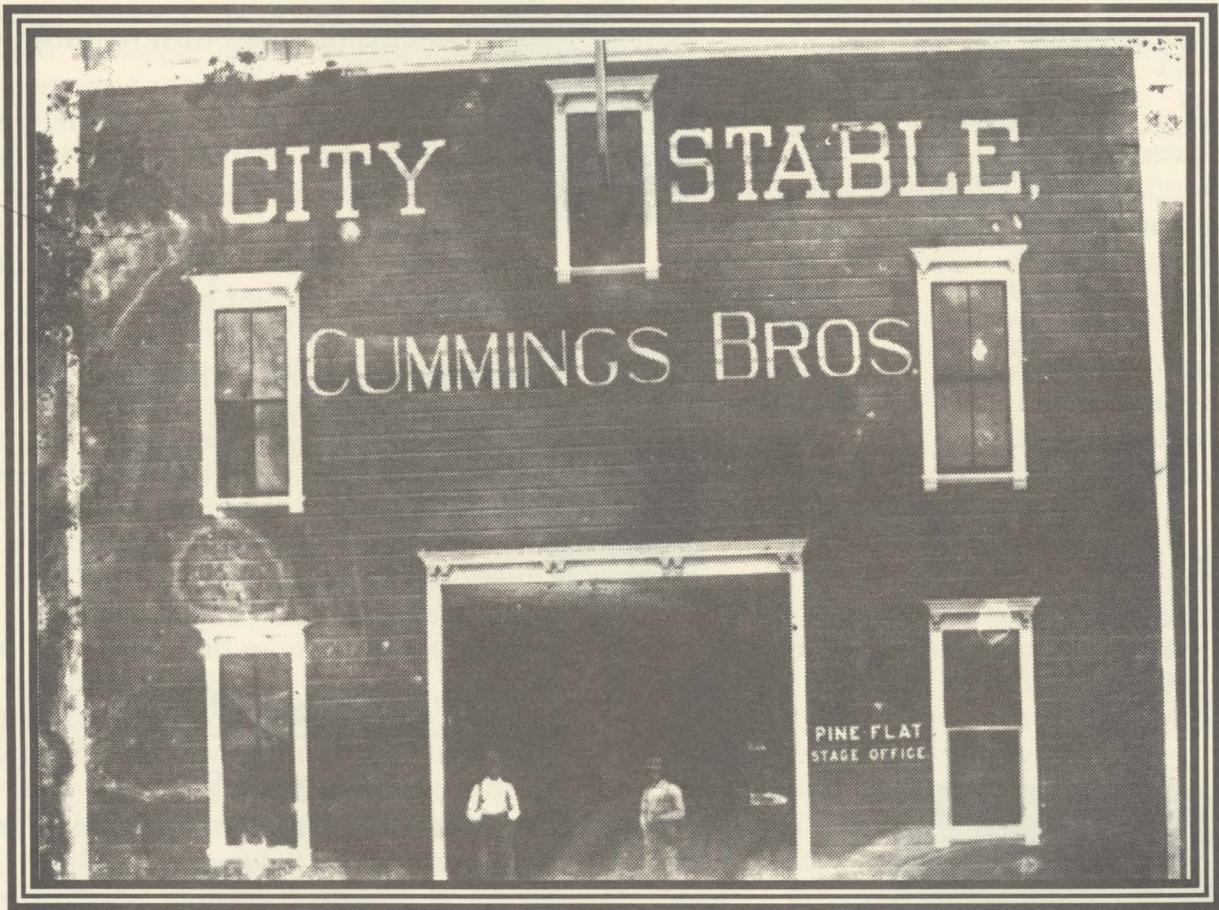


RUSSIAN RIVER



R E C O R D E R



Quicksilver Fever The Healdsburg - Pine Flat Connection

Healdsburg Historical Society

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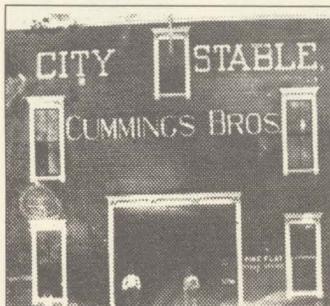
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On The Cover

The Cummings Stable adjoining Charles Cummings Electric on Healdsburg Avenue.
(Circa 1902-1906)

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President's Address, Passport to the Past,
Memorial Donations,
Museum Endowment News

Save These Dates

September 9

Healdsburg Museum's Endowment Fund Benefit
Mrs. Edward Gauer's Residence, 5-7 p.m.

