***2020 MUSEUM HOURS***

Due to Covid-19 guidelines as set forth by the State of California, the OUTDOOR exhibits at the Museum are currently open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm until Labor Day Weekend. The INSIDE of the Museum is closed.

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Download our cell phone app at your app store!  

Check out our new website regarding the tree die-off at aforestwithouttrees.org

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The mission of CSHS is to enrich the cultural and educational experiences of visitors to the Sierra Nevada Mountains, by deepening their understanding of the human and natural history of this area.
THE 22ND ANNUAL BLACK POT COOKOFF...GONE VIRTUAL!

HOSTED BY
THE SHAWER LAKE FISHING CLUB
EST - 1902

It is with great excitement that the Shaver Lake Fishing Club announces the coals are still hot for this year's 22nd Annual Black Pot Cookoff! In an effort to meet the critical needs of the Central Sierra Historical Society and Museum in Shaver Lake, during this current health crisis, we are taking the fundraiser "virtual"!

For the past 21 years, community members, along with Central Sierra Historical Society supporters, have joined together on the beautiful shore of Shaver Lake to raise money for our local Museum. Thousands of dollars are raised every August to help ensure the museum doors stay open for the enjoyment of thousands of visitors each year.

The High Sierra Black Pot Cookers and other volunteer "chefs" prepare a variety of delicious foods from cast iron Dutch ovens known as "black pots". Local bluegrass musicians The Bluegrass Element plays the sunset into place over the lake, while savory smells from the black pots fill the air. Shaver Lake Fishing Club members host cocktails, appetizers, dinner, and dessert for the many wonderful people who attend.

The Black Pot Cookoff is the largest annual fundraiser for the Central Sierra Historical Society. In light of the current health crisis, we have sadly had to cancel this year's event at the lake. At the same time, our local Museum faces unique challenges and needs our help now more than ever.

Although we would prefer to host you in person at the lake, the embers are still burning as we take the event "virtual" this year. We hope you will join us and continue to support the Museum. Thanks to the generous donations from people like you, the annual Black Pot fundraiser has raised nearly $400,000 since 1999. We would also like to thank Southern California Edison for, without them, none of this would be possible. All proceeds from this year's "virtual" event will go to the Central Historical Society's – Building and Exhibit Fund.

Our goal is to raise $30,000 for the Central Sierra Historical Society's Building and Exhibit Fund.
HISTORY OF THE SHAVER LAKE FISHING CLUB

The Shaver Lake Fishing Club was conceived in the summer of 1902, when two Fresno businessmen, General M.W. Muller, and Major J. Ed Hughes, both officers in the state militia, had a great time fishing the Shaver Millpond with a few friends. The next year, the outing had grown to over 20 fishermen, and in 1904, the Shaver Lake Fishing Club was officially organized with 22 charter members. There were no accommodations at the millpond, but tents belonging to the state militia miraculously appeared along the shore, along with professional chefs. A crude bar was constructed and thoroughly stocked. In 1905, the Shaver Sawmill partners, C. B. Shaver and Harvey Swift, provided land and built the first clubhouse. Since then, fire, wind, and heavy snows have destroyed three clubhouses but have never affected the popularity and rich traditions of the group.

The Shaver Lake Fishing Club continues in existence today, and many of the present members are descendants of its founders. The original cabins and the site of the last clubhouse, marked by a lone standing fireplace and chimney, are located on the southeast shore of the lake in the area where the Shaver Lake Railroad once dropped logs in the old millpond. Nine cabins and the old cookhouse still surround the old clubhouse site. Gatherings still happen at the location, and hospitality and camaraderie continue to thrive.

HISTORY OF THE BLACK POT COOKOFF

Today's club members still swap lies about the big ones that got away and the rustic habits of their predecessors. The club is now active in aiding the Historical Society by way of holding the annual Black Pot Cookoff fundraiser every first Saturday in August.

The High Sierra Black Pot Cookers formed 22 years ago when a few friends took a black pot cooking class. The group has since expanded and get together for fun and good food. The technique of cooking meals in a covered pot buried in hot coals grew out of necessity. Life in the Old West was rough and rugged. There were long periods spent outdoors with little more than wood coals to cover over. Frontier settlers, cowboys and railroad workers used cast iron dutch ovens to cook everything from stews to baked goods. Now, over 165 years later, the art of black pot cooking invites competition among backcountry chefs and cowboy cookers. Meat becomes tender, juicy, and infused with all the flavors that the cook throws into the pot. Baked goods are crispy, and stews are tantalizing.

In a typical year, the Black Pot Cookoff is held the first Saturday in August. Invitations are sent out in July, and reservations are a must.
THE 22ND ANNUAL BLACK POT COOKOFF....
Gone Virtual!

Kicks off immediately and will continue through August 31, 2020.

