



# Douglas County Historical Society

## NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER 2009  
VOLUME 33, NO. 4

### PRESIDENTS MESSAGE - Grace Bower

Fall is upon us already! We have had a really busy summer. Our Chautauqua program ended in June. The students did a really good job on their last performance. The lectures and Student/Senior Days are bringing in a lot of people and we've picked up quite a few new members from among them.

The Pony Express was a little late, but when they did show up, they were fun to watch and everyone took lots of pictures. The Swap Meets were great. It was hot sitting out there! Those who came out found plenty of bargains.

'Thirsty Third Thursdays' put on by the Gardnerville Main Street USA group brought in a number of people who had never been in our museum. They were very surprised to see what has been done here and how great it looks!

The Taste of The Towns was great fun. We didn't sell as many tickets as we had hoped, but everyone said the food was the best it had ever been. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped and to Douglas/Alpine Thrivent for their support.

I hope all of you are reading Ellen Caywood's column in the Record Courier. She does a great job for us.

Our fiscal year ended June 30. We ended up in the black, thank goodness! Everyone who volunteers here has been very good about making do with what we have and not spending a lot of money. Our proposed budget for the new fiscal year is \$180,000.00. That's a lot of money for us to raise. We do not receive any state, county or federal monies. That is why it is so important to increase our membership. That money helps us meet our expenses.

Look forward to seeing all of you at our Haunted Weekend and Holiday Gala Events this fall.

### CARSON VALLEY MUSEUM AND

**CULTURAL CENTER**  
1477 U.S. Highway 395 N. Suite B  
Gardnerville, NV 89410-5214  
775-782-2555  
FAX: 775-783-8802  
Open Mon - Sat 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.



### COURTHOUSE MUSEUM In GENOA

2304 Main Street  
Genoa, Nevada 89411  
775-782-4325  
Open May - October  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.



[www.HistoricNevada.org](http://www.HistoricNevada.org)  
Email: [dchs@wpti.net](mailto:dchs@wpti.net)

### DCHS OFFICERS

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**Vice President**  
Tonja Dressler  
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Barbara Smallwood  
**Treasurer**  
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**BOOKKEEPER**  
Kathleen Hansen

## The Carson Valley Museum and Cultural Center and Genoa Museum Stores

By: The Museums Bookstore Committee

With Fall arriving, Halloween on the horizon, and the holidays soon to be here (yes, already!), the time is right to come down and browse through our Bookstores. There are a wide variety of subjects to be enjoyed, something for everyone and, as you know, your purchases will benefit the Douglas County Historical Society.

Speaking of Halloween and in conjunction with the upcoming Historical Society's Haunted Ghost Walks and Cemetery Tour in October, there are several delightful mystery books available. For young readers is the Ghost Town Mystery Series by Calamity Jan: *Ghostowners – Goodbye God, I'm Going to Bodie*. This book is historical fiction about a 12-year-old girl discovering a diary in the ghost town of Bodie. This diary, written by an unknown girl, reveals secrets buried for over a hundred years. *Ghostowners – The Haunted Horse of Gold Hill*. For over a hundred years, a small, wild horse has been sighted in the hills, circling a tombstone on the outskirts of Gold Hill, Nevada. A young girl and her best friend are determined to discover the story behind this legend. For the adults, spine-tingling and chilling reading includes *Ghost Stories of the Old West* by Dan Asfar. In this book, featured are ghost stories of murder, mayhem and madness of the frontier period that have left their mark on the paranormal landscape. Available as well is *Native American Ghost Stories* by Amos Gideon and Darren Zenko. Native American folklore and mythology are rich with mystery and wisdom, and spiritually sacred stories have echoed through the years. These stories have been adapted into a modern fiction style while at the same time being as faithful as possible to the original source material.