September 24

Autumn Fest
Trentadue Winery, 2-6 p.m.

November 22

Annual Toy Exhibit Opens

December 3

Children's Open House

Museum News

Claire Rithner, Curator

1920's Exhibit Featured at the Museum through November 5

The Museum's new exhibit, *The 1920's: Technology, Transition and Reaction*, opened July 18. The exhibit begins with a look back at World War I as one of the major events to shape the twenties and then continues on to study various changes and trends within the decade. The twenties is often dismissed as a shallow parentheses between the "Great War" and the Depression. However, as the exhibit illustrates, it is important not to discount it since many present institutions and cultural traditions became prevalent during this transitional period. For instance, consumer deficit spending, many leisure activities, and national radio programming were popularized in the twenties. Each of these changes had cultural and social effects which survive to this day.

Highlights of the exhibit include many examples of twenties technology; three radios from the decade illustrate the vast changes in its development and its rise in popularity. Other highlights include examples of fashion from the Museum's collection, fashion accessories and decorative arts. In one section of the exhibit there is a 1920's kitchen scene, complete with a "modern" gas stove and many twenties gadgets. Another section studies the effects of national prohibition in Sonoma County and includes a homemade still. As always there are many local photos; they are exceptionally rich with detail this time, be sure to look closely when you come view the exhibit.

As always the exhibit is greatly improved and more interesting because so many people contributed their knowledge, time and talent along the way. Many thanks to the following people and institutions:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Bill Andersen | Nancy Bauer |
| Grant Canfield | Bess Cunningham |
| Vince Dougherty | Lee Gunnerson |
| Bob Jones | Dawn & Bill Moser |
| Ken Mullen | Jim Myers |

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Lorraine Owen | Bob Rawlins |
| Rebeckah Rithner | Don Reukema |
| Temple Smith | Doreene Zanzi |
| Vallejo Naval and Historical Museum | |
| Petaluma History Museum | |
| Sonoma County Museum | |
| Mendocino County Museum | |

New Acquisitions:

Special thanks to the following people who have recently donated artifacts to the Museum's permanent collection. Artifacts donated include photographs, scrapbooks, high school annuals, textiles, W.W.II memorabilia, and children's toys.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Perry Beeson | Cathy Harvey |
| Glyn & Jeanne Hasal | Nancy Silliman |
| Dennis & Denise Neves | Vince Dougherty |
| Wardine Herrick | Daniel Campbell |
| William Lucius | Thomas Passalacqua |
| Harold Dicke | Mary Lou Weule |
| Taffy Curtis | Doreene Zanzi |
| Richard Iverson | Ben & Marilyn Collins |
| Jorge Nuno | Nancy Jenkins |
| Frances Rithner | Robert Hill |
| Anthropology Studies Center/SSU | |

The Museum is always collecting artifacts relating to North County history. We are especially interested in artifacts which represent everyday life. Often what people save and donate are the extraordinary items: a wedding dress, rather than their everyday house dress which was long ago worn-out and discarded. So think about what you might have that would be helpful for interpreting everyday life in a particular decade or era and consider making a donation to the Museum's permanent collection.

The Historical Society purchased two new artifacts for the Museum from our memorial donation account. They are a Victorian sheet music cabinet and a lovely hooked rug designed by artist Grace Hudson. Both of these artifacts came from Genevieve Warfield's estate. We are delighted to add them to our collection.

THE HEALDSBURG - PINE FLAT CONNECTION

c. 1873-1875

QUICKSILVER RUSH PRELUDE, C. 1860

With the California Gold Rush, came the immediate need for quicksilver, which was used as an amalgam in the reduction process of milling gold and silver. Although San Jose's legendary New Almaden Mine admirably filled that need, one of Geyserville's founding fathers, Colonel A.C. Godwin, became intrigued with the possibility of mining the red cinnabar ore that laced the ridge leading south from this Geysers Springs property.

In 1859, Godwin organized what was to become known as the Cinnabar Mining District, which is located in northeastern Sonoma County. Although Godwin knew relatively little about the quicksilver mining process itself, he quickly enticed others to join him in the fledgling venture. Among those who answered his call were "... men named Southard, Doyle, Kelty, Baxter, Campbell, Palmer, Hayden, Roberson, and Van Doren". In fact, by 1861, approximately 33,000 feet of claims had been located in the district. Those that were worked that year included the Cincinnati, Pittsburg, Pioneer and Dead-Broke, which aptly describes the fiscal reality of these nascent mines, all of which closed within the year.



