



*The Cobblestones of Historic Events
Pave the passing Years' Pathway*

C O L F A X
A R E A H I S T O R I C A L S O C I E T Y

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SPRING PHOTO GALLERY



Colfax 100 Year Anniversary

CAHS President Jim Flynn presents to Colfax Mayor Josh Alpine the plaque given to the City of Colfax by Placer County Board of Supervisors



Civil War Soldier's Grave

Photo by Nikla Duffek



Dad in Cisco Grove

Sent to us by E.L. Wall, Helsinki, Finland
See His Colfax Story on page 3



February Program

Author retired U.S. Navy Lieutenant
Commander Theodore Robinson

Photo by Teri A. Murch

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MUSEUM UPDATE

CAHS Heritage Museum
99 Railroad Street
Open: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm Daily
CAHS members receive 10%
discount in the Gift Shop
VOLUNTEERS WELCOME
Museum help is always wel-
come, and encouraged
Contact Helen Wayland, or stop
by the Museum
We need you!
Contact Helen Wayland

Visitor Count

2007 - 5068
2008 - 8624
2009 - 9084
2010 - 2514 to date
March 2010 we had
1057 Visitors!

BITS & PIECES

Upcoming Colfax Events

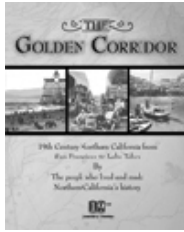
Spring Green Festival
May 1

Hwy 40 Spring Hot Rod Show
May 15

Independence Day

Railroad Days

APRIL PROGRAM: CALIFORNIA HISTORY AS TOLD BY DEAD PEOPLE



**Saturday
April 24th
10am
Colfax Railroad
Depot
Colfax**

The next Colfax Area Historical Society guest presentation will be held on Saturday, April 24th at 10:00 A.M. in the Colfax Railroad Depot.

Guest speakers will be Jody and Ric Hornor of Pilot Hill, authors of a complete series of historical books on Northern California history. These stories are taken from personal letters and newspaper articles written between the late 1840's to the early 1900's. The books contain marvelous photographs of people and

places of this time period.

One of my favorite photographs was taken from the south bank of the American River at Mineral Bar. This photo shows the buildings of a small town, a covered bridge and the wagon/stagecoach road leading north towards Colfax, the top center of the photograph is of Cape Horn.

One of my favorite stories is of Grass Valley at the time the streets were graveled. The gravel rock contained a significant quantity of gold, causing some considerable

problem when gold panning took place in the middle of the streets.

The Hornor family will have a collection of their absolutely fascinating books on sale following the presentation. A collection of these books, along with those on sale at the Depot, will make a wonderful library of our early history.

For more information on the authors and their books you can visit their website at: www.19thcentury.us

RECIPE FROM THE PAST

*Who Can Wait
to Pull Those
First Young
Carrots Out of
The Warm
Spring Soil ?*

Candied Spring Carrots (late-1800s)

In the spring when carrots are short and sweet, collect as many as you need and boil them just short of tender; remove them from the fire, drain them and wipe them dry. Melt 1/4 cup of butter and 1/2 cup of maple sugar in a skillet; when they bubble, add the carrots and let them sim-

mer until completely candied. Serve hot with Butter Sauce. This will candy about 12 very young and plump carrots.



Butter Sauce (early-1800s)

Cut 2 oz of butter into bits, that it may melt more easily and mix more readily. Put it into a saucepan with 2 tablespoons of flour absorbed into 2 tablespoons of cold milk.

When this has been mixed with the melted butter, add 6 tablespoons of water; the sauce should be the thickness of good cream. In making Butter Sauce *do not stir the sauce after the water has been added*, but hold the saucepan over the fire and shake it round every minute, all the while the same way, until it just begins to simmer, then let it stand quietly and boil up. This is the secret of a superior Butter Sauce.

Recipes from: *Grandma in the Kitchen* Helen Lyon Adamson



CALL FOR ARTICLES

Dear Members, We need your help with articles or photographs for Cobblestones.

Please send articles or photographs to our editor Teri Murch at teri@LiveInColfax.com Include "Cobblestones" in subject field.