New to the Bookstores for the holidays is a special Christmas ornament featuring the Mormon Station and its history. This ornament is beautifully done and a one-of-a-kind collectors item, truly special and only \$8.00. Also new are key rings, amusingly unique, in designs of a cowboy and a horse made from horseshoe nails by a gentleman in Nevada City. An out-of-the-ordinary bookmark is the Bookbutton Magnet Bookmarker. These unusual bookmarks have different designs: a bear, bird, ladybug, flower, to name a few, and are handcrafted in the USA. Other additions are 2009 calendar photo entry note cards, large twig pencils and fun, challenging jigsaw puzzles. Great stocking stuffers for the little ones include folk art toys, sticker books, stencils, story booklets of pioneers, Indians and the early West to name a few. For you candy aficionados, this holiday season See's Candy can be purchased through the Lions Club.

**News Flash...** Inside this newsletter, look for our first time offering of Bookstore coupons that offer 20% off any one regularly priced item, excluding the Christmas ornament and items on consignment. (This discount is **NOT** in addition to the discount DCHS members receive.) There are four coupons, each good for two weeks during the months of October and November and are good at both Museums (Genoa closes November 1<sup>st</sup>).

Enjoy your shopping and thank you from the Douglas County Historical Society.



### SWAP MEET COMING TO A SUCCESSFUL END! SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 12TH



Douglas County Historical Society's last swap meet is September 12. Booth spaces are \$10.00 for 10 x 10 space in advance. \$20.00 the day of the swap meet. Hours are 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.

We have had a great response this year from booth renters and the public. Bring in your junkie and join us. Sign up applications are available at the front desk of the Carson Valley Museum and Cultural Center.

#### MISSION

The Douglas County Historical Society seeks to enrich lives by preserving local history and making it accessible to our communities and visitors.

#### MEMORIALS

Jean Cook Allen      Frances Helen Burke Anker  
Paula Reed                      Anita Stodieck

## Exhibit Committee Report

By: Irene Marshall



The Exhibit Committee has been stymied with the proposed "Barn Yard" exhibit between the CVM&CC and the Old Gym because of money. It will cost about \$8,000.00 to build the fences, storage areas and the various stalls that we have envisioned. The plans are completed and ready to go when the money comes in.

In the meantime, we have hung four Washoe legends storyboards in the Washoe Room in Genoa. A small Washoe doll on a stand was placed in one of the exhibit cases. The log carrier in the Blacksmith Shop now has logs so people will know how the apparatus was used.

The Changing Gallery in the CVM&CC now has pictures of the students and the classes at the old High School (now the Museum). They have taken the place of the early day Glenbrook photographs.

New artifacts have been donated recently. A Sibley Stove, invented during the Civil War, now graces a space next to the lower elevator doors and a milk can & carrier have been placed in the Ag Room. Sleigh Bells will be used on Santa's Sleigh at Christmas.

Sheriff William's Nevada National Guard Ap-

pointment & Commission certificate, on sheepskin, is a new addition hanging the Jail Room in Genoa. We are waiting for articles for a gambling exhibit in the Changing Gallery.

Our **lecture series** has become a great hit! We had over 100 people at Laurie Hickey's talk on the Emigrant Trail. In August we heard from Pat Hickey, (relative of Laurie), on a book he wrote entitled "Tahoe Boy". It's about his experiences growing up around Lake Tahoe. In September, the lecturer will be Darin Talbot on "Around Tahoe". He has put together two CD'S that tell the history of places around Lake Tahoe. These CD's are a great idea for entertaining your company. Put the CD's in and go for a ride around Lake Tahoe and hear about the history of many of the buildings and sights.

In October, we'll hear from Jeff Kintop from the Nevada State Museum. He will be lecturing about the controversy regarding the location of Mormon Station.

**Taste of The Towns** turned out great! Everyone said that the food was the best this year. Lots of people voted for their choice in the different categories.

Here are the winners: The Best Taste, Atmosphere and Overall was The J.T.'s, Bravo Cafe and Bakery came close for Taste. The Overland came second for Atmosphere. Best Shop was 3 Room Gallery hands down. Best Discovery was Battle Born Wine. Bravo Cafe and Bakery lost this category by one vote. Qdoba, Kiva Juice and Grace & Ida's Cookies were new this year and their tastes were wonderful.