Edwin Langhart examining cinnabar rock (c. 1969)
Photo courtesy of the Press Democrat

A stab at consolidation, with Godwin serving as president, fared little better. And, in 1863, forsaking quicksilver mining forever, Godwin resumed his military career. Soon after, he was killed in the War Between the States while serving in the Union Army. His death, along with the price of quicksilver, which dawdled along from 1863-1872, at forty-five to sixty-five cents a pound, might have doomed quicksilver mining in the Cinnabar Mining District forever. Yet, suddenly, in 1873, the price of quicksilver spiraled to a whopping one dollar-plus per pound. Immediately, quicksilver fever ensued.

THE FOUNDING OF PINE FLAT

By late 1873, the *Russian River Flag* reported that "... the whole region about the Geysers has been overrun by prospectors seeking their fortunes in the silvery fluid. Nearly every spot that could be suspected of harboring mercury has been claimed...". Much of this activity was centered in the area known as the "Hog's Back", a ridge which extends east from Geysers Peak to Mount Saint Helena. Despite the fact that the Hog's Back was covered with scrub oak, manzanita, and chamise, "quicksilver crazy" prospectors combed its treacherous slopes in search of the tell-tale red cinnabar ore, which as the *Mining and Scientific Press* duly noted "... will excite a miner now-a-days as much as a red rag will a bull."

Quick to cash in on this quicksilver rush, Missouri-born identical twins named Granville and Greenville Thompson considered the possibilities of founding a mining town to cater to the prospectors' needs. A year shy of thirty in 1873, the Thompson twins, who had helped to build the Calistoga -Geysers Road in 1867 and had previously owned a Napa-based hotel, laid claim to unoccupied government land that was labeled "Pine Flat" on the Bower's County Map. Located ten and three-quarters miles northeast of Healdsburg, Pine Flat, according to the *Russian River Flag*, "... offered a comparatively level strip of country [where] level ground is like angels' visits".

Another gentleman who saw the value of such a relatively level strip of land in this steep, rocky terrain at the 2,000 foot elevation mark was none other than the imitable stage coach driver, Clark Foss, who transported visitors by way of the Calistoga Mine Road to the Geysers on a regular basis. About the same time that the Thompson twins became Pine Flat's "official" founding fathers, Foss, who it was claimed "... launches his team with small

regard to human life or the doctrine of probabilities" built a stagecoach station in the vicinity of Pine Flat to allow his passengers to catch their collective breaths .



Clark Foss with passengers heading to the Geysers

By the summer of 1872, the Thompsons, who were eventually dubbed "Gran-Green" Thompson by the editor of the *Calistoga Free Press*, had laid out the township of Pine Flat (one quarter of which was designated "mineral land" by government surveyor, Gustavius Cox). They then proceeded to sell 50-foot wide by 150-long lots for two hundred dollars apiece to prospectors in need of a little patch of land to call their own. Meanwhile, the brothers also offered miners other amenities that were sadly lacking in quicksilver country: a dry goods store (which charged exorbitant prices) as well as a hotel—The Thompson Hotel, of course. By early 1874, they even had their own post office, manned by none other than the government-appointed postmaster, Granville Thompson. A few short months later, the *Flag* reported that there were ". . . nine regular lumber wagons hauling from Healdsburg to Pine Flat" on a daily basis. They came by way of the Geyser Toll Road, with Hudson and Ward Lumber Company of Healdsburg boasting daily deliveries of up to 7,000 feet of lumber to be used for the construction of the swiftly growing mining town.

To their credit, the Thompsons, who were cognizant of the summer's dry weather, also built a reservoir which housed a municipal water supply. Just as they had hoped, miners and entrepreneurs, alike, flocked to the new town. By the summer of '74, there were four grocery and dry goods stores (with Phillips, Bowen & McGrear; and Lambert & Congdon listed among the enterprising proprietors), two livery stables (Ed Kinyon's and A.A. Brown's), F. Swinney's blacksmith shop and hotel, Sewell and Rickman's butcher shop, and a lumber yard owned by Mathieson and Ferguson. Two shoe

shops, two laundries, a gunsmith shop, a bakery run by Mrs. Joyce, and a fruit store operated by David Day, along with the Reverend J. Daubenspeck's brickyard (neither a church nor a school existed in the original township) were also among the twenty-three businesses in operation at Pine Flat, exclusive of hotels and saloons. By 1875, sixty hastily constructed houses had been erected in the town itself. In addition, a Mexican "camp" and a Chinese "camp" thrived, on opposite ends of the flourishing settlement.

