



THE AMADORIAN

A Publication of the Amador County Historical Society

"Preserving the past and present for tomorrow"

Spring 2022 – Vol. 15, No. 1

President's Corner

Dear ACHS Members:

In keeping with our mission statement, "Preserving the past and present for tomorrow," I'm happy to announce that we now have doors on our new storage building (see photo, right). We can start moving the artifacts into storage and out of the elements for preservation. The next step will be to demolish the old livery building.

A thanks goes to all our generous supporters. We received \$8,176.15 on the November 30th Giving Tuesday. There's still a long way to go, but it's certainly a step in the right direction for the proposed livery building.

We are planning our first event of the year, our Steak Sandwich BBQ at the Museum on Sunday, June 12th. We haven't done this since 2019, so we are really looking forward to it. I will be sending out flyers with the details when we get closer to the date of the event.

The Historical Society is working with the Kennedy Mine and other organizations on the 100th anniversary commemoration of the Argonaut Mine Disaster. Please read the article about the event on page 5 in this issue. The plans are still evolving, but you will receive more information in the future about all the various activities and their dates, times and locations. Also, watch for all the many announcements



The Amador Historical Society storage building has doors. We're truly preserving the past and present for tomorrow.

that will be on the radio and appear in the Ledger Dispatch. This will be a very educational and historical commemoration.

I want to thank all our members again for their continuing support and interest in the Historical Society. Hope to see you at the BBQ in June!

Best regards,

Cathy McGowen,
President
Amador County Historical Society

Save the date: **Steak and Sandwich BBQ**
Sunday, June 12, 2022

A Blast from the Past – The History of Mace Meadow

Compiled by Carroll Jones

Part I – Lafayette “Fayette” Mace

In 1850 the news of gold in California lured the young Lafayette “Fayette” Mace from his family and the tiny town of Strong, Maine. Born to Benjamin and Sara Glint Mace, who were of the Shaker religion, at 21 years old, Fayette sailed to Panama, crossed the isthmus, then traveled by ship north to San Francisco and subsequently to the thriving town of Volcano in Amador County.

In the census records of 1852, the name of Fayette Mace appears in Calaveras County land claims, as claimant to a ranch abutting the new emigrant wagon road into Volcano. One branch of the road went toward Fiddletown; the new branch crossed land which is now the golf course and went into Volcano. In addition to searching for gold on his mining claim, Fayette opened a photographic establishment named “Mace’s Daguerrean Rooms,” located opposite the old Empire Hotel in Volcano. Fayette had obtained experience in photography before coming to California.



Mace Meadow with pond

In the winter of 1854-55 Mace began making ice with water diverted from Antelope Springs. This water was shunted into two ponds located on land that is now the golf course. When the ponds froze solid, Mace then released another measure of water which then froze. In this manner, Mace built up layers of ice in the ponds. At the appropriate time, Mace cut the ice into huge cakes and stored them in an icehouse insulated with thick packets of sawdust. When summer arrived, Mace’s lumber wagons, also carrying ice, delivered ice to Volcano, Jackson, and other towns, selling it for 50 cents a pound. By 1857, Mace’s ranch had become so identified with its ice production that it became known as “Iceland.” Around that same time, Fayette took in Duncan Cameron as a partner in the ice business and built a two-story house located on land that is now the 15th fairway.

By the end of 1857, Mace’s ranch produced large crops of hay, seeded from English timothy, and clover and excellent grasses of all kinds which he sold, along with his ice, to surrounding towns. On ground not far from the sawmill, Mace’s ranch also produced large and high-quality potatoes. It also had small orchards of apple, pear, peach, and plum trees as well as herds of cattle and a sawmill operation. In 1867 he bought from Ingalls what later became known as the Mace and Kay building in Jackson.

During this time Mace also was admitted to the Bar. In 1881 historian J. D. Mason wrote, “Fayette Mace was admitted to the practice of law many years since, but owing to his extensive operations in sawmills, quartz mills and farming, he has given the law little attention since, except as it was incidental in his business operations.” (cont’d. on page 3)

On January 4, 1868, at 39 years old, Fayette Mace married Caroline Sanborn. Caroline was 24 and had traveled the emigrant trail from Wisconsin over the Sierra Nevada Mountains in 1853. As the wagon train traveled the emigrant trail over the summit and around Emigrant Lake, one wagon went over the cliff, and all contents were lost. The wagon train continued toward Volcano on the trail which came across land that is now the golf course. The Sanborns settled in Jackson where they opened a restaurant.

One morning Caroline darted out of the father's restaurant to see a man dangling from the hanging tree, and she quickly retreated. It was the last hanging on the tree which stood directly in front of the Mace Building.