Articles can be in the most basic of text files. If you do not have email, please ask someone to type it into an electronic format for you and send it to Teri via email. A basic .txt file is preferred.

Photographs should be at

highest resolution for best print quality. Teri can scan them if you leave them at the museum and call her at 530-798-0215.

Next deadline for articles is June 30, 2010.

Thank-you
www.ColfaxHistory.org



TALES FROM THE PAST AS TOLD BY E.L. WALL

Cisco Ca is just a place on the old Southern Pacific Railroad about half way between Emigrant Pass and Norden. There is nothing left there anymore but it was a small community at one time. In the 1860's it was an important place in the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad. It had a turntable, depot, repair sheds and a hotel. You can still see the remnants of the turntable if you know where to look. In 1940, my father, step-mother and I moved into the depot as my father became the district Signal Maintainer for the S.P. Down the hill from the depot was a three story hotel, a store and several storage sheds. Evidently Cisco had been somewhat of a ski resort at one time. The proprietors were Mr. & Mrs. Frank Bartosh. Frank was a small grey haired man and his wife was quite a bit larger than him. Both very nice friendly people. I was 11 years old then and the closest school was at Norden. In order to get to school I would walk about 3/4 of a mile down the hill to old highway 40. There was a bridge across the Yuba River at this point. A lady from Big Bend (which is near Rainbow tavern) would pick me up in her 1939 Ford station wagon. She would then pick up other children at places like Cisco Grove, Cramptons Lodge, Kingvale, Troy and Soda Springs. When we arrived at Norden we had to walk thru` a long wooden foot tunnel down to the tracks. We then would walk thru` the railroad snow sheds across several tracks and come out of the snow sheds on the south side. The school (a converted bunk house) was about 300 ft beyond the snow sheds. There were about 25 children altogether and the teacher's name was Mrs. Moore. During the winter of 40-41, The snow got to 14ft on the level at Norden and 9 ft at Cisco. The school policy then was that our school vacation was Jan Feb and March. We would get to school all summer. In the winter, the road between Cisco and Highway 40 was not kept open which meant that as long as there was snow on the ground I had to ski down to Highway 40 every morning. Before I left for school I would warm my skis behind our coal stove and then I would apply paraffin wax to the bottom of the skis. The wax seemed last just long enough for my trip down to the highway. I sure didn't need waxed skis

hiking back up the hill in the evening. In the winter, all our groceries and other supplies were delivered by train. My father would call up the grocery store at Emigrant Gap and give them a list of groceries. They would then put the on a local passenger train and then the train would stop at Cisco and drop off the groceries.

Cisco for me was a great place to live. I could fish in the summer in the Yuba River or at various lakes near by. In the winter I could ski and explore the adjacent forests with my dog Wolf. There were no other children to play with. Occasionally, Bob Del Carlo, who was the same age as me, would come up and visit his father. Bob's dad was a extra gang foreman on a steel gang. He had a 100 man gang that laid new track. Bob and I would hike around the surrounding woods. (Bob was a long time Colfax resident and is now deceased.) I would like to mention here that Bob's father, Mr. Del Carlo was one of the toughest men I have ever met. He was short statured man with blue overalls and a felt hat. I can still remember him very clearly. When he barked an order, everyone complied immediately. I still remember him standing on and driving his 4 cylinder track car pulling two or three gang cars filled with men behind him.

Late one evening after we had gone to bed, my step mother Chris noticed flames coming out of one of the hotel windows. She ran down to the hotel and woke up Mr. and Mrs. Bartosh. They escaped out of a second story window over the porch roof. My dad called the fire train at Norden. This fire train was mainly used for snow shed fires. My dad then sprayed water on the depot to keep it from catching fire. It seemed that it was just a matter of minutes that everything burned down. The hotel, the store and all the storage sheds all were gone. The fire train arrived about 3 hours later. The paint was blistered on the backside of the depot but that was the only damage. Later on Frank Bartosh became manager of Cisco Grove Resort.