Although population counts during Pine Flat's heyday are unreliable, at best, given the transitory, seasonal nature of mine work, it's safe to assume that the town's population hovered around 200 inhabitants, while drawing an additional 1,000 to 1,500 miners and laborers from the surrounding area into its sphere of influence.

During the peak of the quicksilver boom, white male miners averaged three dollars a day in wages, less five dollars a week for room and board, if so required. Their Mexican and Chinese counterparts earned considerably less. Not surprisingly, the cost of living was sky-high in Pine Flat, with hay going for as much as \$22.00 a bale compared to \$12.00 in the "lowlands". Healdsburg-based merchants soon realized, though, that when the miners came down to the "valley floor" for a little r & r as well as to stock up on supplies, they usually preferred to spend their hard-earned cash in Calistoga, not Healdsburg. The same was often true of the mine owners, who needed to import materials for their growing business concerns. Eager to attract this lucrative trade, Healdsburg merchants began analyzing the situation as early as 1873, only to discover that the Calistoga Mine Road was perceived by the miners as a faster and better route than the Geysers Toll Road.

HEALDSBURG'S HUE AND CRY

A new road! A shorter route! That's what was needed to compete with Calistoga, agreed the denizens of Healdsburg. The *Flag* echoed their hue and cry, "It is clearly in the interest of the people of this town to see that . . . the road is speedily built". Granville Thompson himself stepped in to make certain the new road became a reality. And in November, 1873, he joined a committee comprised of H.M. Wilson, I.N. Chapman, T.W. Hudson, Wood Bostwick, and H.B. Snow which determined that the new road would ". . . run in a northeasterly direction from town, passing near Silas Rodgers' farm, crossing the Russian River near Soda Rock . . . through the canon of Sausal Creek . . . (which) runs directly towards Pine Flat."

At once the question of funding arose: Who was to pay for this new road? The citizens of Healdsburg? Or the miners themselves? Without wasting time, Healdsburg residents petitioned the County Board of Supervisors to build the new thoroughfare with county funds, since they claimed that nearby communities, such as Santa Rosa, also would profit from a more direct route to quicksilver country. Edwin Clarke, the Superintendent of Sonoma Mine (formerly known as the Thompson Mine), seconded Healdsburg's petition to apply for county funding when he wrote a compelling letter, which was read aloud to the Board of Supervisors. "The Russian River country is the natural outlet from the mining district," he wrote. "But should you fail to recognize the importance of this valuable mining district and refuse our reasonable demands for good roads . . . we shall seek an outlet in the Napa Valley".

Soon after, on April 3, 1874, a \$10,000 bond election was held, with 373 county voters approving construction; 173 opposed. The sole bidder of the job, Robinson and Son, agreed to complete the Sausal Road as it was called within ninety days, in order to give Healdsburg merchants a competitive edge over their Calistoga counterparts. Instead, due to "much more rock that needs blasting", the road was not completed until September, thereby dashing local merchants' hopes of long-term, fair-weather commerce.

On a more positive note, however, Sausal Road was four miles shorter than Calistoga Mine Road. It also reduced traveling time, when driving a team of four horses, from four hours to a mere two and a half! All in all, then, this sixteen mile stretch of narrow, crooked roadway was superior to the rival Calistoga route. Or was it? The following September, the *Flag* broached the need for a bridge at Soda Rock, where the road crossed the Russian River, by plaintively stating, "A bridge is now the battle cry". Apparently, the paper's words of wisdom went unheeded. For several months later, Healdsburg and the surrounding area experienced the heaviest rainfall of the decade. The lack of a bridge, coupled with washouts and slides on both sides of the river, made Sausal Road impassable. To add insult to indignation, the daily stage out of Healdsburg was re-routed through Knight's Valley to the Calistoga Mine Road.

Even after the road re-opened the following spring, another factor loomed large in discouraging the Healdsburg-Pine Flat trade: the exorbitant freight rates charged by the San Francisco and Northern Pacific Railroads (S.F. & N.P.R.), which linked Healdsburg with the city. Even the Thompson twins, who had been

staunch supporters of the Sausal route, eventually opted to haul freight by wagon from Pine Flat to San Francisco via the Napa Valley since it proved less costly than by rail. Humbled by their lack of foresight, Healdsburg merchants continued to court the miner's' trade, with varying degrees of success.

