DOCENTS NEWLETTER

Historical Society of Dayton Valley http//daytonnvhistory.org November 2014

By Laura Tennant, Dayton historian

Holding this very cool faded old wood sign, are, from left, Jack Folmar, Stony Tennant, Jenny Dodd and Pat



Neylan. They met recently at the Dayton Museum to discuss its fate. Stony joined the others, who are members of the Museum Accession Committee, to check it out. This is very exciting since the sign could date to the very early 1860s. More information is being gathered.

Dennis Maginot brought the sign to the Museum a month or so ago. He's a Dayton resident who has had the sign a long time. He has been contacted. Stony says the board on which the sign is painted is old planed lumber.

Historically speaking, here's some research I've done: There was a proposed Mineral Rapids town laid out about 1860 — there's a map of the planners' vision posted in the Museum. It was to be located just below China Town (Dayton by 1861) on the west side of the Carson River, and developers hoped it would replace China Town. The idea failed.

In her 1922 book, Historical Sketches of Dayton, Fannie Hazlett says just two residents relocated there. (Her great stories in a book of Dayton's early history is for sale at the Dayton Museum.)

According to Kelly's 1862 Directory of the Utah Territory, there was a Mineral Rapids Hotel in 1862, located on the Southeast Corner of Third Street and Third Avenue. The Mineral Rapids Mill was built on the west bank of the Carson River just below Dayton (this side, south of the Rock Point Mill site where remnants remain at today's Dayton State Park. There was also a place in town, possibly the Mineral Rapids Hotel, where "hurdy gurdies" were available. It's said these ladies weren't Red Light District women but they were paid, something like two bits (25 cents), which they could accept in drinks from the bar or keep. Hazlett said most of them kept the money.

The Accession Committee will keep members posted regarding the Mineral Rapid's sign and its authenticity.

Docent Letters By Ruby McFarland

A turtle only gets ahead when he sticks out his neck.

"unknown"

I lived through the great depression in the 1930s. I have two in my family that were born after and in the 1940s. They were visiting me lately and I was telling them how inventive mama was trying to feed the family. I also told them about the times she had nothing to be inventive with and we went to bed hungry. My sister looked at my brother after my depression stories and said "Boy, I'm sure glad we missed that."

President Roosevelt was elected in 1932 and was inaugurated on March 4, 1933. He became our savior because of the many programs he created to help the people in the U.S.A.

Emma Loftus recorded the events of the day in her diaries. This is what she wrote on March 4, 1933. "29 degrees this morning. I done a big washing this morning with my new washing machine. It's a fine one. Today Franklin D. Roosevelt was inaugurated and sworn in as President of the United States, a big time in Washington all day. He is the 32 president. I hope he will make a better U.S.A. than it is today. Cold tonight."

On March 5th she wrote about friends who had visited and then wrote, "President Roosevelt issued a national moratorium so all banks will be closed in the United States until thursday. He has called congress to meet on Thursday March 9."

On March 13 she wrote, "The banks that are sound opened today all over the United States after being closed for a week, it will make business a little better."

It appeared from what Emma wrote in her diaries that it was tough in Dayton but not as tough as the rest of the nation. Being a rural area, the people seemed to take care of one another so nobody went hungry. Chester Barton, Sheriff from time to time, would let people stay in the jail so they would have a place to sleep. He also would feed them. In return, he put them to work for a few days, then sent them on their way.

Many of the young men in Dayton joined the C.C.C. program. It gave them work and they had to send \$25 home to help out the family.

Roosevelt started a school lunch program so a lot of kids who had nothing to eat at home, had a good meal at school. I was one of those kids. My folks couldn't pay anything, so I washed dishes for my lunch. Didn't hurt me and taught me good work ethics.

I remember President Roosevelt's fireside chats. My grandparents had a radio so we went to their house to listen. The chats seemed to raise the hopes of my family.

There was a WPA encampment in Dayton. The men that were there helped in building and repairing public buildings and roads in and around Dayton. Emma noted the work they did in her diaries.

Emma was a Democrat and her husband, Jack, was a Republican which caused a bit of a riff in their family life. There is no doubt that her diaries will always be a good source of history of Dayton in the early 20th century. Hope they are always taken care of.