In the winter time rotary plows and flangers were quite active. Heavy shutters had to be put on over the windows on the trackside of the depot. When a flanger came by (a flanger is a single railroad car pulled by locomotive with a

plow mounted in the middle and two blades that fit just inside the rail) at high speed the snow would hit the depot with a loud bang. When a rotary plow came by, generally, the snow would be thrown over the top of the depot, but if the snow was wet it would hit the depot with a direct broadside.

In 1941, Dad decided to take the district at Boca just east of Truckee. We were there Dec 7, 1941, another day I'll never forget.

E.L. Wall
Signal Engineer UPRR (Retired)



Norden School

Sent to us by E.L. Wall, Helsinki, Finland
He is the boy in the last row on the right in the striped shirt

Do you have any stories you would like to share?

Please email them to the editor:

Teri@LiveInColfax.com

Subject line: Cobblestones





ARE THERE ANY SEARS MODERN HOMES IN COLFAX?

I am not joking! From 1908 to 1940 you could leaf leisurely through a Sears mail order catalog and order yourself a gorgeous family home with all the accessories and fixtures you could desire. These included lumber, windows, doors, nails, hinges, paint, etc. Absolutely everything you needed to build your house arrived in at least 30,000 pieces. Your job was to put it together according to plans that were also included in the shipment. The price was also right (well under \$5000 for the fanciest). Sears promised that a man of "average abilities" could build the house but estimated that a carpenter would charge \$450 to assemble the kit. Sears also predicted that a painter would want \$34.50 to apply the 27 gallons of paint and varnish that came with the kit. Other skilled labor would even cost \$1 an hour! Better get your friends and family together and build it yourself.

If you were fortunate to live near a railroad track, your hauling costs would happily be lower. You might then splurge on other desirable features like heating, electrical and plumbing, all from Sears of course. It was also possible to customize your home with available options (you could even add a shed, a cabin or outdoor privy).

So where can you start looking for these jewels of the past? It would be natural to search in towns near railroad stops as well as in places that needed lower-cost housing at the time. Next observe the street appearance. In general, homes were in the "bungalow" or cottage style; many displayed a front porch with prominent columns and roof dormers. If possible, you can look at the basement or attic lumber since most kits had a Sears number printed on them. You could also look at the floor plan and compare that with the original, bearing in mind that remodeling may have taken place since the kit house was built.

Valuable resources are available for further study and some are listed below. Copies of the original Sears catalogs as well as published books are available online. They provide history, pictures and details on this fascinating subject.

Our "old" railroad town of Colfax appears to fulfill the above descriptions and makes me wish that I could identify a Sears house still in place. My search is under way and any positive results will be posted here. Any ideas or suggestions are welcome by this writer.

References:

1. *Sears Modern Homes 1913*, Dover

Publications, Inc., Mineola, NY
2. Thornton, Rosemary (2002) *The Houses that Sears Built: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Sears Catalog Homes* Gentle Beam Publications; Alton, IL

3. Among many great Web links:

www.searsarchives.com

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sears_catalog_home

(great page)

Article by:

Nilda Z. Duffek, CAHS Member

This photo shows "The Winona" offered for \$721 from 1913 to 1940



MY COLFAX MEMORIES BY BILL LIDSTER

My First Summer in Colfax

When we first arrived in Colfax, I didn't know anybody and as a young boy with a younger sister I had to find something to do that got me away from my sister, after all I had just spent many days in a car with her right next to me in a crowded car. So the first thing that I did was to go explore the streets of Colfax to get the lay of the town so to speak. Being from Chicago my mother thought nothing of let-

ting me travel around a small town. We found a house to live in right next to what was then (1949-1950) the grade school, and what a place to explore, Wow what a school, it was as big as some of the factories in Chicago, in fact, and I thought it was the grade school and the high school all in one because of its size. After traveling down Dinky St. toward N. Main St. and crossing the railroad tracks I found a corral where horses and other animals were

kept temporarily, (waiting to be shipped), I figured this was going to be an alright town because I was going to the big school and there were going to be wild horses and who knew what else to ride on some days. In further exploration I found the Fruit Growers Buildings. and wondered what these were. Over the summer I found out what their purpose was, and that was to provide me and the friends that I made a place to build a completely private hideout within the

Lidster cont on pg 5:



CAHS MEMBERSHIP JOIN US!

