

# THE AMADORIAN

*A Publication of the Amador County Historical Society*

Summer – Fall 2019

## ***President's Corner***

Dear Fellow ACHS Members:

As we head to the end of 2019, I can't help but reflect on what a rewarding year this has been serving as President for the Amador County Historical Society. But it isn't about me whatsoever. I am truly grateful for the volunteer board, many of whom still work full time, who devote precious time giving back to this organization. I would also be remiss if I didn't mention the so many hours from others that volunteer at the museum, at our events and in many other capacities. A huge shout out to the Giurlani family and Teresa's Restaurant for being our "go to" caterer for this year's events and many other sponsors. Please take a look at a list on page 10 and if you have an opportunity to patronize these businesses, thank them for supporting ACHS. Later this month, ACHS will again be recognized for contributing our volunteerism to Amador County. Thank you all!

As you know, ACHS has embarked upon a huge project to build a new livery building – not an easy feat by any means – taking time, talent and treasure. ACHS received a very nice resolution from the Amador County Board of Supervisors acknowledging the importance of the Livery Project and supporting our efforts to raise the necessary funds needed to complete the project. Read the full resolution on Page 10.

ACHS is so grateful to Leonard Williams and his volunteer crew to move Phase I forward – enclosing the existing pole barn to provide temporary storage for the several pieces currently in the existing livery. Take a look at a few pictures on Page 9.

**And you won't want to miss a special treat on November 3<sup>rd</sup> when we will hear from renowned San Francisco historian and part-time resident of Sutter Creek, Charles A. Fracchia.**

Lastly, mark your calendar for #GivingTuesday, December 3, 2019 and consider your donation for the Amador County Historical Society – [www.giveamador.org](http://www.giveamador.org).

Thank you for your membership and interest in the Amador County Historical Society. Enjoy the Amadorian and I hope to see many of you at our upcoming Annual Meeting dinner on Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>.

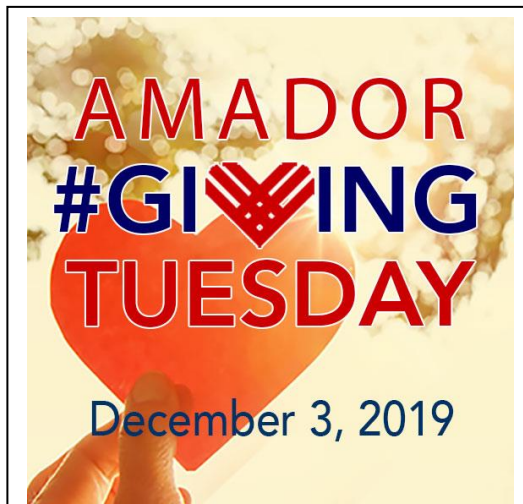
*Best regards,  
Jeana Hultquist, President*

## **Livery Building Project**



**A Project of the Amador  
County Historical Society at  
the Amador County Museum**

*Your generous donation will help build  
the New Livery Building which will  
replicate the California-style of rural  
agricultural buildings. Learn more at  
[www.amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org)*



## Take a Ride on History . . .

By Karen Dustman

Our tickets called it a “Speeder Excursion.” And a delightful (if not speedy) ride into history it was, bumping along on the 114-year-old rails of the Amador Central Railroad -- one of the oldest continuously running railroad lines in the country!

We gathered at Lane’s Station -- a dirt pull-out on Highway 104, about 1.5 miles south of Ione. There we watched in awe as sheer muscle-power (and a pivot) were used to turn the cars around and get them facing in the right direction.

These fully restored "maintenance of way" cars offered the added luxury of padded seats. (Not part of the maintenance cars' original equipment!)

Our guides turned each car the "old-fashioned" way -- with pivot and muscle,

And before long we were boarding the restored and upgraded cars. All are “maintenance of way” work cars, to which comfortable seats have been added. The oldest (extensively rebuilt) was from 1937; some were World War II vintage; and one was originally in use in the 1970s. The Amador Central owns two of these beautifully restored railroad cars. The rest are privately owned by passionate railroad enthusiasts who make them available for special excursions like this.

Our host for the ride, Mark Demler, kicked off the tour with a fascinating thumbnail history of the Amador Central. Turns out its earliest roots go back to the late 1880s, when would-be founders intended to start an electric-powered railway. Eventually they realized that electricity wasn’t really practical for the route they had in mind.