We hope you will visit all the restaurants that participated and thank them for helping us out.

We received a nice cash match from Douglas/Alpine Thrivent Financial again this year. They are a great sponsor.

# Volunteer Scoop

In their own words!



Anita Kornoff

## **Anita Kornoff, Genoa Courthouse Museum**

Although I was born in Michigan, I've lived most of my life in Southern California. In 2005, while attending a Dune Buggy Club event at Lake Tahoe, my husband Bob and I met some old friends who had moved to the Carson Valley. They insisted we try the peach ice cream at the Genoa Country Store. The store was out of peach ice cream that day but our trip was not wasted. On the way back to camp about five miles from Genoa, we saw a house for sale on Foothill and fell in love. We had been searching in vain for such a house in California for months.

Until that day we had never even considered moving to Nevada. However, without thinking too long or hard about it we did just that. This happy coincidence turned out to be one of the best decisions we have ever made. We love the area and the people, and couldn't be happier! There has never been a problem finding things to do here and great friends to do them with.

The quaint little town of Genoa has always held a special attraction for me. I have frequently both worked and volunteered here. This summer I met Grace Bower at the Courthouse Museum and have continued to volunteer on a weekly basis ever since. I enjoy welcoming all the interesting out of town visitors and being affiliated with such an excellent historical site.

Before coming to Nevada my professional background included being the Program Director at an Adult Education Center, Development Director for a Public Radio Station at a university, and 20 years of design/graphics/publication work. I have also volunteered for many schools, churches, etc. over the years.

Today I feel so fortunate to be living in a beautiful place that many people only get to see on vacation.

## **Barbara List, Genoa Courthouse Museum**

I moved to Nevada in 1990 after retiring from teaching school in southern California. We, my husband Mel and I, lived in Incline Village for nine years. I have four children, six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. For recreation, we enjoy golf, traveling, playing bridge and I am a recent fan of quilting. I enjoy volunteering at the Courthouse Museum in Genoa, where I currently live, and have absolutely fallen in love with the Carson Valley and the people living here.



Barbara List

B

# Volunteer Scoop

In their own words!



Denise Uber

Denise Uber, yep....some distant relative to Adam Uber, you know the guy that was hung after being drug out of the jail in Genoa over a hundred years ago by that angry mob. That is how I came to volunteer here at the Courthouse Museum in Genoa. The kids and I were invited by the Hickeys to participate in the reenactment of the Curse of the Hangin Tree. I was the court recorder, my son passed out jury summons, while my daughter wept in the church over the bar room brawl victim. Lots of fun and a sort of a good way to learn some history, it also was great to put down on scholarship applications that my son is a member and volunteer.

I have lived in the Carson-Douglas area for 25 years, moving here from the Great Northwest. I work (not volunteer) for the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection. I have three children; Loren, my oldest who resides in Southern California, Cliff just started classes at UNR (he was the recipient of several scholarships from some very generous people here), and one daughter Kendall who is a freshman at Carson Valley Middle school.

I know volunteering is a good thing, you are giving back, meeting new people, even scaring a few when confirming their questions about ghosts in the museum. Well they do help me close the building at night, my friends the ghosts that is; I get out of there fast, zoom. And if you are scheduled the weekend of the Candy Dance, you get a parking pass, it is all good.

## STUDENT / SENIOR DAY

By: Sue Smith

The first Saturday of each month activity continues. Seniors and students with the required adult who accompanies them are admitted free. Donations are appreciated. Tours led by costumed museum volunteers are available on request. Presentations are at 11 am and 1 pm unless otherwise announced. Watch for email from DCHS. We have outstanding presentations and low attendance. We hope you will attend and support continuation of the program. Any suggestions for more participation are appreciated.

September 5: CVMCC will be closed for the Labor Day weekend . Student/Senior Day will be held at the Courthouse Museum Genoa . There will be no speaker.

