



## **Newsletter of the Plumas Eureka State Park Association**

### **SPRING –SUMMER 2019**

#### **MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIRMAN - John Sciborski**



This is a note of thanks to all who have contributed to PESPA. We look forward to a busy summer season with many opportunities to enjoy all that the park has to offer. Much has been accomplished, plus more to come....

The past winter brought much needed snow but also the need for dedicated staff and volunteers to do extra work to be ready for visitors.

Looking forward to our big events, Gold Discovery Days and Dinner in the Park. Hope to see you there.

#### **SPRING CLEANUP FROM HEAVY WINTER SNOW**

The past winter was one of abundant snow. It was so beautiful (even the avalanche), and fabulous fun for snowshoe hikers and cross country skiers and the Longboard Races. The snow added greatly to the streams and rivers, but left an extra dose of needles, branches and debris to clear. The State Forest Service crews have made great progress in completing the Jamison Creek Forest Stewardship Project to reduce the fuel in the twelve-acre Historical District area and they continue to plan additional forest health measures.

Park staff and many dedicated volunteers have readied the park for the summer season: there was a tree that fell onto an Upper Campground restroom, a woodshed roof that collapsed from the snow load, and the spring trail cleanup is being done as the snow melts. The Volunteer cleanup activities were extended to three weekend days in May and we're ready for visitors: the museum is cleaned and stocked with interesting books and lots of beautiful items and clothing, the Historical District is raked and ready and the Assay Office, Woodshop, Blacksmith Shop and Panning Trough are ready to show how life was in the 1800's and early 1900's. Many trails are ready to hike, picnic tables set up, and the Moriarity House is set for tours to help folks imagine what life was like so many years ago. The campground is open and awaiting the outdoor adventurers (or the folks who come to relax in the quiet forest).



# JAMISON MINE BARN, MINERS CABIN, AND MORE PROJECTS...

By Denise Jaffke, Parks' Archaeologist



This year promises to be an eventful season for cultural heritage documentation, interpretation, and stabilization at Plumas Eureka. First, HistoriCorps is scheduled to work on two buildings associated with the Jamison Mine portion of the National Register of Historic Places listed historic district. HistoriCorps is a nonprofit organization, based in Denver, Colorado, that works through partnerships to mobilize volunteers to help save and sustain historical sites while also providing educational and outdoor experiences for those involved. Volunteers learn preservation trades skills including roof repair and replacement, masonry repointing and repair, log restoration and reconstruction,

door and window restoration, among other types of work. PESPA is funding the stabilization and repair of the Jamison Mine barn and southern miner's cabin. Work is scheduled to begin mid-August. If you're interested in volunteering, check out HistoriCorps' project page at <https://historicorps.org/jamison-barn-ca/>.



In 2017, Plumas hosted the first Park Champions volunteer archaeological workday at the park. The project involved recording the archaeological remains of one of the earliest mining camps in the county. Volunteers and park staff recorded building ruins, features, and artifacts near the Eureka Peak, Gold Discovery Site. Although this was a great beginning in documenting this important heritage site, there is much more to do. Archaeological consultant, Thomas Martin, will work throughout the summer to GPS, photo-document, measure, and inventory the settlement site. He will also record other mining features in and around the peak. In an effort to be comprehensive, the Sierra Dive Team will conduct underwater archaeological surveys in Eureka Lake to identify submerged resources that may have been deposited there, either intentionally or unintentionally. We hope to have enough information to put together an exhibit in the PESPA sponsored case located in the museum. In the meantime, check out our current exhibit on Eureka Mills.