BOOM TO BUST

Undaunted by their colleagues' trials and tribulations in the valley below, the "Gran-Green" Thompsons celebrated their fledgling town's popularity (where "pack mules lined the street from one end to the other" on a daily basis), by inviting guests from Healdsburg, Geyserville, Middletown, Santa Rosa, Knight's Valley, and points beyond to the Anniversary Ball, which commemorated the founding of Pine Flat. The first of several such galas was held on November 6, 1874, at the Thompson's hotel. It was, according to those who attended, a memorable event. Yet as one disgruntled observer noted, the party was nothing more than "three long days of noise and turmoil".

The other quicksilver mining towns in northeastern Sonoma County couldn't begin to compete, either in population or entrepreneurial enterprise, with Pine Flat. Just the same, a number of small mining towns sprouted up seemingly overnight to accommodate the influx of miners. There was Mercuryville (located at the junction of Sausal and Geysers Toll roads), Excelsior (based at the mouth of Sausal Creek), and Illinois City (situated near the Rattlesnake Mine). They were entirely dependent upon the quicksilver industry, just as Pine Flat proved to be.



Post-quicksilver rush, Mercuryville (c. 1940)

Statistics show that, in 1873, the surrounding quicksilver mines, bearing such fanciful names as Chiquita, Bacon, Rattlesnake, and the Anna Belcher, produced 50 flasks of mercury. In 1874, production increased to 1,700 flasks, with 73

claims located in the area turning a combined profit of \$173,806 . It is possible that profits may have been dramatically higher if the miners themselves, in a land where "greenhorns" abounded, had been more knowledgeable of the quicksilver mining industry. Even the California State Mining Bureau was forced to admit, that besides the plethora of costly court battles being waged over mining claim disputes, the Sonoma County quicksilver industry suffered from "much injudicious work".

In any event, in March of 1875, the price of quicksilver nosedived to ninety cents per pound. One month later, it plummeted to sixty cents. By November, when it was hovering at fifty cents, the *Flag* duly noted that "... the depression in quicksilver has put a damper on Pine Flat".

That winter all of the mines suspended operation, with only one—the Lost Ledge/Oakland —reopening the following spring. In September 1876, Pine Flat's post office closed. With its demise, went the last vestige of business. And by 1880, by all accounts, Pine Flat was a bona-fide ghost town. Which is not to say that it was not without charm. For none other than Robert Louis Stevenson, who was intrigued with the idea of "going rent-free, into a ready-made home", searched for a honeymoon cottage in the derelict mining town before choosing to settle on the slopes of Mount Saint Helena.

Perhaps it was just as well. For, in July 1880, a fire of suspicious origin claimed all but seven of Pine Flat's existing structures, including the Thompson twins' diverse properties, for which they collected ample insurance money. A forest fire in 1904 destroyed the remaining seven boarded-up structures that served as testament to the town that quicksilver built.

LAST TREACHEROUS LEG

Although quicksilver mining continued sporadically in the Pine Flat area for many years, the last visible link that connects Healdsburg and the Thompson twins' nova-like township is the ill-fated Sausal Road [now known as Pine Flat Road, at the Highway 128 junction]. A narrow, twisted ribbon of asphalt, it winds its way up the steep hillside. Then, just before the site of the original township comes into view, the road juts out, seemingly into space. "Cape Horn", the stage drivers once called this "last treacherous leg" of road. Even now, it is not meant for the faint of heart. Yet, as one observant stage passenger noted over a century ago, the view from the Horn was worth every heart-pounding, spine-jarring mile: "... one can see afar the beautiful Russian River

Valley, with the town of Healdsburg nestled in the shade of numerous groves, surrounded by fields of waving grain and orchards heavily burdened with ripening fruit".

Time, however, proved the town of Pine Flat to be as ephemeral as those long-ago valley crops, as fleeting as quicksilver fever.

Primary Source

Pelanconi, Joseph D., *Quicksilver Rush of Sonoma County, California, c. 1873-1875*; *Master's of Arts in History Thesis, C.S.U., Chico*. This 40-page manuscript offers a definitive compilation of information regarding the quicksilver craze within northeastern Sonoma County during the mid-1870's. Footnotes are included in the original manuscript only.

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A MINER'S LIFE

Edwin A. Roberts was the third of five children. His father, E.N. "Tough" Roberts, was foreman of Lieuallen Hall's sprawling Alexander Valley cattle ranch. In the summer of 1904, fifteen-year-old Edwin A. Roberts sought work in the nearby Pine Flat quicksilver mines. Along with an older brother, Edwin found a job at the Socrates Mine, where he cut and peeled timber to shore up the mine's tunnels and shafts. He received two cents a running foot, and considered it a fair wage.