And who knows just how serious they really were about creating a viable railroad, anyhow?! “Many of the 1880s and 1890s railroad corporations were actually scams,” Demler told us. “They’d set up to sell stock or take donations but then lay no actual track -- and eventually declare bankruptcy. So eventually the state prohibited railroad companies from making any stock offerings until they at least made a survey of the route, first.”



It was a gorgeous journey through the Amador rolling hills.



The cows didn't mind a bit having company.

Undaunted by their early missteps, backers of the new railroad managed to complete the necessary railroad survey in 1890, finally incorporating in 1904 as the Ione & Eastern. Becoming an official corporation allowed the promoters to begin selling stock. Even more important, it allowed them to start

borrowing money. Short-term bonds were issued to help finance the new railroad line. Tracklaying began in 1904, and a short first run took place in 1905.

But expenses were big, and profits were small. When those short-term bonds came due in 1908, the company found itself unable to pay. The Ione & Eastern was in a financial mess.

Luckily, a man from Sutter Creek named Erickson stepped forward, acquiring the railroad's right-of-way by paying off the defaulted bonds. He renamed the railroad the Amador Central. Things were looking up a bit. Erickson passed away just a few years later. But his thrifty wife, Meta, stepped in and managed to not only keep the railroad running but make it solvent.

Once we reached the far end of the journey, the cars had to be turned again.

In its early days, the railroad hauled aggregate, brick, and lumber. (Ione was known for its high-quality clay and quarry goods.) During the WWI-era, the line carried heavy mining equipment like pumps and replacement gears to the Kennedy and Argonaut mines. In the 1930-1950s, the Amador Central began hauling goods for the newly prosperous local lumber companies. And in later years, it ferried passengers up the hill, too, becoming the "bus" taking kids to and from the local high school (a practice that ended in the late 1930s).

A local lumber mill owner acquired the railroad in the 1980s, renaming it the Amador Foothills. He kept the business name when he sold the railroad a few years later, so another name change was required for the line. And what better name than its early-day moniker, the Amador Central?! A group of passionate railroad buffs incorporated under the Amador Central name, leased the line for five years, then finally bought it in 2010 (in partnership with the Amador Historical Society) for just \$1. The group successfully petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to officially change the name.



Larry Cenotto, President of the Amador Co. Historical Society, shakes hands with Larry Bowler, President of the Recreational Railroad Coalition Historical Society on October 29, 2010, celebrating purchase of the Amador Central for \$1. (Photographer: Larry Angier/Amador County Ledger Dispatch photo)

"The community has been very generous in supporting the line," Mark Demler tells us. "Local companies donate rock and aggregate for the rail bed, and local contractors sometimes do grading for us at cost or for nothing." When a slide occurred recently, the Jackson Rancheria casino trucked in a quarter of a million dollars of rock to help stabilize the hillside -- for just the cost of paying the truck drivers!



Close-up of the original track and crushed rock base. Gaps allow for expansion and contraction, but also make for a bumpy ride in these smaller, lighter work cars!

Total length of the Amador Central's line today, from end to end: ten miles. But, oh, this short line still boasts major bragging rights! It's now licensed by the Federal Railway Administration as a true passenger railroad -- technically, a "class one non-insular tourist railroad." The complete route climbs over 1,200 feet in altitude in its mere ten miles, making it one of the steepest railroads in America. Several of the grades are as steep as 4 percent (a rise of 4 feet in 100 feet traveled); for most other railroads, the max is just 1.5 percent (1.5 feet in 100). For a heavy train, that's astonishing. "In the old days, they had to stop half-way down to cool the brakes off!" Demler notes.

Our six-mile round trip through the beautiful rolling hills took just about an hour. It would be an especially fun trip for kids -- though they must be 5 or older to board the cars.

Short excursions like the one we took depart the second Saturday of most months, through November, at 10 a.m., noon, and 2 p.m., and cost a mere \$10 bucks. Longer, full-length runs are also offered three times a year. Sunscreen, closed-toed shoes and water are recommended. For more information and a flyer, visit [www.amadorcentralrailroad.com](http://www.amadorcentralrailroad.com).

Take your own ride into history!

