

# Docents Newsletter

Volume 6, Number 1

Historical Society of Dayton Valley

February 2013

## Docents program

By Ruby McFarland

“One of the signs of passing youth is the birth of a sense of fellowship with other human beings as we take our place among them.” Virginia Woolf

It's been a cold long winter so far and I look forward to spring and getting my hands in the ground again. I'm very attached to the earth and all the things about it. The past few years I haven't been able enough to get my hands dirty and reap the fruits I planted. But, right now I'm more concerned with not having frozen pipes. However, this is not cold by any means compared to say, cutting ice for summer use in the 1920/s and 1930's. Emma Loftus wrote in her diaries that everyone was out cutting ice to put in the store-houses. It was something the people of Dayton did every year.

The reservoir on Steve Saylor's property was the town's water supply. It was part of the ditch the Chinese dug from the Carson River to Dayton. It was one of the sources for ice cutting. It doesn't seem possible for ice to be that thick to be used for summer use. Emma made note of how thick the ice was at the time ... sometimes a foot or more! The children skated on the ponds around Dayton. Now you know that had to be cold! I don't think they left out any brass monkeys.

Even though we have had a lot of bright sunny days, it has been very cold. We have a few hens and we try to get the eggs before they freeze, and the girls are always glad to see some fresh water every day.

I'm doing better with my new hip and I hope to do more at the museum and with the Society. One

of the things I'd like to do is have a town tour of the Loftus/Barton houses. Stay tuned for the date and time. Meanwhile, stay warm and stay away from the flu bug.

## Docent doings

By Patrick Neylan

The 2012 HSDV Christmas Party was the biggest and best ever! Never in the memory of old time members could the Society have pulled off an event like this. According to secret (Ruby) sources, the first event encompassed nine members with a “potluck” at the museum.

The attendance this year (76, I heard) only confirms the growth of awareness of Dayton History that our Society has promoted. The diversity of participants only highlights the importance of Dayton in Nevada history! As a Society, we have had our work cut out for us ... but have responded in kind.

For our members to come together, celebrate each other and recognize those in the Dayton community and beyond that support our past, our goals, and our future ... this could not have been a better celebration! Proof again of the “family” atmosphere in our beloved Dayton.

For the success of our Christmas party, all the members of the Society and our well wishers need to thank the incredible committee: Gretchen Arndt (talented newcomer) committee chair, centerpiece designer, head worrier, etc., Jack Folmar (no brainer), Sheila Hodach, Mabel Masterman and Margy Bethers. They did all the planning, arranging, worrying, printing, mailing room set up,

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worrying, reservation confirmations, recording of meal choices, worrying ... and a million last minute details! The entire Society owes this dedicated group a GREAT BIG THANK YOU!

But, remember, I went to the museum and picked up the PA System!

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## Closing notes

By Bob Wallace

During the last week of January an email message mentioned the Carson & Colorado Railroad along with the Southern Pacific narrow gauge line. Content of the message was most unsettling! Unscrupulous individuals are posting items on the eBay auction Internet site, suggesting that items being promoted have a connection with the railroads mentioned.

In one instance, a party put up a full set of china with an alleged connection to the C&C Railroad (the C&C had no dining car!), other items including a police badge, and pictures well known to people who follow one or both of these railroads with misleading captions.

Understand that it's not about belittling eBay for items posted by various people who use that Internet site to sell items, it's about making you aware that such practices are taking place that you with a railroadiana interest ought to use some caution in believing what people interested in getting a few bucks in their pocket at your expense are likely to offer for sale. *Caveat emptor!*

A separate message related to how many states does it take to assemble the *Docents Newsletter* each of the 11 months it's put together. Over the past couple of years we have spent time near Sacramento to visit Lois's mother before she passed last year. On several occasions it took email with files connected to get information back and forth, put the pages together and send them back to Dayton for printed copies for the museum, and PDF versions sent to those who have expressed an

interest in reading each issue. Prior to this 2012-13 winter season, only Nevada and California had been in play.

Such is not the case any longer, given our visits to La Pine, OR; Chehalis and Elma, WA; Troutdale, Seaside, Harrisburg and Grants Pass, OR; Woodland, Morgan Hill, Oceano, Riverside, and San Diego county, CA; then on to Yuma and Phoenix, AZ, arriving in the Valley of the Sun on January 15 for three months.

Thanks this month to Ruby and Pat for sending along pieces to get this year's issues started. While the museum may not yet be open on weekends, monthly meetings are taking place throughout the month. We will be back at the end of April.

While visiting several areas during our highway adventures, we've managed to find the occasional museum with connections to railroad, whether narrow or standard gauge. One such was found in Chehalis, WA., the former Northern Pacific depot still sitting beside the tracks. It's interesting to go visit these museums to see what they've done with items in their collection, including historic photos of mostly steam trains showing the depot as part of that picture.

While spending a few days in Oceano, CA., we stopped at the former Southern Pacific standard gauge "combination station," not quite sitting where it was built, but beside the tracks where a few trains go by on a daily basis. In addition to a plaque on the side of the building, they had used bricks in a patio-like setting with names of donors imprinted, those donations used to maintain the building for future generations.

Two weeks in San Diego county meant finding time to visit, again, the San Diego Model Railroad Club in Balboa Park. Aside from their modeling the Tehachapi line between Bakersfield and Mojave, they, too, have an interesting way of thanking their donors: a display on the floor resembling railroad tracks with "ties" showing the names imprinted on them. No space left to show some of these pictures, but they can be sent along to several people in Dayton for you to see.