DOCENT DOINGS SEASON FINALE

By Pat Neylan

Just a couple of weeks remain for the 2014 museum season. As you know this year we tried a new system for museum coverage, each docent choosing one set day and time per month and working only that shift each month. With very few glitches that seemed to work out well all year. This eliminated much of the confusion and last minute running around trying to find coverage and no docent was required to commit to more than just a few hours per month. Docents were free to trade among themselves when conflicts arose and there was a list of alternates to plug in when necessary. As a side benefit, we have a new volunteer training to be part of the docent program next season and a very noticeable increase in weekend traffic. Of course none of this would have worked had it not been for our group of passionate and dedicated docents who fully understood the importance of consistent and dependable coverage at our museum. No matter how many special events the Society is involved in, the museum is still the core of our exposure to the community day in and day out. For our docents, this was not their only service to the Society. Each one was and is involved in many other aspects of our work in Dayton. Thank you for all you do!!

Going forward, the "winter projects" will loom large after Christmas for us. Early in 2015 we will focus on some museum updates, mostly improved signage, and some catch up work on accessioning. A number of wonderful and important items have been recently donated to the Society and we need to properly incorporate them into our collections. Information about these sessions will be sent out when appropriate, and there will be an "official" docent meeting scheduled for Jan or Feb to line out the museum schedule for next year. Again, "Thank You" for all your work this past year and we hope you have a wonderful Christmas!!

Ruby McFarland

My name is Ruby Ethyl Duncan McFarland. I was born in 1928 in Santa Rosa, Calif., curious from birth. No tree

was too tall to climb, no mountain too rough to scale, no river too swift to swim.



I liked school but family problems made attendance difficult. Then in high school I was placed in a foster home with the best parents ever. At Santa Rosa Junior College they wanted me to be a plant pathologist but I wanted to go into engineering. They thought I'd have a hard time breaking into engineering and they were right, but I did it anyway...starting by working part-time as a draftsman.

After junior college I went to San Antonio, Texas, to marry my high school boyfriend. There I apprenticed as an aerial photograph interpreter, drafting maps for oil companies. Later I attended University of Kansas and then worked for Hercules Powder Company in Sunflower, Kansas. It was fun since I was trained to take dignitaries through the ballistics area to show them solid-rocket fuel in action.

I returned to California but soon decided to join the U.S. Air Force, where I was educated in graphic arts—skills I have used many times since. After the Air Force I worked for engineers in San Francisco and



joined the Army Reserves. I then went to work at the City of Santa Rosa Planning Department and took classes in City and Regional Planning through the University of California Berkeley. That led to a job in the engineering department of the Sonoma County Flood Control District, where I got to design two regional parks.

I had an itch to be in business for myself so first I opened an art gallery in a tourist area and then went into business(es) in Susanville, Calif. I had an arts and crafts store, a restaurant, a boarding house, and a beauty salon! It turns out I wasn't Superwoman after all—I lost everything!

So I moved to South Lake Tahoe, working first as an executive housekeeper, then for an engineer, and finally at Harvey's Hotel

Casino as an in-house architect. After 11 years I retired to Dayton, where I have lived for 26 years.

I didn't expect to work again but the Dayton Senior Center needed expansion so I designed their addition. The county liked my work so I designed the welfare office in Silver Springs, a kitchen for the jail in Yerington, and the Fernley Senior Center addition.

Unfortunately, I then developed macular degeneration and glaucoma so I had to give up design work. Nonetheless, I continued as a community volunteer. I've served on the Town Board, Parks and Recreation, Lyon County Master Plan, and the Historical Society of Dayton Valley.

Since my 86th birthday I have slowed to a crawl because of my eyesight and aches and pains but I will always be glad I've had the opportunity to do what I have.

November in Dayton by Linda Clements

Carol asked me if there was anything special or unusual that folks did on Thanksgiving in historic Dayton. I asked several old-timers and everyone indicated that as far as they knew everyone here celebrated Thanksgiving like Americans all over the country—with family, food, and warm fellowship. So instead I looked into historic November events in or affecting Dayton. I'm sure there is much more but these are the events that the files on my computer yielded. If anyone wants more information I'd be happy to provide the references for all of these dates and details.