Fayette, Caroline, and their children lived in Jackson during the winter months but moved to the Mace Ranch home for the summer months, taking with them the household cook Ah Ling.

Fayette Mace was one of the first trustees of the Preston School of Industry in Ione and was probably the person most responsible for the dignitaries of Sacramento approving the site for the boys' school. Adequate water was a necessity for the school, and Fayette Mace was not above a little chicanery to assure approval. He got his sawmill workers to build earth dams at two places across Pioneer Creek near the sawmill. Water from Pioneer Creek flows into Sutter Creek which continues near the site for the school. Working with Senator Anthony Caminetti, Fayette went to Sacramento to meet some dignitaries who were to entrain for Ione to see for themselves if the water supply was adequate. At the right time, Mace telegraphed his son to blow the dams. Fayette Jr. blew one dam to permit water to supplement Sutter Creek at the time the dignitaries were to arrive; he blew the second dam to supplement Sutter Creek at the time the dignitaries were to leave. When the senators and judge arrived and saw a generous flow of water, they were convinced.

By 1899, Fayette Mace had accumulated approximately 1,800 acres of land in the Buckhorn-Pioneer area. On a portion of this land, he ran a sawmill. The Modoc quartz mine, which Fayette owned, was about one mile east of the sawmill. In 1899, Eric W. Emslie, whose land was north of the Mace land, filed a petition with the Amador County Board of Supervisors to open a road from his home to the Pioneer School. This road would run 3.59 miles over the Fayette Mace land and 5,025 feet over Ivy Mace land. Part of this road is now called Pioneer Creek Road. Fayette Mace opposed this road going through his private property and that of his daughter Ivy, but the superior court approved the road with the payment of \$150 damages to Fayette Mace and \$10 to Ivy Mace.

In 1909, Fayette Mace, before his death, transferred all his land and other property to a trust to be turned over to a Mace Corporation whose stockholders would be his wife, Carrie Mace, and his children, Benjamin H. Mace, Ivy A. Yarrington, and Fayette Mace, Jr. Carrie Mace became president of the corporation. B. H. Mace managed the ranch until he accepted a job with the Forest Service about 1912. About 1925, the land owned by the corporation was split up and deeded to the Mace heirs.

(cont'd. on page 4)

Part II – The Amador Golf Club

From “Amador County History,” published by Amador County Federation of Women’s Clubs, dated April 1927: “The Amador Golf Club began in January 1923, with Ralph McGee, president, and Harold Tallon, secretary. Land for the course was provided by the Kennedy Mining Company through the courtesy of Mr. E. C. Hutchinson. Mr. A. Ginocchio gave the old stone powder house on the hill above the links to the members who fitted it up for an attractive clubhouse. Under the present officers, Alex Ross, president, H. Tallon, secretary, and Jesse McLaughlin, treasurer, Amador golf players are having a pleasant season playing golf and attending parties.”

In a report from Louie Fuentes and John Huberty: “The original Amador golf Club had six holes with greens made of sand, sawdust and a little oil mixed together. At each green there was a specially made rake constructed by molding carpet around the rake frame. Players would smooth the sand from their balls to the hole by using this rake. The golf course grass was cut by pulling a mower behind an old truck. Nothing was irrigated. Van Praag, who worked for Preston School, got a group together and started a club. Members paid \$2 per month green fees. The land was rented to them for \$1 per year. The club had tournaments with groups from Stockton, Sacramento, Angels Camp, and Sonora. Frank Cuneo took care of the golf course (without pay). Frank had a clothing store on Main Street in Jackson. He would get his wife to run the store, and he spent more time on the golf course than at his store. The golf club had about 32 members. For a clubhouse they used the old powder house, which was about 15 feet by 20 feet, as reported in the article from the Amador County History published by the County Federation of Women’s Clubs.”

Players usually played in groups of 8 or 10 players and would bet 10 cents a hole, 15 cents for birdies, and 25 cents for eagles. John Huberty was the treasurer and secretary. During later years, Joe Fuentes, Judy Rule, and her father, Will Lagomarsino, often played this six-hole golf course. Howard Mace also played a lot of golf there.

Part III - The Fuentes Brothers and Mace Meadow Estates

Louis “Louie” Fuentes grew up in Jackson, not far from the Kennedy Mine. His father had worked at both the Kennedy Mine and the Argonaut Mine. Louie’s mother died when he was 17 years old. At that time his father left the mines and opened a boarding house so that he could raise his children. When Louie was in school, he spent his summers herding cattle for a rancher who would pick him up each morning and take him to his job.

