evidently learned from his previous mistakes as a pilot; his obituary noted that he “frequently had accomplished the [difficult] feat of landing and taking off from Bagley Valley.”

Other tales told about Lessley paint a picture of a grizzled outdoorsman. Like many of his generation, he apparently disdained doctors; after developing “foot trouble” (possibly frostbite or gangrene), Lessley simply cut off part of his own toes with an axe.

He also had a frontiersman’s wicked sense of humor. Lessley once pranked local fishermen by stuffing the hind-quarters of a dead bear into a pair of old Levis and half-burying the carcass in a river bank where he knew they would find it!

In 1952, Lessley suffered a concussion when a horse fell on him. He told his coworkers to leave him there, saying he was content to die there in Carson Valley. His fellow cowboys didn’t listen, however, carting him out successfully on a stretcher for medical treatment.

Lessley’s end came three years later -- and a rather ironic end it was for an old cowboy. It was April 17, 1955, and the spring winds through Carson Valley were strong and gusty. Lessley was working on his car at the Klauber Ranch, and had jacked up the car and crawled underneath it. The car slipped off the jack, possibly from the gusty wind. The rear axle landed on Lessley’s chest. His body was discovered the next day by Hans Dunwebber, a fellow employee. The coroner’s jury concluded that Lessley had died instantaneously. He was 66 years old.

Earl Lessley was laid to rest near his parents in the family plot at Shenandoah Valley Cemetery in Plymouth, California, in a grave he now shares with his younger brother, Ray. (Ray died in 1962; it is unclear where their sister, Edith Lessley Waters, is buried.)

One touching indicator of the high regard in which Lessley was held by the Carson Valley community: prominent locals Bill Hellwinkel and



Earl Lessley (left) on a cattle drive with George Koenig. (Photo courtesy of Judy Wolkwin).



Earl Lessley's infamous biplane. (Photo courtesy of Judy Wickwire.)

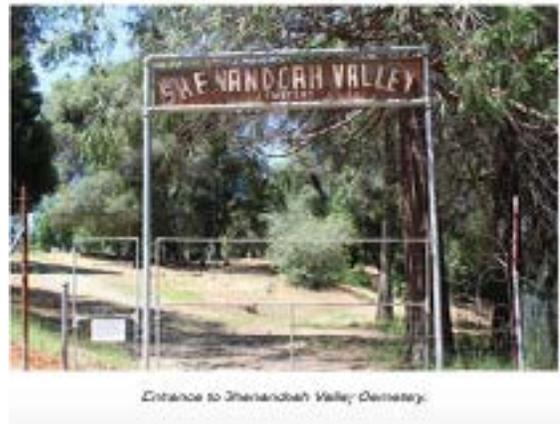


Earl Lessley's grave, shared with his brother, Ray.

Flying Cowboy (Cont.)

Otto Heise traveled all the way from Carson Valley to Jackson, California to pay their respects at his funeral.

For additional information about Earl Lessley and the vaqueros at Bagley Valley, check out Judy Wickwire's wonderful book, "Land Use Patterns in Bagley and Silver King Valleys" (Clear Water Publishing, 2017) -- available at the Alpine County Museum in Markleeville! Contact the Museum at: (530) 694-2317.



Entrance to Shenandoah Valley Cemetery.

Earl Lessley: The Flying Cowboy was reprinted with permission from Karen Dustman and the Clairitage Press. Karen writes about great historian people, places and things from our neighboring Alpine County.

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