"Iron Ivan," one of the original Amador Central steam engines, can also be seen in nearby Ione.



***ACHS 2019- 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 2019***

***Nov 3 - Annual Membership Dinner at  
Teresa's Restaurant – Banquet Room***

***4:30 -7:00 pm***

***Special Guest Speaker: Charles Fracchia  
Renowned San Francisco historian and part-  
time resident of Sutter Creek***

***\$30 – purchase online***

***[www.amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org)***

***\$35 – at door***

***\* \* \****

***Amador Central Railroad -  
Events and Run Dates for 2019***

***Second Saturday - Ione Station (weather  
permitting)***

***Run times: 10 am - Noon - 2pm***

***\$10/Seat***

***For more information, contact Grant Vogel  
at (209) 221-5418 or  
[grant@amadorcentral.com](mailto: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 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 Life Members***

Eugene & Christina Ammann ~ Kathy Allen & Frank Axe ~ Richard & July Allen ~ Joseph and Iris Aparicio ~ 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 ~ Jim & Teresa Guidi ~ 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 ~ JoAnn Levy ~ Gary & Jaimie Little ~ Stan Lukowicz ~ Doug & Susan McElwee ~ Allen & Karen Martin ~ Jeremy & Shirley McCarty ~ Doug & Susan McElwee ~ Frances Melusky ~ Marshal Merriam ~ Joe & Alicia Miller (Giurlani) ~ Jean Mueller ~ Ron Oliverro ~ Katherine & William Orescan ~ Alan & Peggy Piccardo ~ 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 ~ Keith & Gail Sweet ~ Ed & Margaret Swift ~ Russell & Mary Beth VanVoorhis ~ Violich Farms ~ Grant Vogel & Pam Sharp ~ Fraser & Teddy West ~ Sutter Creek Promotions Committee ~ Volcano Community Services District \*Benefactor







***The Livery Building Project  
A Project of the Amador County Historical Society***

The existing pole barn on the Museum grounds gets a new look!

Thanks to Leonard Williams and his crew of volunteers, the barn is now nearly enclosed and painted to match the color of the museum. When completed, we can then move to transitioning the existing artifacts of early transportation, agricultural and rural items of the area that were donated to the museum into the temporary storage.

***Next step ----- continuing to raise the necessary funds and collect in-kind donations to build the new Livery Building.***



***ACHS Annual Dinner – Guest Speaker: Charles Fracchia  
November 3<sup>rd</sup> – Teresa’s Banquet Room – See Page 6 for details***



Charles A. Fracchia is a native San Franciscan. He received a BA in history from the University of San Francisco, an MA in history from San Francisco State University, an MLS from the University of California in Berkeley, and an MA in theology from the Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley. Fracchia spent 20 years in the investment banking and investment advisory business and 35 years as an academic, teaching at San Francisco State University, City College of San Francisco, and the University of San Francisco. He is the author of 15 books; *Palimpsest* is his first book of fiction. He is a Fellow of the California Historical Society, and the Founder and President Emeritus of the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society. Fracchia was one of the founders of *Rolling Stone* magazine.



Amador County Supervisor, Pat Crew presents ACHS President, Jeana Hultquist with a resolution from the Amador County Supervisors

***ACHS Receives Support from Amador County Board of Supervisors***

Resolution of the Amador County Board of Supervisors in Support of the Amador County Historical Society

WHEREAS, the Amador County Board of Supervisors and the Amador County Historical Society value the importance of preserving and providing access to the county’s rich historical artifacts, papers, photos, and miscellany of Amador County history; and

WHEREAS, in June 1948, Amador County acquired the old Brown family, 2-story home and outbuildings on Court House Hill and established the Amador County Museum; and

WHEREAS, in June 2013, the Amador County Historical Society entered into an agreement with the Amador County Board of Supervisors to operate and manage the museum and its grounds; and

WHEREAS, the open-faced shed on the museum grounds which house the display of farm wagons and carriages is deteriorating rapidly and is jeopardizing the historical integrity of the artifacts; and

WHEREAS, the Amador County Historical Society has embarked upon a plan to raise funds to build an enclosed livery to house the current livery artifacts as well as expected similar donations;

HEREBY BE RESOLVED, the Amador County Board of Supervisors supports the efforts of the Amador County Historical Society to raise funds to build an enclosed livery building on the grounds of the Amador County Museum.