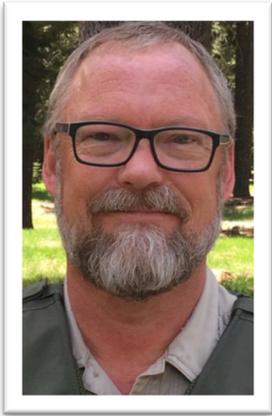
Unfortunately, we continue to notice that hikers visiting the Eureka Mills Settlement Site are picking up artifacts and placing them on a stump or log near the trail, creating "collector's piles." Although the intent is not malicious, it destroys site integrity, making it difficult to interpret the lives of early miners and their families. An important concept in archaeology, and one that isn't given a lot of public attention until things go awry is that of context. Context is the position and associations of an artifact, feature, or archaeological find in space and time. Noting where the artifact was found and what was around it assists archaeologists in determining chronology and interpreting function and significance. Loss of context strips an artifact of meaning and makes it more difficult (sometimes, impossible) to understand and properly interpret the information contained at a site. This is especially true for a site like Eureka Mills where we have limited historical information to help tell the story of who lived and worked here. In an effort to protect the site, we'll be posting archaeological information signs around the site and installing monitoring cameras at select locations. We could also use your help. If you would like to be a site steward for Eureka Mills, please contact me at [denise.jaffke@parks.ca.gov](mailto:denise.jaffke@parks.ca.gov). Help spread the word!

## RANGER RAMBLINGS

By Tim Quandt, PESP Park Ranger



California State  
Park Rangers  
150 Years of Service  
1866-2016



The winter of early 2019 may be one for the record books. Plumas-Eureka State Park and the little town of Johnsville saw a lot of snow come down! In fact, as I type this, I still have a 5' high mound resting in my back yard and we have yet to access the campground, due to the avalanche that came down and choked off the road with a 14' high wall of snow that stretches between 50 and 100' across! Good news is that Plumas County may be giving us a hand with that during the first week of May.

We have a lot of work ahead of us to get ready for the 2019 camping season. While we haven't been able to assess all of the damage that winter brought us, and more will be revealed as the snow melts away, we do know that our newer lower combination restroom near campsite 8 had a tree come down on top of it and the stamp mill had a small section collapse near the Pelton wheel. Our district forestry crew still has work slated for the campground as well...as soon as they can get into it.

In the meantime, we are trying to get all of our ducks in a row and preparing for our anticipated opening over Memorial Day weekend. The last Saturday of April, we held our annual volunteer/docent sign-up, orientation and training day, and we are preparing for a number of park cleanup days, to get the museum and grounds presentable for the visiting public over the next few upcoming Saturdays.

Staff is beginning to return with our usual players Cindy Johnson and Kathy Osher, facilitating the visitor services operations at the museum, complemented by our lovable interpreter Patrick O'Reilly. Look for a new face this summer as Natalie Dutton joins the team to help out in both the museum and in the field supporting Pat as he takes on a more relaxed role at the park.

Anglers! How long has it been since Eureka Lake was planted with trout? Word is, it's been around 20 years! This season, we will see a return to fish being planted in the lake by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. I was told we'll be seeing Rainbow, Brook and German Brown trout planted in the lake in numbers up in the thousands...as soon as the snow clears and they can get up there. Fishing at the lake should be good this season. Be sure to get your license before wetting your line though...both myself and or local wardens will be checking and issuing citations, if you're not fishing legally.

All of the usual summer events are on schedule this year. We'll participate in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade in Graeagle; hold Gold Discovery Days in July; Dinner in the Park rolls around in August; The Lost Sierra Hoedown returns in September. On top of that, our dutiful docents will be interpreting the various venues around the park – Moriarity House, Assay Office, Blacksmith Shop, Historic Woodworking Shop and the folks at the Museum are all eager to share their knowledge and skills with the visiting public. In addition to all of that, during the month of August, Plumas-Eureka State Park will host the HistoriCorps organization, as they work to secure and stabilize structures in the Jamison Mine complex, specifically, the barn near the Grass Lake trailhead, that is showing a real need for attention. Lastly, the California Conservation Crew will be returning to complete the ADA accessible aspects of the Madora Lake trail.

The time is short and the weather is favorable, so I need to step away from this computer now and get the outdoors back into play again. I'll be looking forward to seeing all of our returning visitors and meeting the new ones that seem to find us and fall in love with this place without exception, this season.

Cheers!

# PRICE OF GOLD HISTORY

By Cliff Romig, PESP Board Director

Finding the gold in the western mountains, which include Plumas Eureka State Park, became the miners' obsession as they searched for the valuable mineral. The park is here because of the miners' curiosity and hardscrabble work and the hope each miner had to find a big nugget like the 52-pound nugget found nearby. The mines in the area (from mid-1800's-WWII) produced more than \$17 million in gold at those years' prices.

