

THE AMADORIAN

A Publication of the Amador County Historical Society

President's Corner

Dear Fellow ACHS Member:

Every year we get new members and we lose a few through attrition for one reason or another but I cannot believe that anyone leaves because the Society is not working to improve the quality of the exhibits or the experience that one has when visiting the museum and mine model.

We have a small but dedicated group of volunteers that show up every Friday, Saturday and Sunday to greet our visitors and share with them their knowledge and enthusiasm and love of Amador County. Please consider sharing an hour or two of your time as a docent. You will enjoy every minute of your time spent with visitors. I guarantee it!

Soon you will be able to visit and look at all of the exhibits on the internet as our Museum Director, Judy Jebian, puts the finishing touches on the pictorial inventory. You will also see some significant changes to the landscape between the museum and the cottage.

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Financing Amador County – A New Bank for Amador¹

The rumor sped along Main – August, 1896 – in Jackson. “Someone is going to put up a brick building on a Main Street vacant lot!” Not that new brick buildings that year were rare. Chris Marelia was planning a 2-story on Curt, below the court house, and DB Spagnoli was adding a second story on his brick office opposite it.

What about Patrick Dwyer? His Globe Hotel² had been two stories since 1858, and even he was adding a third story to it! Times were getting better (The Argonaut and Kennedy Gold Mines, significant producers and employers then, had much to do with it). But none of those were on a vacant lot on Main. Who was the builder and what was the building?

Insiders, of course, knew. Just ask one. “Why, yes, there’s going to be a bank built on the old Hamilton Stage Stable lot,” the answer came, matter-of-factly. Leaving aside for a moment
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President's Corner (Cont.)

Last year's successful wine and cheese tasting and auction brought to light that we need more room in this part of the grounds so soon some bushes will be moved or re-moved and some planters will be re-located to open up this area. Thanks to Eddie Metherd (G.E.M. Electric) and Phil Giurlani, the electrical panel has been improved and a donation from the National Hotel will be used to improve the exterior lighting. Please mark your calendars for September 23rd, 4pm to 7pm, for this year's Wine & Cheese tasting event.

The Board of Supervisors has received a donation of \$25,000 to be used on a project to improve the facilities and a joint committee comprised of ACHS and BOS members has been formed to discuss project ideas. The project the ACHS Board is most interested in is the replacement and subsequent enlargement of what is now called the Livery. Time will tell in what direction the project committee moves but their enthusiasm will no doubt result in something great for the museum and its visitors.

On July 3rd at the museum and adjacent park, and just prior to the annual Lion's fireworks display, the ACHS Board will host an Independence Day Picnic complete with good food and drink and a program by historian Frank Tortorich in keeping with the holiday. So mark your calendars now. 6pm to 8pm.

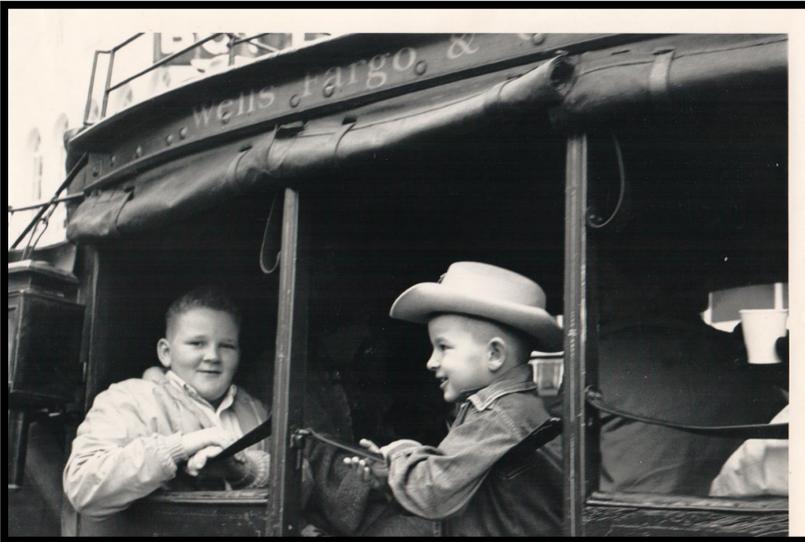
I also want to thank Ron and Marie Scofield for the excellent program they

presented to ACHS members and the public on their cowboy and cowgirl adventures. Their love of history and the western lifestyle was in great evidence that night. I also want to wish them a speedy recovery from their wagon mishap the following day.

And finally, this year's annual meeting will be on November 6th, 5pm to 7pm at Teresa's Restaurant. See all of you there to honor our donors and docents.