Eventually, Edwin's brother was promoted to



The Socrates Mine

driller while Edwin became a "drill carrier". It was his job to carry dull drills from the mine to the blacksmith shop located near the mine's entrance. Then, once the drills were sharpened, he returned them again to the underground drillers.

The mine, which was often referred to as "The Forty Thieves", in reference to the number of lives lost in its early days, was "anything but safe", according to Edwin. "Great stopes of ore would come down, until you had a hole you could put a barn in." Often the miners became ill, due to the pockets of gas that such a cave-in produced. "The miners would get very sick," Edwin reported. "Your teeth would get loose and your hands shake so bad you had to be fed." Despite the health hazards, Edwin returned the following summer, when he was sixteen-years-old. This time he got a better job: running an ore car. He also was relieved to discover that during the slow season the owners of the Socrates had installed an escape vent, deep inside the quicksilver mine. Unfortunately, the tunnel where he and his brother worked was in "awful shape". The ground would "squeeze up from the bottom" in some places, causing the car track to buckle at random. "We called it 'swelling ground' or 'creeping earth' ", he wrote. "The sides of the tunnel would swell in and bend the timbers (which were twenty inches thick or more) so the car would rub a little harder every few days." Edwin also referred to a snow-white fungus - "the Ghost of Dead Miners", as he called it - that blanketed over thirty feet of a particular dead-end tunnel, where fifteen miners had reportedly been buried in a cave-in years before. He swore that on clear, breezy days, he could hear a moaning noise coming from the mouth of the tunnel, which led him to surmise that "Old miners never die, they just moan away".

In spite of the good pay, Edwin freely admitted that working underground for seven hours a day was "long enough", in more ways than one. After the first month on the job, he lost his appetite. This was understandable, considering that the midday meal provided by the mining camp where he and his brother boarded consisted of hard-boiled eggs "older than the mine itself" and dried fruit "full of worms". Ironically, while he worked on an empty stomach his pockets were full of "free silver" [mercury], which oozed out of his clothing whenever he sat down to rest after a hard day's work.

In spite of the abundance of "free silver", the profit came from extracting mercury from the mined cinnabar ore. The ore cars, which Edwin loaded, ran on an automated tramway which brought the ore down the side of the mountain where the mine was located, and dumped it into a rock crusher. After being crushed into one-half inch pieces, the ore was fed into a concentrator,

where the mercury was forced through buckskin by water pressure. Next, it was transferred to the three-story, oil-fueled Fifty Ton Scott furnace, which was located on the south side of Sulphur Creek.



Miners shown with ore cars. (c. 1964)

Once a month, according to Edwin, the quicksilver made its way to Healdsburg. It was encased in fifty one-half-gallon metal flasks, which had a combined weight of approximately forty-five hundred pounds. The cargo was shipped to San Francisco via rail.

By late 1905, both Edwin and his brother had taken a leave of absence from quicksilver mining in order to help build a dam at Big Sulphur Creek which runs through the Pine Flat area. Their change in occupation was understandable, as mining was a seasonal operation, due to inclement weather conditions. In fact, on January 10, 1906, a two day deluge pounded the Pine Flat area. On January 12, the dam they had recently finished building, broke. "The trees were uprooted and all the buildings were gone," Edwin wrote. "On the furnace side [where the mined ore was processed], the bank had washed away so bad that the furnace was weakened". A month later, the local saloon, which had offered drinks to the workers upon completion of the dam, shut its doors. "Almost everyone left that same day," Edwin noted, "as there was no place (left) to eat or sleep".

Memories of Edwin's quicksilver mining days remained alive for decades, prompting him to eventually recount his experiences many years later. By doing so, he gave us a glimpse into the life of a quicksilver miner at the turn of the twentieth century.

Sources:

Roberts, Edwin A., The Creeping Earth Mine. An unpublished memoir.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Norbert Babin

This is my tenth note for the *Russian River Recorder* dating back to November of 1991, and it is with great joy that I can report to you the wonderful success that the Society has had in its efforts to preserve the history of Healdsburg, and in displaying that history at the Museum.

We have greatly benefitted by having Claire Rithner as our Curator. The recent World War II show was well received in the community as it was most informative and it was put together in an excellent manner. The current show, Healdsburg in the 20's, is truly outstanding. The success of the Society and the Museum has been the result of all of you, the members, volunteers, financial supporters, and the very active members of the Board of Directors. To all of you, I deeply appreciate the support that you have given.