Gold and silver have been precious throughout history but weren't used for money until 643 BC. I did not find a value for that far back, but the earliest reference I did find for the price of gold was 30 BC.

In ancient Rome, Emperor Augustus (30 BC – 14 AD) set the price of gold at 45 coins per pound. That's about 3.5 cents per ounce. The next several emperors devalued coins to 50, 60 then 70 coins per pound. These emperors lowered the value of gold coins so much it created hyperinflation. But to keep their military afloat this had to be done. The Roman Empire also increased taxes. So, there was a direct relationship to the price of gold and to the strength of their armies.

In 301 AD one pound of gold was worth 50,000 denarii (coin based on silver) and in 337 AD (36 years later) a pound of gold was worth 20 million denarii. This is one reason the Roman Empire began to crumble. More details can be found in "Inflation and the Fall of the Roman Empire" by Joseph R. Peden.

Now we jump to 1257 AD and used the Great Britain standard @\$0 .89 per ounce.

Year	Price/Ounce	Years at Price		Year	Price/Ounce	Years at Price
1344	5.58	7		1971	43.48	1
1351	6.37	91		1973**		
1442	7.18	22		January 1980	875.00	4 months
1464	8.03	62		May 1980	594.92	1 time loss
1526	11.02	78		1981	410.89	1
1604	15.90	7		1982	444.30	***
1611	17.36	52		2007	833.85	
1663	19.82	36		2009	1087.50	
1699	20.36	18		2010	1405.50	
1717	20.67	217*		2011	1895.00****	
1934	35.00	37		2012	1657.60	
1968	38.69	1		May 24, 2019	1275.49	
1970	37.44	1				

\* California Gold Rush

\*\* In 1973 the gold standard ends and in 1974 President Ford allows private ownership of gold, thus putting gold on the public market. Just like the Stock Market, gold rises and falls. Mostly rises.

\*\*\*Gold stays in \$300-500 range as the stock market has its peaks and lows until 2007, where gold prices started to rise at a greater rate.

\*\*\*\*Record High



Other little tidbits of information:

- The Miners gold pan originated in Russia.
- Dropping a gold nugget in a pan has a ring to it, Pyrite sounds more like a bell.
- Wet a rock with "gold" in it rotate it – gold will gleam 360°, Pyrite will gleam "on & off".

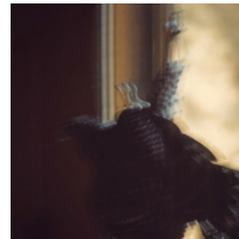
# Have you seen or heard of these?

## By Jay Headly, Retired Interpretive Ranger

Each time you come here you see wildlife and sometimes your experiences will be truly unique. Here is a couple that I will never forget.

In the summer of 1972 I came to work by myself, as my wife was expecting our fourth child. Our housing was the large “summer” house across the street from the museum and behind the “new” firehouse. And it was surrounded by trees and very private. I had opened the window in the kitchen – a tilt-out – to get fresh air into the house. Soooooo, at 6:30 in the morning, I was rudely awakened by the crashing of glass and a thump on the kitchen floor. I sprang from my bed, REALLY, and there standing in the middle of the floor was a chicken-sized hawk, a Northern Goshawk. I was elated, as I had never seen one before, and really UP CLOSE!

But, how was I going to get it outside without me getting hurt. I shooed it into the enclosed porch where I had been sleeping and it tried for the window, which was screened, so it hung there a minute before falling back to the floor. My task became one of rolling up the screen without having him do a “touch-and-go” off my bare shoulder. Luckily, he waited and when the screen was up he flew out and stopped on a close tree branch. Being in the “interpretive” business I did manage to get a couple pictures, but since my adrenaline level was pretty high, they were not of superior quality.



I met another unknown PESP resident in the year 1976 when the park was closed due to a young girl being bitten by a flea with the Bubonic Plague. All campers were forced to leave in June and a team from the state Vector Control Center came to check out the animals for fleas that carried the virus. This meant setting up bait stations to catch the animals, mainly rodents, and then checking the animals for fleas, removing the fleas, and sending them back to the Disease Control Center in Colorado.