Sincerely,
Keith Sweet, President
ACHS

Cowboy & Cowgirl Adventures***Ron & Marie Scofield***



“It was a very big deal for Jackson, Wells Fargo Bank and a young boy named “Marshall”. It took on a special meaning. The horses and stage coach and guards in their cowboy hats and shiny U.S. Marshal badges. I was given one of those badges and was a real “Marshal” for the day. Sitting in the stage coach was a thrill for this small town boy.” — Marshall Cova

Doug Campbell (left) - Marshall Cova (right) Circa 1965

Financing Amador County - A New Bank for Amador (cont.)

where the Hamilton ³ lot was, the questioner could only exclaim, “A bank? You mean, Amador County is finally going to get its first bank? No!”

“Yep, a bank. It’s going to be down at the foot of Main, west side, between Webb’s dilapidated frames,⁴ and Peek and Newman’s livery by the National Hotel.” Who’s behind it?” Gaskill is his name. A promoter from Oakland. He’s got a bunch of San Francisco capitalists together and even some local businessmen, too. Varney W. Gaskill, about 40, a real insider. I’ve heard he’s going to come up here and direct construction and live here!”

Further signs that a bank was being born in Jackson was not long in the coming. On November 20, Gaskill filed with county clerk Charles Culbert articles of incorporation⁵ for a Bank of Amador County.

“Hey, boys. That’s something to be proud of. A bank right here. A Bank of Amador County.” And maybe in Sutter Creek, too. That’s what the incorporation papers said, Jackson and Sutter Creek, with Jackson the principal office.

Gaskill was president, Frederick C. Siebe vice president, Frederick Eudey, secretary and cashier, and Henry Eudey, S.G. Spagnoli, Gaskill, Siebe and M.J. Madison, directors. Corporation attorneys would be Judge John F. Davis and the Honorable Anthony Caminetti. Miss Hilda Clough would be notary. The Bank of Amador County was capitalized at \$50,000, with the directors buying \$10,500 worth of shares, Gaskill most of it.

“The management,” reported Sutter Creek’s Amador Record, “proposed being conservative but progressive... and ever ready to listen to suggestions from local Citizens of the county who (think otherwise).

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Financing Amador County (cont.)

“The combined wealth of the stockholders will amount to over \$10 million, thus offering absolute security to the depositors.” Evidently, many merchants in Jackson agreed and purchased their own stock in the venture. Once the bank was incorporated, Gaskell officially purchased a lot on Main, which historically, was the northerly half of the wide lot on which the two-story Union House stood from 1854 to 1862.

Early that December Fred Eudey was a clerk in the Newman-Peiser store just up Main. By mid-month the new bank appointed him secretary and cashier. In subsequent weeks, while craftsmen built the bank, Eudey boned up on banking at the State Bank in Sacramento and the Oroville Bank.

The directors awarded the contract to build their bank to local millwright, Ed Kay,⁶ and signed an agreement with Vincenzo Particelli⁷ and brother to supply the granite for the building's trim. Workmen poured the concrete foundation and mortared walls of pressed brick by early January. By April 20, the flagpole topped off the building in time for the public to preview the bank two days before it would officially open on May 1.

Before 9 a.m. on Saturday, May 1, 1897, the flag was furled, and at 9a.m. president Gaskill and cashier Eudey opened the doors of the Bank of Amador County. Residents flocked in to make deposits and get their bank and checkbooks. “The express of favor sounded loud and deep,” said a county paper. No longer would anyone on any day but Sunday have to scurry around for change or a place to cash a check. Now, the bank would provide those services and more.

The visitors saw a shallow lobby athwart which ran a counter across the entire room, separating the work area from the public. Along the top of the railing on the counter was a handsome grill work of brass, with wickets for cashier and teller. Behind the counter were the bank rooms proper, the director's room which would later be moved into an annex, and a sleeping room with closets. The directors' room was carpeted and furnished with beautiful oak furniture. The bank interior boasted oak finish, plaster of paris walls.

The fire-proof vault, enclosed by pressed brick, and the burglar-proof safe were awesome. The vault was 9 by 9 by 6 feet, and lined with quarter-inch steel. A combination opened the outside doors; a key opened the inside ones. Those doors weighed 3500 pounds and cost \$400!

Inside the vault, the safe stood six feet tall, extended three feet wide and was two feet deep. It cost \$2,500 and weighed an incredible 6,000 pounds! No one would carry that safe away!

In 1899, Henry Eudey was chairman of the board, and also a director with Mareline, Alexander Eudey, John Strohm and Spagnoli. Their bank paid four percent interest on savings, compounded semi-annually.

Sometime between 1903 and 1912, insurance maps show, an annex was added to the rear of the bank.