- Nov. 1, 1861 In his "Letter from Dan DeQuille" to the Cedar Falls (Iowa) *Gazette*, William Wright reports, "There are thirty or forty water mills in operation and process of construction on Carson river; also, between this place and Dayton, (formerly Nevada City, and previously Chinatown), along Gold Cañon. Other are building on Six-Mile Cañon, between Virginia City and Flowery." [Note that since this letter was supposedly written two days before the town meeting that selected the name "Dayton," either the latter date is incorrect, the date of DeQuille's letter was reported incorrectly, or folks were pretty sure of the outcome before the town meeting on the 3rd.]
- Nov. 3, 1861 At a public meeting the name of Dayton was chosen, in honor of John Day, who surveyed the town. In 1862 Day took office as Lyon County Surveyor and later was Surveyor-General of Nevada.

- Nov. 1861 The Pony Express makes its last run.
- Nov. 25, 1861 Lyon County is established as one of original nine counties of Nevada by Territorial Legislature.
- Nov. 29, 1861 The Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Nevada designates Dayton as the County Seat of Lyon County.
- Nov. 1862 The Territorial Legislature gives Bolivar Roberts the exclusive right to build and maintain a toll bridge across the Carson River at Dayton. The franchise to Roberts and his heirs and assigns extended for ten years.
- Nov. 6, 1863 As reported in the *Gold Hill News* Dayton's earliest recorded fire destroys Adolf Sutro's first mill—an arrastra located on the river behind today's Railroad Street. Flames were visible in Virginia City and Gold Hill and one mill employee was injured. It was later speculated that an incendiary was used with the goal of covering up a murder.
- Nov. 30, 1880 Seven miles of Carson & Colorado Railroad track is complete, bringing the rail line from Mound House through Dayton.
- Nov. 14, 1885 The *Daily Nevada State Journal* of this date reports that, "The farmers will be able to eat turkey on Thanksgiving and hang up their stocking on I Eve." [i.e., the harvest has been good.]
- Dec. 3, 1892 The Lyon County Times of this date reports on a severe recent storm but indicates that there was some relief on Thanksgiving Day. "The late storm was the most severe and continuous that has ever visited this section of the country, say the oldest residents here. It began with a big blow a week ago last Wednesday, and with the exception of Thanksgiving day there was not a pleasant day until last Thursday. Last Saturday it began to rain, and it continued until it turned into a snow storm Wednesday afternoon. About six inches of the "beautiful" fell here that afternoon and night, and great piles of it in the hills. Thursday morning the weather turned colder and cleared up, leaving enough ice and snow on the ground for poor sleighing. Present indications are for more rain.

[It seems that this unrelenting weather did not lead to a flood, fortunately, since none is reported around that time period.]

- Nov. 1897 Joe Quilici purchased the ranch on the Carson River upstream from Dayton and known as the Depaoli ranch.

 [Joe Quilici was the father of Joseph, Jr., who sadly died in May 1907 while taking his wagon
 - and team across the still-swollen Carson River after the bridge washed out in March of that year.]
- Nov. 1924 Clark J. Guild of Dayton was elected Judge of the Eighth Judicial District comprising Lyon and Churchill Counties. He was thereafter reelected in November of every other year until his retirement in 1953.
- Nov. 29, 1954 Joe Ricci and Grace Testolin marry in Fallon and settle on the Ricci Ranch in Dayton.
- Nov. 24, 1977 Dayton photographer Will Scott dies at age 97.



A Big Thank You! By Carol McKim

I'd like to thank everyone who regularly contributes articles for the Docents Newsletter. Without them, I would have to work a lot harder: Pat Neylan, Ruby McFarland, Linda Clements and Laura Tennant are the backbone of our newsletter.

I hope everyone in the Society has a wonderful Thanksgiving.



Bob and Lois Wallace saw this cute little red caboose near the old railroad depot in San Angelo, Texas. It is a trash container and something we might consider doing when we get our depot restored.