After Louie finished high school, he worked at various logging jobs. He built several houses, ran a portable sawmill, and finally he and his brother Tony subdivided some acreage near West Point; then they subdivided Sierra Pines. During this time Louie’s brother, Joe Fuentes, owned the Pioneer Rex Restaurant and the building it occupied. Ben Mace, who was custodian of the Courthouse, would often stop in the Rex during the morning for coffee. One morning Ben told Joe Fuentes that he was going to sell 950 acres of land he had inherited from his father, Benjamin Hale Mace, and then retire from his job. Joe Fuentes immediately talked to Louie about getting a few people together who would be interested in putting in some money to buy the land. Louie felt that his present commitments were about all he could handle, and he didn’t have \$5,000 to put into Joe’s project. (cont’d. on page 5)

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Joe talked to other people and ended up with 15 others who would join, but Joe said he would not go ahead if Louie would not join and run the corporation. Finally, Louie decided to borrow \$5,000 from the bank. So, Mace Meadow Estates, Inc. was formed, and 950 acres were purchased from Ben Mace.

Louie Fuentes had purchased a D8 Caterpillar tractor some years before in King City for \$3,500. He went down with a low bed truck and trailer and brought the D8 back to Galt where he and Tony overhauled the D8 in an old barn. The parts for the repairs cost \$6,500, and the job took more than two weeks. They ended up with a D8 Caterpillar in good repair for a total investment of \$10,000 plus a lot of hard work.

Mace Meadow Estates began work on their subdivision about 1962. Louie did the grading with his D8. In unit #1 they made 90 lots. Amador Plumbing put in water lines and a 20,000-gallon storage tank; they were lucky to hit a 30 gallon per minute well on the first try.

Their next project, Unit #2, was not on land purchased from Ben Mace. It was on land acquired from Martin Ryan. Mace Meadow Estates continued with the subdivision of one unit after another until the seventh unit was complete and the lots offered for sale. In 1969, they were ready to start on the golf course. Much of the meadow was a swamp, and the area that was not a swamp was heavily wooded. Louie removed trees and dug out the stumps with his D8 Cat to make the fairways through the wooded area. He dragged the stumps north of the golf course about a half mile to a location north of the green water tank. In 1969, Louie also began draining the swamp areas. It was only possible to get equipment in to work during the summer and early fall before the rains began. In 1960, Louie's brother Tony quit, so Louie hired his brother-in-law Jesus Garcia. Louie taught "Sus" how to run the tractor, and he said that after a couple of years Sus was a very fine worker.

It took about three years to take the trees and stumps off the land and drain the meadow. In 1970, Mace Meadow Estates made application to the State Water Resources Control Board for a permit to store 45-acre feet of water. The reservoir and dam were to be designed by the Federal Soil Conservation Service. When the application for the permit to store water was published and posted, several residents along Sutter Creek protested. The Water Resources Control Board set up a hearing for the persons who protested. Mace Meadow Estates, Inc. filed an amended answer to the protests, and the State Water Resources Control Board then approved the application.

Louie hired Joe Vicini to help build the reservoir. Vicini brought a drag line to excavate for the key at the base of the dam and then filled this core with clay that they dug out of the reservoir. Joe Vicini brought in two 14-yard carry-all scrapers to move dirt. The D8 tractor was used to push these scrapers during the loading. All good dirt was used to build the greens and as fill on fairways that were mostly clay. In 1970, Jack Fleming was hired to do the final design on the golf course. Fleming brought in a Mexican to help with shaping the greens. This Mexican had worked with Fleming and understood what he wanted. The top surface of the greens consisted of sand mixed with a little of the best soil available from the excavation of the reservoir. About 100 yards of sand were used on each green. Amador Plumbing was given a contract to install an automatic sprinkling system, including the pumps.

(cont'd. on page 6)

The Amador Golf Club golf course was finished in 1971 and was ready to open in the Spring of 1972. Bruce Wylie was brought in as the teaching professional and operator of the Pro Shop. Bruce Wylie applied for the job as Mace Meadow's first pro because his new wife, Betty, didn't want to live in a city. Bruce was very active in immediately setting up a men's club and a women's club. He arranged for the men's club to join the Northern California Golf Association and for the women's club to join the Pacific Women's Golf Association. Bruce was very popular with Mace Meadow golfers and worked with Louie and Joe Fuentes in the management of the golf course. Bruce's untimely death from lung cancer was mourned by the entire community. A golf memorial tournament was played after his death.

Part IV In our next issue of The Amadorian will explain the formation of the Mace Meadow Golf and Country Club.

A Plan for the 100th Anniversary Commemoration of the 1922 Argonaut Mine Disaster and Rescue

The Argonaut Mine Disaster Centennial Commemoration Committee would like to hear from anyone who has an ancestor, memorabilia, or other connection to the 1922 Argonaut Mine disaster.

In August and September of 1922, the eyes of the country and the world were riveted on Amador County and the 47 miners trapped by fire in the Argonaut Mine. It remains the worst mining disaster in the history of California and the worst gold mining disaster in the United States.