October 3: Video of HOTEL MINDEN, the melodrama farce presented in February 2009 at Carson Valley Museum and Cultural Center . If you missed the real thing, come see the video.

November 7: We hope to have the program planned for September on the U.S. Constitution.

Watch for further plans and details.

December 5: Pictures with Santa will again be part of the Holiday Gala. Watch for any further attractions.

## MELO-DRAMA 2010 UPDATE



The dates January 28, 29, 30 have been reserved for the annual Melodrama /farce Fund-raiser. We are working on it, but inspiration is lagging. Keep your fingers crossed and your hopes high.



A.V.I.D. will be holding their annual picnic September 17th from 3 to 7 p.m. at Heritage Park, Gardnerville. There will be food and music. Member organizations will be giving out awards.

The Douglas County Historical Society is a member of A.V.I.D., so all volunteers are invited.

### PRE-PONY EXPRESS

Bill Palmer

Carson Valley, being an integral portion of the original *Pony Express* route and with the recent completion of this year's annual re-ride, it is hoped a little background of this famous historical enterprise will be of interest.

California's early population swelled, mainly starting in 1849, as gold seekers from all over the world flocked through Carson Valley on the California trail, as they made their way to seek their fortunes. Many of these had simply dropped what they were doing, quickly outfitted themselves with what they thought they might need, and then set out for California – leaving their wives, families and friends behind. Most had no thoughts of permanent settlement; they simply planned to come out there, pick up a 'few lumps of gold,' then quickly return home, to retire in luxury, with their wives and families.

Only a relatively few were able to realize their dreams and aspirations. Most, like little Eva crossing the ice (in "Uncle Tom's Cabin"), the 'dogs of poverty' were 'biting at their heels' all the time, as they 'ran harder and harder' trying to stay even – as the free, or placer gold dwindled and outlandish rises in prices made many items required to simply survive barely affordable.

When they were finally able to take time to look up from their shovels, they realized that instead of months, it had become years since they had left home. These men became desperate to be in touch with the East. It was the distance that was so overwhelming. They were some 2000 miles beyond towns like St. Joseph, Independence and St. Louis, which these former easterners knew to be on 'the outskirts of civilization'--with many of their homes even farther east than that.

Making things worse, mail delivery between East and West was 'lousy' at best. That which came via Panama seemed fastest. But even that took about 6 weeks, and schedules were very unreliable since many ships got to San Francisco, but the mails they contained often remained aboard after so many crews jumped ship to head for the gold fields.

Adding to these delivery delays were the uncertainties that existed throughout the gold fields, as new towns and camps sprouted up so quickly that the Post Office Department couldn't keep up with them. Miners often quickly changed locations as new sites promised richer findings, luring them to quickly re-locate without being able to inform their families in the East of their changed addresses. Tons of 'dead letter' mail piled up in the San Francisco Post Office.

Soon, enterprising people (for a price) began delivering this mail to such outlying places as "Hog's Glory, Dead Man Gulch and Murderer's Bar."

(One can't help but wonder what inspired some of those names.)

One man and his mule started what was soon to become known as the "*Jackass Express*." He would gather mail in San Francisco and deliver it to the miners, collecting his fees as he made his often streamside deliveries. The "*Jackass Express*" obviously couldn't cover all of the many camps, so it didn't take others long to realize that they too could enter the business.

## PRE-PONY EXPRESS - CONTINUED

Bill Palmer

Alonzo Delano in his "Penknife Sketches" described the arrival of one of these expressmen:

"The express has arrived! Every pick and shovel is dropped, every pan is laid aside, every rocker is stopped with its half-washed dirt, every claim is deserted, and they crowded around with eager inquiries, "Have you got a letter for me?"

(Those of you who have been in the military know a bit about how these men felt.)

Joaquin Miller, the famous writer, was an early miner and once wrote of these early mail deliveries:

"The *Pony Express* was a great feature in the gold mines of California long before anyone ever thought of putting it on the plains. Every creek, camp or 'city' has its Pony Express. The rider was always a bold, bright young fellow, who owned the line, horses and all, and had his "office" in some responsible store."