In 1915 the bank purchased lots in Sutter Creek and Plymouth and probably built branch banks soon after. The Plymouth bank lot was once part of the Sutherland Quartz Mine. To buy it bank directors had to get approval of directors of the Plymouth Consolidated Gold Mines, Ltd., in London, England!

In 1917, the Jackson bank was renovated, the directors' room moved from front to rear, and a savings department installed.

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Financing Amador County (Continued)

Newspaper ads heralded the innovation and branches in Sutter Creek, Plymouth and Amador City got savings departments, too. When and how long there was a branch in Amador City is not known.

The late 1920s and early 1930s were memorable banking times. From 1927 to 1931 Jess McLaughlin and John Huberty from the Jackson branch traveled up the Alpine Highway high into the Sierra to provide banking services to hundreds of workmen constructing PG&E's Salt Springs Dam and power house. Also 20 miles of concrete flume and tunnel and Tiger Creek power house, regulator and after bay.

“We took up a brown satchel with about \$3,000 to \$4,000 in cash,” Huberty told the writer. “We opened accounts with the men’s paychecks and gave them less cash for spending money.”⁸

It was a two-day trip. Near the end of the second day, at Tiger Creek, they usually cashed checks until they ran out of cash.

Hubert had been hired by Charles Culbert in 1924. McLaughlin well before that. With the latter's recent passing⁹ ... Huberty is now the bank's alumnus with the earliest employment date.

At the bank in 1924 when Huberty was hired were Culbert, manager-cashier Tom Hedgepeth, assistant cashier McLaughlin, stenographer Lillian Bradshaw, and bookkeeper-tellers Lucinda Waters and Dena Vigna.

According to Sargent's 1927 history of Amador County, the officers that year were Julius Chichizola, president; Alfonso Ginocchio and C.R. Downs, vice presidents; and Culbert secretary-manager. George E. Allen, Vincent Brignole, WF Detert, James Grillo and Ralph McGee were directors.

Cashiers were: at Jackson, Hedgepeth; at Plymouth, Roy Merwin; and at Sutter Creek, Frank Payne. Says Azalea Cuneo about Merwin: “He dressed the part of the old-time banker, with the green eyeshades and celluloid cuffs.”

Though a strong, independent bank, even the Bank of Amador County had to close down in 1933 when the Roosevelt administration, to stop the stampede for deposits, closed all the nation's banks. The bank here, says Huberty, reopened in about a month.

Circa 1934-36, say Plymouth old timers, that branch of the bank experienced at least one holdup. A couple of local hunters pursued one robber and brought him back dead. Best you research these episodes yourself.¹⁰ Also, in the 1930s, remembers Ms. Cuneo¹¹ the Bank of America tried to become majority shareholder in the Bank of Amador County, having two directors already on its board. The takeover was foiled, she says, when the Bank of Amador County shareholders formed a voting trust, requiring that the directors approve any further stock sale. The Bank of America established its own branch in Jackson in about 1937.

In 1936 Culbert hired Amos Seifert, along with Cuneo and Mary Perano. Seifert had impressed him with the expert way he “liquidated” the Bank of Lincoln, another depression casualty. When cashier Hedgepeth was killed in an accident, Seifert became cashier and vice president in 1941 and remained in that responsibility through January 1, 1966, when he retired after over four decades of banking.

In 1964, with many of its officers of or near retirement age, bank directors decided to merge with a larger bank. Crocker Bank was interested but did not want to pay full retirement benefits. Wells Fargo Bank was interested, too, but agreed to what Crocker wouldn't.

(Continued on page 6)

Financing Amador County (Cont.)

Officers of both banks approved a merger plan on June 9, 1964. With shareholders approval later obtained, Bank of Amador County would merge into Wells Fargo Bank, exchanging 50,000 shares of \$10 par value stock for 12,500 shares of \$20 par value Bank of Amador County stock.

As of October 1, 1964, Bank of Amador County's assets were \$12,772,121, and deposits were \$11,563,846. The board of governors of the Federal Reserve System approved the merger on December 16, 1964, and the date of consummation was Monday, January 4, 1965 – over 110 years after Wells Fargo first came to Amador.

Said Wells Fargo's executive vice president, H. Stephen Chase: "We are most pleased with the prospect of returning to Amador County... The present staff and management (of Bank of Amador County) will continue without loss of seniority or employee benefits and as full participants in our comprehensive employee benefit program."

At the time of the merger, Bank of Amador County officers were Judge Ralph McGee, chairman of the board and president; the late Amos M Seifert, vice president and cashier; John A Huberty, vice president and secretary; and Frank J Hann, vice president and treasurer. The nine directors were Gard Chisholm, A.S. Brignole, John Ferreccio, James Levaggi, D.S. Mason, Jr., Ralph McGee, Jess E. McLaughlin, Seifert and W.D. Tam 12

At the Sutter Creek branch Charles Cassinelli was manager, and at Plymouth, the manager was T.K. "Van" Van Arsdale. Longtime employees included Marie Oneto and Sylvia Krzich at Sutter Creek, Betty Ticquet at Plymouth, and Huberty and Cuneo at Jackson.