As you know, the Society is embarking on a full-fledged Endowment Fund program, and we look forward to your assistance. Briefly, the Endowment Fund is designed to accumulate \$800,000 as rapidly as possible, without spending any of the principle of that fund. After the accumulation of the principle amount, interest from the fund will be used to finance the day-to-day operation of the Museum, while continuing to accumulate additional contributions of principle. When the interest from the fund can be used for the operation of the Museum, the Society will then be able to direct its efforts toward fundraising events which will be utilized for the purchase of artifacts and amenities for the Museum (which is what the Society was designed to do before it was required by circumstance to provide the day-to-day expenses of Museum operation.

I can hardly wait for the day when the Endowment Fund will provide a solid financial base for the Museum into the indefinite future. What a feather in the cap it will be to those who are going to make that dream come true.

With the Endowment Fund on my mind, I would ask that all of you consider ways that you might assist in this very important program. Obviously, monetary contributions (the larger, the better) are very important to the success of the program. However, there are other ways in which members and friends can contribute to the Fund. I would ask that you consider making a pledge of monthly contributions, or annual contributions to the Fund. Contributions need

not be monetary only, as donations of real and personal property have a significant place in making the Fund a viable tool to meet the purposes of the Society. You may also want to consider a bequest to the Endowment Fund in your Will. There are just so many ways that are available to all of us to assist in making the Endowment Fund a real success.

In reviewing my past messages for the *Russian River Recorder*, I cannot help but think that almost all of them related to requests from the membership for financial assistance (Zin Hop, Curator Fund, etc.). This message does not break that thread; but, after all, in order to meet the goal of preserving Healdsburg's history, and operating the Museum, financial considerations cannot be ignored. Please consider carefully how a contribution to the Endowment Fund will benefit the Society and the Museum, and make you feel good, too.

*You are cordially invited
to the first
Healdsburg Museum
Endowment Fund Benefit*

*September 9, 1995
at the Alexander Valley home
of Mrs. Edward Gauer
5 to 7 p.m.*

hors d'oeuvres, wine, music

Donation: \$50/person Attendance is limited

*For information, call
431-1109 or 431-3325*

GIFT SHOP BOOK REVIEWS

The following books are on sale at the Healdsburg Museum's Gift Shop. They make great gifts, as well as fascinating reading!

Flintknapping: The Art of Making Stone Tools

by Paul Hellweg. Photos by Michael Seacord.
Canyon Publishing Company, 1984
\$5.95 paper.

Hellweg and Seacord combine to produce a thoroughly readable how-to guide on the manufacture of arrowheads and other stone tools. Local resident and Museum member, Frank Zak, has mesmerized children and adults alike with his flintknapping expertise via the Museum Outreach Program. Now, with the help of this informative book you will learn how to make your own stone arrowheads, spearheads, knives, axes, hammers, mortar/pestle sets, and much more. The aesthetic and symbolic appeal of such handmade tools is stressed in this 110 page book. A glossary, suggested reading and source lists are also included to help novice flintknappers get started in these ancient art forms.

Mabel McKay: Weaving the Dream

by Greg Sarris. University of California Press, 1994
\$18.00 hardcover.

UCLA professor and elected chief of the Coast Miwok tribe, biographer Greg Sarris takes his readers on a memorable journey with the noted Lolsel Pomo basketmaker and medicine woman, Mabel McKay. Born in 1912, Mabel was the last of her tribe. Through her eyes, the last Roundhouse dances come alive once again as well as the traditional Strawberry and Acorn Festivals that were part of the cultural fabric of her life. The fact that her economic survival was predicated on doing such mundane jobs as washing clothes and working in a Sonoma County apple cannery did not preclude the intense devotion to the spirit which guided her exemplary basketmaking and healing throughout the years. Impressed with reports of her healing powers, Pope John Paul II once requested an audience with her, only to be turned down. Along with Mabel's story, Sarris interweaves his own life story, which ultimately provides a counterpoint to, as well as a vehicle for, detailing Mabel's gradual acceptance of the Dream into her everyday life, even as her own culture crumbled around her. Numerous Sonoma County sites, including Healdsburg, Fulton and Santa Rosa, are mentioned throughout the book, serving as a reminder that although Mabel McKay lived among us, few of us can claim to have known her, except through the pages of this informative and insightful biography.

VINTAGE VERBIAGE

The following paean to Healdsburg was delivered at a 1915 Healdsburg Business Men's Association luncheon.