After California had quickly become a state, one of its two senators, William Mc Kendree Gwin, tried to get a bill passed to set up a mail-line along the central route, while no great shakes for mail delivery, it had already become a popular freight route. And one of largest, best organized and most thriving freighting operations, was that of the *Russell, Majors and Waddell's Transportation Service*. Russell, being the company's 'idea man' and promoter, saw great potential in improving mail service to California, and so went to Washington. And it was there that he met and discussed his ambitions with Senator Gwin.

Russell reasoned that whatever was done, it had to be exciting and colorful – something that would capture the imagination of the people and their representatives.

A number of people are credited with having first thought up the idea of the *Pony Express*, depending on what one reads. Was it Senator Gwin's idea, passed on to Russell, based on his knowledge of the express services in California's gold fields? One may never know. But the *Pony Express*, as it was developed, was more than likely Russell's idea, even though a good case can be made for Senator Gwin's contribution. We DO know that Russell had discussed the idea as early as 1858 with Secretary of War John B. Floyd – that is well documented.

By April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1860, the system was ready, and the rest is history – although it lasted only 18 months before being replaced by the telegraph -- subsequent eye-witness descriptions, written by men like Mark Twain and now actively sustained with annual re-enactments -- these have all helped keep the *Pony Express* a lasting historic entity.

**Volunteering** for DCHS is a great way to get involved in the community helps to keep both the Gardnerville and Genoa museums up and running, gives the opportunity to meet new and interesting people, not only within the community but visitors from around the world.

Committees are always looking for assistance and new ideas. Committees include: Fund Raising, Membership, Short-Long Term Planning, Accessions, Exhibits, and Newsletter/Publicity.

**Contact the Historical Society at 775-782-2555 or via email at [dchs@wpti.net](mailto:dchs@wpti.net) to volunteer.**

### Douglas County Historical Society Trustees Meetings

Douglas County Historical Society Trustee meetings are the third Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Carson Valley Museum and Cultural Center in Gardnerville.

The Annual Membership Meeting is the third Thursday in May.

Everyone is welcome to attend.



HAUNTED WEEKEND

OCT. 22 - 25



“Haunted Weekend” is a weekend filled with fun historic and haunted adventures in Carson Valley. It’s that time of year when leaves go crunch under your feet, and whirl in the cold fall wind. That is when area ghosts can be found on the streets and in the cemeteries, for a fun, historic Haunted Weekend. One thing for sure you won’t be bored to death!

New this year is the “Haunted Minden Ghost Walk” on Thursday night, October 22<sup>nd</sup>. The cost is \$5.00 per person tours depart from the CVIC Hall on Esmeralda Street in Minden. Tour times are 6:30, 7:30, and 8:30 p.m. The Haunted Gardnerville Ghost Walk”, is Friday night, October 23. The cost is \$5.00 per person tours depart from the Carson Valley Museum and Cultural Center, 1477 Hwy 395, in Gardnerville. Tour times are 6:30, 7:30, and 8:30 p.m. Ghost Hunters and history buffs; join us if you dare for a historical nighttime walk around downtown Minden and Gardnerville.

“Haunted Genoa Cemetery Tour” If you are Dying to take a nighttime tour of one of Nevada’s oldest cemeteries, join us for the “Haunted Genoa Cemetery Tour” Saturday night October 24<sup>th</sup>. Guided tours depart every 15 minutes starting at 6:30, until 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$5 per person. As you stroll through the cemetery you will meet several pioneers from Nevada’s past.

“Haunted Genoa Ghost Walk” October 25<sup>th</sup>, Guided tours depart from the Courthouse Museum at 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. Tickets are \$5 per person. Step-back in time as you learn about the early settlers in Nevada’s first permanent settlement. Of course you will also learn about hangings, murders and suicide’s.

Bring your flashlights and dress warmly!

Members, we are always looking for volunteers to help with events.