Forty-seven miners died from the fire in the Argonaut Mine. As many as 200 men tunneled from the Kennedy Mine in the rescue attempt, and untold community members assisted in other ways.

In August and September of 2022, on the one hundredth anniversary of the disaster, a commemoration of the lives of the 47 men lost and the impact of the disaster on Amador County will be held.

A collaboration of civic, historical, religious and arts organizations are planning a month of memorial and living history events in Jackson, August 27 – September 24, 2022. The Commemoration Committee welcomes involvement from all interested parties.

Planned Events include:

- Commemorative services at three of Jackson's historic cemeteries
- Docent-led tours of the Argonaut Mine site
- Living History Day, Saturday September 24, with educational speakers, entertainment, and period food vendors
- Day-by-day stories of the rescue attempt on radio and local newspaper
- Fourth grade History Day at the Kennedy Mine, Thursday, September 22nd
- Reprise of Larry Rutter's play, "Gold Fire," re-enacting the events of the disaster

If you would like to participate in or be kept informed of any of the planned events, please contact Cathy Piccardo McGowen at kcmcgowen@sbcglobal.net or call 209-256-8124

Correction



The Sutter Creek Auditorium

In the article about the Sutter Creek Auditorium in *The Amadorian* Winter 2021 issue, Vol. 14; No. 3, it incorrectly states that the murals throughout the main room of the auditorium were painted by local school children.

The murals were part of the Sutter Creek Sesquicentennial Mural Project. The project was a collaboration between the city of Sutter Creek, Amador Arts Council, and the City Promotions Committee. The fundraising chairman, Keith Sweet, an arts council director, oversaw soliciting donations to fund the project.

A competition was opened for local artists to paint a series of ten historical murals with themes celebrating the history of Sutter Creek. The artists who were selected for the murals presented conceptual prototypes that were approved by a committee appointed by the arts council.

So, while 3 of the murals were painted by high schoolers, the other 7 were painted by local artists selected by the committee.

ACHS Life Members

Eugene & Christina Ammann ~ Kathy Allen & Frank Axe ~ Richard & July Allen ~ Joseph and Iris Aparicio ~ Ed & Mary Lee Arata ~ Caryl Arnese ~ Dan and Pat Asvitt ~ Evan Bass ~ 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 ~ Christopher & Cori Dover ~ Kathleen Du Bois ~ John Ellyson, MD ~ Carol Emerson ~ Katherine Evatt & Pete Bell ~ Brian Ferdani ~ Robin Field & Carol Mischer ~ Wayne Garibaldi ~ Phillip & Jenny Giurlani ~ David & Linda Gonzales ~ Jim & Teresa Guidi ~ Ray & Cheryl Herndon & Bobby Keeling ~ Curtis & Denise Hollis ~ Patricia Huberty ~ Jeana (Cova) Hultquist & Marshall Cova ~ Judy Jebian ~ Ida Ruth Johnson ~ Marilyn Jones ~ Richard & Pat Jones ~ Gretchen Kingsbury ~ George & Joan La Ponsie ~ JoAnn Levy ~ Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Little ~ 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 ~ Mary O'Neal & Gary Arnese ~ 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 ~ Karen Vaira & Steve Gallant ~ Russell & Mary Beth VanVoorhis ~ Violich Farms ~ Grant Vogel & Pam Sharp ~ Fraser & Teddy West ~ Sutter Creek Promotions Committee ~ Volcano Community Services District *Benefactor

➔➔ *Welcome to new members:*

Elizabeth Fracchia, Atul Patel, Toby Salk, Jim Sorocco, Karen Vaira & Steve Gallant



Our list of donors is growing, making the new Livery Building Project possible

Listed are donors of \$500 or more:

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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

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

Members and friends are invited to attend.

ACHS Mission Statement

The society was formed for the purpose of identifying and preserving items of historical interest of Amador County for its residents and the general public and to educate and increase public awareness while at the same time enlisting public support for historical preservation in Amador County.

The Amador County Historical Society has also partnered with the Recreational Railroad Coalition Historical Society in owning and operating the Amador Central Railroad, a great part of the county's history.

Support

**Amador County Historical
Society by signing up for**

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The Amadorian Editors:
Cathy McGowan,
Hazel & Jeffrey Powell

www.amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org

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, CA 95642-0761

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

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Please check one of the following Memberships:

ANNUAL **Individual \$25.00** **Family (2 or more) \$40.00** **Students \$15.00**

LIFETIME **Family (2 or more) \$400.00** **SPONSOR** **Benefactor (\$1,000 up)**

Patron (\$500 to \$999)

Associate (\$250 to \$499)

Other _____

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P.O. Box 761
Jackson, CA 95642

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