After 42 years of service, Cuneo retired from Wells Fargo in 1978, and Huberty, hired in 1924, retired in 1967, after 43 years duty. At the time of this writing (1982) Oneto and Krzich were still employed by the bank.

On Monday, January 4, 1965, with Chase representing Wells Fargo, the bank hosted and sponsored festivities marking the merger and Wells Fargo's return to Amador County. Chase and other notables were delivered by a famous Wells Fargo stage, Ben Holladay. Like their forebears did in 1896, Amador folk flocked to the new old bank, and many took their kids on a memorable bounding ride around town in the stage coach. Bank personnel served coffee and donuts.

In January, 1966, Wells Fargo, on the lot next south of the old Bank of Amador County – on which the old White House (and Jackson hotel) building and Louvre basement had stood – started construction of the present bank in Jackson.

The new bank was built within inches of the south wall of the old bank, and somehow was unmarred when the old bank itself came down to provide room for the driveway and shrub beds.

Completed in 1966, today's Wells Fargo Bank is on the same site where Wells, Fargo Express opened their new Jackson office back on January 1, 1855!

Footnotes ~

- 1) Continuation of the opus in the Scenic 88 Fun Times, Vol. 7 No. 8, August 1982
- 2) At the northeasterly corner of Court and Main. See Logan's Alley II, page 235.

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ACHS 2016 - Board of Directors

Officers

Keith Sweet, President
 Jeana Hultquist, Vice President
 Judy Jebian, Secretary
 Wayne Garibaldi, Treasurer

Board Members

Ed Arata
 Thornton Consolo
 Jennifer Farmer
 Georgia Fox
 Phillip Giurlani
 Teresa Guidi
 Alicia Miller
 Gary Reinoehl
 Coni Saracino
 Danna Saunders
 Grant Vogel
 Russ vanVoorhis
 Leonard Williams

*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

2016

- ***July 3 - Picnic at the Museum 6-8pm***
- ***Nov 6 - Annual Dinner at Teresa's
 Restaurant 5-7pm***

Amador Central Railroad -

- ***2nd Saturday of each month (weather
 permitting) - Work Day & Inspection Run***

Footnotes (cont).

- 3) William "Baldy" Hamilton awaits his rightful chronicler. In 1906 his obit, in part, said he was "probably the last of California's prominent and picturesque stage drivers. He owned all the stage lines in the county at one time. In '72 he gained fame as driver of the stage that took CP Huntington, Leland Stanford and other moguls from Fresno to Los Angeles.
- 4) Soon to be replaced by fiery Richard Webb's Webb block, which still stands northerly of Wells Fargo Bank today.
- 5) Among incorporation papers in the county archives.
- 6) Henry Edwin Kay, whose vocations included deputy sheriff, county tax collector, contractor.
- 7) Italian-born stonecutter living in the Clinton precinct.
- 8) Huberty oral history, Amador County Archives
- 9) McLaughlin in 1982 and Huberty in 1996.
- 10) In subsequent volume of "A Look Back on Logan's Alley, the writer gives details on the holdup
- 11) Interviewed at the time.



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 narration and tape presentation.

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.

ACHS Lifetime Members

Kathy Allen & Frank Axe - Richard & July Allen - Caryl Arnese - 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 - 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 - Sutter Creek Promotions Committee - Volcano Community Services District - Fraser & Teddy West

*Benefactor

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:

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---|--|--|
| ANNUAL | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family (2 or more) \$30.00 | <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) |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

History on Stage ***“14 Main”***

Amador High school's production of "14 Main" an original one act play written and Directed by: Alex Dutra and Jenni Knight with original music by: Jeremiah Vela-Murphy. The story is based on the Vela family who owned and operated a sporting goods store at 14 Main street in Jackson for many years. The story follows the life of Grace Vela and her family beginning around the 1930's through WWII and on to present day. It is about Grace's hopes, dreams, talents, family ties, disappointments and loss. Three of the characters in the play were in attendance the day I saw the performance. The young play writers were very sensitive in portraying characters who are living and related to other character's in the play, telling their stories in a historically accurate and entertaining way. I spoke with Laurie and Harry Vela afterwards and asked them some questions about the story line. They were very happy to talk about the other characters and expound on the story line of the play, going into much more detail and side stories. The students did an excellent job. I was impressed by how creative and insightful these young adults told their story.

Contributed by Teresa Guidi

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P.O. Box 761
Jackson, CA 95642

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