For Information Call 775-782-2555 or 782-2893



DECEMBER EVENTS

We will be having the Christmas Trees around the Carson Valley Museum and Cultural Center by December 5, 2009. Anyone interested in decorating a tree, come in and get an application. There is no charge and the public votes with quarters on their favorite tree. Space is limited, so get your application in early.

The gingerbread houses will be around again this year. They make the Museum smell so good! We have applications at the main desk of the Carson Valley Museum and Cultural Center for you to fill out to enter your gingerbread house. This is sponsored by the Carson Valley Arts Council.

Lots of Christmas cookies and candy will be on sale downstairs. They are made by volunteers. No need to do any baking, just pick up your choice of many kinds of cookies and candy. They make great gifts.

Santa will be here too! Get your picture taken with him in our sleigh.

There is no admission charge to come in and see the trees and gingerbread houses.



**SCOLARI'S 'FRIENDSHIP FUND'**

Scolari's is updating their 'Friendship Fund' information. This is the time when you can change your fund designation.

The Historical Society is asking if you would designate your contribution to go to us.

All you need to do is look on your Scolari's card and write down all the numbers after 4500 on the form below, fill out the remaining questions, sign, cut out and return it to Scolari's.

If you do not have a Scolari's 'Friendship Card', you need to go into the store and fill out a form and tell them you want the funds to go to the 'Douglas County Historical Society'. We get a check periodically from them.

Every little bit helps us. The money will begin to be collected starting September 1st. You can turn this application in any time while doing your shopping.

**Friendship Fund Enrollment Form**

IMPORTANT: Please fill out the following information with your CURRENT Scolari's Club Card file information.



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SCOLARI'S CLUB CARD NUMBER

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CUSTOMER SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**NEW FRIENDSHIP FUND INFORMATION**

All Scolari's Club Card members enrolled in the Friendship Fund may designate a Non-Profit Organization from the current list of participating organizations.

ORGANIZATION CODE 

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Please complete and give to Store Manager.

**MUSEUMS' BOOKSTORES**  
 20% OFF (1) REGULARLY PRICED ITEM  
 (excluding Xmas Ornaments & Consignment Items)  
 NO Extra Membership discount  
 Oct. 1-17, 2009



**MUSEUMS' BOOKSTORES**  
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 NO Extra Membership discount  
 Nov. 1-14, 2009

**MUSEUMS' BOOKSTORES**  
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 Oct. 18-31, 2009

**MUSEUMS' BOOKSTORES**  
 20% OFF (1) REGULARLY PRICED ITEM  
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 NO Extra Membership discount  
 Nov. 16-30, 2009

*Douglas County Historical Society*  
*1477 U.S. Highway 395 N. Suite B*  
*Gardnerville, Nevada 89410-5214*

## **DCHS 2009 EVENTS**

|              |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|
| September 5  | Student/Senior Day 'U.S. Constitution', CMG                       |  |
| September 10 | Lecture 'Around Tahoe' Darin Talbot, CVM&CC                       |   |
| September 12 | Swap Meet, CVM&CC   |   |
| October 3    | Student/Senior Day 'Hotel Minden' video, CVM&CC                   |   |
| October 8    | Lecture 'Mormon Station' - Jeff Kintop, CVM&CC                    |   |
| October 22   | Haunted Minden Ghost Walk - 6:30, 7:30 & 8:30 P.M. (CVIC Hall)    |   |
| October 23   | Haunted Gardnerville Ghost Walk - 6:30, 7:30 & 8:30 P.M. (CVM&CC) |   |
| October 24   | Haunted Genoa Cemetery Tour - From 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.              |   |
| October 25   | Haunted Genoa Ghost Walk - 10:30 and 11:30 A.M. (CMG)             |   |
| November 12  | Lecture, CVM&CC   |   |
| December 5   | Holiday Gala, CVM&CC  |  |

Watch for additional information in the local newspapers,  
on the DCHS website at [www.HistoricNevada.org](http://www.HistoricNevada.org)  
or call the Historical Society office at 775-782-2555.