"... Sometimes we forget where we are living and of the wealth bestowed upon us by the beneficent hand of Providence. This is our home, this favored section of the West. We can always truthfully write and tell of the wonderful productive quality and of the unexcelled beauty of our surroundings. Our little city nestles at the foot of the mount which stands as a guardian angel over all the vale of Sotoyome. Palms, oranges, the red verbena, the great armsfull [sic] of roses and every variety of fruit and blossoms are at the threshold of each door. Out there the Russian River as a silver gleam runs on to the sea; there is a garden land rich as old Egypt by the waters of the running Nile; there is a vale and the red and gold flowers are as a carpet of velvet kissing the warm earth; there is a forest and the trees whisper their songs of love and peace; there is a soft wind from the south and it bears the raindrops of December, and in August it touches us with a cooling hand from off the sea; there is the harvest time and the yellow and the purple and the gold are as fruitage gifts from the garden of the gods; and the summer sleeps upon the bosom of the winter, for they are both of sunshine; there is a blue sky and it is not so far away, as if it lingered long close to its heaven land. These are all ours and myriads more. Let us not forget, for we have an enchanted land. It is all ours—our home of life, of love, of peace".

Source: *Healdsburg Enterprise*



Back by Popular Demand

The Museum Outreach once again presents "Flintknapping with Frank", on Saturday September 16, 10 a.m., Museum Lawn. Families are welcome and encouraged to attend. The above-mentioned book as well as flintknapping kits will be available for purchase in the Museum Gift Shop.

PASSPORT TO THE PAST

Electa Noble Kennedy, 1810-1915

In 1911, when Rosenberg and Bush held a cake baking contest at their store, the "best special and first class prize" was won by none other than Electa "Grandma" Kennedy. At the time Grandma Kennedy was 101 years old. That very same month she rode down to the Santa Rosa Courthouse in the Swisher family's automobile to pay her taxes, and ended up registering to vote as well.

The following year, Grandma Kennedy became a member of the Sotoyome Chapter, Order of Eastern Star. Then, in 1913, not content to rest on her laurels, she "motored down" to Santa Rosa to be initiated into the Grand Court of the Amaranth. In January 1915, her small house on Lincoln Street was filled with guests who cheered her on as she walked across the room to light the large candle in the center of her enormous birthday cake, which was decorated with a forest of candles: 105, in all. *The Healdsburg Tribune* covered the event, and the front page headlines proclaimed, "Great Age Does Not Dim Memory or Cloud Mind".

One of eleven children, Grandma was born in Derby, Vermont. At the age of sixteen, she taught school in a one-room log schoolhouse, earning \$5.00 a month. In 1836, she married James Kennedy. They settled in Lowell, Massachusetts, where he worked at the local cotton mill. After bearing two sons, George and Charles, Electa

Noble Kennedy contracted tuberculosis. On the advice of her physician, she left her children with relatives and caught a steamer to Tampico with her husband who was on his way to Guaymas, Mexico, to superintend the construction of a cotton mill. Three years later, when the Mexican-American War broke out, they returned to the States, with Electa riding a little white mule all the way to Santa Fe. From there, they traveled back to Vermont by freight wagon.



Electa Kennedy on her 102nd birthday (1912)

Bitten by the traveling bug, the family came by way of "prairie schooner" to Illinois. Then, in 1853, they arrived in Placer County, where Electa "conducted" the Eureka Hotel, which boasted 60 boarders, including Leland Stanford. A year later, the Kennedys chose to call Healdsburg and the surrounding area "home". When her husband died in 1880, Electa, who had been living on the family ranch, a mile from Windsor, moved to several locations in Sonoma County. She eventually settled into her house on Lincoln Street, where she continued to amaze family and friends alike with her spunk and fortitude.

Sources: *Healdsburg Enterprise*; *Healdsburg Tribune*

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

In Memory of Leonida Frediani

Keith & Irene Lampson	Garry & Helen Rosenberg
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In Memory of Emily Bailey

Don Frediani & Renata Gasperi

In Memory of Alfred Leth-Nissen

Don Frediani & Renata Gasperi

In Memory of Fred Tonelli

Don Frediani & Renata Gasperi

Attention

Researchers and Genealogists:

Do any of you have ancestors who came from Simsbury, Connecticut? John G. Wierdsma, a genealogical researcher from Nevada recently stopped by the museum to use our archive. While he was here he told Claire some very interesting information about some of Healdsburg's early settlers. Apparently, Simsbury, a company town, developed economic problems in the 1850s prompting many of its inhabitants to journey westward and relocate in Healdsburg.... If you know anything about this possible connection between Healdsburg and Simsbury please call the museum at 431-3325.