Well, one night a flying squirrel entered a trap. Since “flyers” are nighttime residents, no one on the staff was aware of their presence. I watched the Vector Control Team anesthetize the little squirrel, hold it by its tail and back-brush the fleas into a tray, and then place it into a cage to recover. Before placing it in the cage, I got to touch its undercoat and it was similar to the belly of a longhaired cat. As soon as the squirrel was okay, it was taken back over to the spot it had been caught (right by the Lower Restroom) and released. It quickly went to the nearest tree and started climbing – then it “flew” downward to a nearby tree and continued climbing. It did this back and forth until it was up 30-40 feet within minutes.

So, have you seen some of our “not’ so often seen” residents? Let the park staff know about your finds that made your visit a SPECIAL ONE!!!



Northern Goshawk in flight



Northern Flying Squirrel in flight

# PESPA Membership and Important Dates

By Nancy Degger, PESPA Membership Chairperson

## How can I tell if my PESPA membership is current?

Thanks for all members who have paid their 2019 membership. Many members want to know when or if their 2019 membership is due. Please take a peek at your address label. Along the right side near the bottom, you will see a letter and number. According to our records this represents *what type and year you have paid your membership*. This is what the letter means: **S= Single membership, F= Family Membership, B= Business membership, and G= Gold membership**. There is also a **Life** membership which was discontinued a number of years ago. However, if you have that designation on your address label, know it will be honored. The numbers represent the year – **19=2019 18=2018 17=2017 16=2016**. For instance, if after your address if you have a S19 that will mean our records indicate you renewed or joined PESPA as a Single member in 2019. If you have a F16, that means our records indicate that the last time you renewed or the date you joined PESPA was as a Family member in 2016.

I use our “records indicate” because there could be an error and we wish to maintain the most recent and up to date membership information possible. Please let me know via email or text if your label has incorrect information, including name(s) address or membership status. I will research all membership status inquiries I receive and respond to you in a timely manner.

Presently, we go back as far as 2016. Next year (2020) we will drop the 2016 members and no longer send emails or the Ore Car newsletter to those past members. If you wish to continue receiving PESPA info and the Ore Car newsletter, please be certain to maintain your current membership.

PESPA gratefully accepts all “additional” tax-deductible donations and any donation you choose to make when visiting the park summer or winter. PESPA is dedicated to supporting interpretive and educational programs at Plumas Eureka State Park. Your memberships and donations are invaluable to this endeavor.

Text corrections to: 530-927-9748 or Email corrections to: [nancyingraeagle@gmail.com](mailto:nancyingraeagle@gmail.com)



### PESPA Board of Directors for 2018-19:

John Sciborski - Chairman

Cliff Romig - Director

Dennis Black - Vice Chairman

Tim Hardie - Director

Rich Martinez - Secretary

Tim Kurdupski - Director

Jane Roix – Director and Museum Store Manager

\* \* \* \* \*

Nancy Degger - PESPA Membership Chairperson and Treasurer

*PESPA important dates this summer...*

## Gold Discovery Days

July 20 and 21, 2019

Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm



Fun-filled family weekend: BBQ (Saturday and Sunday), Pancake Breakfast (Sunday 8 - 11 am), live music, kids' games, spinning wool, pine needle basketry, candle making, woodworking, blacksmith demo, assay office tours, wagon rides, kids' archeological digs, Moriarity House tours, museum displays, and guided hikes to the Gold Discovery site. Take photos in a period costume and win prizes



## Dinner in the Park

**Thursday, August 15, 2019 ~ 5 pm – 8 pm**

Join us for a picnic style delicious catered dinner with wine & beer

Under the canopy of your state park!

Join in a Live Auction and bid on a Silent Auction item as well

Enjoy a memorable historical guest speaker

***Look for tickets on sale at the park museum this summer***

PLUMAS-EUREKA STATE PARK ASSOCIATION  
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TO:

# GOLD DISCOVERY DAYS



**July 20 & 21,  
2019**

**10 am to 3 pm  
Saturday & Sunday**

For more information check out our website at: [www.plumas-eureka.org](http://www.plumas-eureka.org)

Follow us on Facebook at: Plumas Eureka State Park Association