***Thank You*** to our Sponsors of the September Wine & Cheese Event ~

- Giurlani Family & Teresa’s Restaurant
- JB Specialty Business
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- Keith Sweet
- Amador Central Railroad
- Celtic Knot
- Lady’s First Women’s Fashion
- Sue’s Shoppe
- Biggest Little Kitchen Store
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 Over the Moon

**Dave Brubeck's Sequel to Deborah Cook's Vestiges of Amador in  
Ledger Dispatch's "Roots" of July 16, 2019  
By Georgia Fox**



If you are keeping up with the very informative, Vestiges of Amador, you have read the whole life Biography of Dave Brubeck!...well, I have some of my experience to add to Dave Brubeck's growing up here in the Mother Lode' Ione, and then some!

During my tenure at Amador County Museum, as Curator, I had several volunteers, and a very special one was, "Allen Martin from Ione"... well, he told me a few stories about Dave Brubeck as he and Dave were growing up in the County.

Allen said, "Dave Brubeck used to babysit me"! Very interesting to say the least that a "celebrity", such as Dave Brubeck was a very caring person with younger children, also, along with his many brothers!

Dave worked on his dad's ranch, while his mother, Bessie was realizing her dream by teaching children piano lessons from all over Ione and Amador County, as well as her own boys!

As I am writing this history about Dave Brubeck, I wanted to tell people just how it came about that we created "The Dave Brubeck, In Concert" Exhibit in the Amador County Museum! Since Allen Martin grew up in Ione, and was my volunteer, he knew so much about the Brubeck family... his parents and Dave's parents were good friends. Allen suggested we go over to UOP in Stockton to research and gather information and photos! We understood UOP had a special Curator of Dave Brubeck's extensive collection. We made a trip to UOP, gathered the material to create an exhibit of Dave Brubeck! As a result, this very notable person, came alive in Amador County!

Yes, we had a grand opening of the Dave Brubeck Exhibit, with many locals attending. People came from near and far to honor this special person! To this day, Dave's exhibit is very much a part of Amador County Museum. The Brubeck Exhibit show visitors interesting photos with a timeline from birth, childhood and leading to his future as a renowned "Jazz" icon of the United States and all over the world!

I recently came across more information regarding the 20 year-end of an era as the home of the Brubeck Institute Collection, located at the University of the Pacific "The University of the Pacific is ending the official relationship of Brubeck Institute and Collection in December, 2019"!

I have quoted the above sad, sad new release posted on March 27, 2019 in the Stockton Record, by Lori Gilbert, Record Staff Writer. (you may check the complete release: <http://www.recordnet.com/news/20190327/brubeck-ending-official> Brubeck's relationship with UOP.

This quote from the above news release, dated March 27, 2019 by Dave's son, Chris Brubeck, noted, "the material and collection has been archived and digitized, including photos, music, and more, but, NO NEW HOME at this time"!!

**Brubeck (cont.)**

I have garnered even more significant background of the personal life of Dave and Iola Brubeck's two fabulous homes from "Town and Country, Top of the Line for Diamonds, Jewelry and High Fashion Magazine", September, 2019 issue! And I quote, "Architect, Beverly David Thorne. (now goes by Beverly Thorne), who built their Oakland, California home, he created an eclectic effect by cantilevering over a rocky slope, with gorgeous views of San Francisco Bay".

After more soul searching, wanting to be closer to family, because his music and concerts took him away so often, they decided to pull up stakes in the 60's and move to Connecticut! They used the same architect, Beverly David Thorne, to build another unusual home, similar to the Oakland home. This new home was also cantilevered over a steep slope, very unusual and beautiful as the Oakland home.

The children kept this Connecticut home just the way it was when their parents moved in, so long ago.

I will end with a quote from Town and Country magazine, David was just a cowboy who became a "jazz legend", and was also a devoted family man with many children and his lovely wife, Iola"!

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!...There's more...

Latest news from Ledger Dispatch's new edition of "in the Neighborhood", by Rachel Norris August 16, 2019.

"A major undertaking of a historic preservation project on the Ione home of Dave Brubeck", noted by Larry White of Jackson Casino Resort!

Wow, what's next?

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A Publication of the Amador County Historical Society  
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