Objectives:

To support and promote educational and research activities and interest in the history of the Colfax area; to promote and establish a local museum; to work with other Historical Societies and local groups; to discover, collect and make accessible to the public historical facts and objects; to mark places and building of historical interest in the Colfax area and cata-

log such markers in an or-

derly manner; to register historical landmarks and buildings' to accept gifts and donations from the public and other organizations and to raise funds to accomplish all the above.

Meetings:

General Meetings: 4/year

Executive Board: 4/year

Location: 99 Railroad Ave

Membership and Annual Dues:

Regular (single) Member : \$15.00

Family (including children: \$25.00

Junior (not included in Family: \$ 5.00

Business (includes ad in *Cobblestones*) \$30.00

Non-profit Organizations \$30.00

Additional contributions are always welcome
Dues apply to fiscal year, July 1 to June 30 and are tax-deductible. Members receive a membership card and *Cobblestones*.

Make checks payable to: Colfax Area Historical Society
Send with your name, address, phone #, email address and amount enclosed to : POB 185, Colfax, Ca 95713

Lidster cont from pg 4:

thousands of boxes for shipping fruit around the country. What we did was to go to the warehouses at night and move the stacks of boxes around and reconstruct a maze within the sea of boxes, we put boards up across some boxes and made a roof over our heads and put roller skate wheels under the entrance stack of boxes. We had five different rooms inside this leaky (because of the rain) club house. We never did get caught doing this, and I have never forgotten that hideout.

Learning to Swim in Colfax

Before coming to Colfax I was only nine, and still living in Chicago, Ill. My uncles and I would on a hot day walk to Lake Michigan, which was only 18 blocks away from where we lived and we would go (what I would call) swimming, in reality it was really my uncles day of **fun in the sun** and they would throw me into the lake and watch me struggle to get back to the shoreline.

I truly was never in danger because they were always there if I needed them however I thought I was really swimming.

Now in Colfax and making friends and learning my way around I met some boys about my own age and one day they wanted to go swimming and of course I could swim, or so I thought. I

asked where in Colfax you could swim and they told me that we would hop on the freight trains that passed through town and ride to a swimming hole north of town as I remember; this was no problem because this really was something we had done in the stockyards of Chicago.

After hitching a ride on the train we went north what seemed like an eternity we jumped off the train and low and behold there was a **huge** pond so we got ready to go swimming, one of my friends said watch how well he could swim and he swam across the pond and when he got half way back he hollered and went under, I thought he

was just holding his breath and waited for him to come up but that didn't happen, and the other kids hollered at me to go out and save him because I had told them that I could swim, I jumped in and swam out to the middle and couldn't find him I panicked and started to cry as I realized I really couldn't swim and thought I would drown so I sank to the bottom and walked back to shore as I did with my uncles when I was still in Chicago. After getting back to shore I found my friends all laughing at me for falling for their prank. As it was the friend who swam across the pond could swim very well, but I realized I had indeed learned (out of fear) how to swim trying to rescue my friend and have been swimming ever since.

After that experience, we all went swimming a lot and I learned in a

hurry to check the depth of the water before diving because the water in that mountain pond was clearer than any water I had ever been in before, and you would get a distorted view of the bottom. (The bottom was closer than it looked).



**Bill & His Sister in Front of Their
Colfax House
Photo Provided by Bill Lidster**

Call for Colfax Photos

Please share your history gems .

2010 is the Colfax City Centennial and CAHS is collecting pictures for a City of Colfax Anthology -100 Years of Incorporation. Please let us know if you have something that could be a part of this effort (we can scan what you have, our place or yours). Stop by the Museum or leave a message with your contact information at 402-9935.



WE'RE ON THE WEB AT
WWW.COLFAXHISTORY.ORG

COLFAX AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mailing Address:
PO Box 185
Colfax, CA 95713

Visit our Museum Located in
the Depot
99 Railroad Street

10am—3pm Daily



SUPPORT OUR LOCAL BUSINESS MEMBERS

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