Join the excitement and listen to the tunes at:
https://shaverlakefishingclub.org/blackpot-2020/

- Learn more about the Black Pot Cookoff
- Purchase your virtual plates
- Purchase your raffle tickets
- View our photo gallery while listening to The Bluegrass Element
A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON, KEITH SWINGER

With regret, the Board of Directors announces that Executive Director Laurie Zaninovich will not be returning to the Museum. Financial repercussions of the Pandemic have made this difficult decision necessary. All of us at the Museum wish Laurie the very best in her future endeavors.

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS

You can support the Historical Society by giving your friends and loved ones a yearly membership to the Museum. It makes an excellent gift. Call the Museum office for details.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

We hope you will remember the Society when you are planning your estate or as a suitable means of honoring a departed friend or loved one. Donations were recently received in memory of the following:

- Tom Heitzman
- Bud Spickler
- John Statler
- Judith Woodward

CSHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice-Chair: Tom Warner
Interim Secretary: Rebecca Davis
Chief Financial Officer: Robert Knapp

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Peter Van Vleet
A. Emory Wishon III
O. James Woodward III

If you feel you can contribute to the good works of the Historical Society as a member of the Board of Directors or as a member of the Advocate Council, feel free to contact us at cshs@sierrahistorical.org

OUR FIRST VISITORS FOR 2020

Thank you, Brian Bennett and Janelle Younger, of San Luis Obispo for being our first 2020 visitors to the Museum on June 26, 2020! It was good to have at least part of the Museum open and be able to chat with you during your visit.
THE OUTDOOR MUSEUM EXHIBITS ARE OPEN ON WEEKENDS

Due to the State of California Covid-19 guidelines, we are unable to open the inside of the Museum to visitors. Still, the outside exhibits are available for a great museum experience! See and smell the beautiful lupine in bloom around the buildings.

The outdoor exhibits are available for viewing Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 11-3 until Labor Day. There is no cost to visit the Museum, but donations are appreciated. Gift shop items are for sale on the front patio. While there, you can download our app, Sounds of the Central Sierra, to your Android or iPhone to enhance your visitor experience.

Upon recommendations from former Museum Assistant Robert Brookey and current Museum Assistant Joy West, we recently installed iron railings across the doors to the caboose and the powerhouse allowing us to open those exhibits for viewing when a docent is unavailable to take visitors inside. The iron railings were made by Mark Van Aacken of Xero Fab Worx, Shaver Lake. Great job, Mark! And great idea Robert and Joy!

We need your support now more than ever. We are a non-profit organization funded solely by the generosity of our donors. Unfortunately, we have canceled or postponed all our 2020 fundraiser events. Please visit the Museum or go to our website and donate to help us keep the Museum moving forward. Every donation, no matter how big or small, counts!

NEW BOTANICAL WALK AT THE MUSEUM

Did you know there are up to 49 different species of vegetation on the Museum grounds? Past director Linda Clague worked with Intermountain Nursery in 2008 to landscape the grounds that have now matured with amazing colors, smells, and growth. The next time you are at the Museum, be sure to take a stroll along Linda’s Botanical Walk, where you can enjoy a unique display of Central Sierra beauty. Signage stakes are placed along the paths.

OUR THANKS TO CSHS BUSINESS CIRCLE MEMBERS

THANK YOU to the following businesses that have joined the Historical Society’s Business Circle. Your membership helps to preserve the Museum collection, to maintain and improve the Museum and its exhibits, and to provide our community with educational programs, exhibitions, and engaging social activities. An updated portable banner listing all business memberships will be commissioned in April and displayed at the Museum and other outreach events. If you have a business, please consider supporting us by joining the Historical Society as a Business Member with a tax-deductible $250/year membership donation.

In addition to the quarterly newsletters, your business name is on signage at the Museum & outside events. You will receive free entry for up to four people into the Friday In The Pines concerts with early seating as well as free admission for up to four people into our Sierra Voices presentations. Your business can have free use of our media room for your meetings.
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HAYDEN SAWMILL RESTORATION UPDATE

Board member Norm Saude is pleased to report the Hayden Sawmill Restoration Project continues to move forward despite the slow-down due to Covid-19. Cement for the 1935 Waukesha engine (being restored by Mark Isaac) was poured at the site on July 27. The engine will be placed at the site soon.

Sadly, one of the volunteers working on the project, Tom Heitzman, lost his hard-fought battle with cancer in May. We all miss Tom and offer his wife, Teresa, and their family all our support. Tom was an active member of the Sierra Steamers.

UPDATED NATURE TRAIL NOW ON MUSEUM GROUNDS

With the help of John & Dona Mount and the Shaver Lake Volunteers group, the Museum nature trail has been cleared and marked and made ready for your enjoyment. The path is about 2/3 of a mile in length and gains about 70 feet of elevation. It is an easy 30-minute walk with stops at each of the marked stations corresponding to the trail guide that is available at the beginning of the trail.

PREVERSE THE CENTRAL SIERRA HISTORY – BECOME A MEMBER!

Become a MEMBER of the Central Sierra Historical Society & Museum and explore our unique cultural history.

Your membership helps to preserve the museum collection, to maintain and improve the Museum and its exhibits, and to provide our community with educational programs, exhibitions, and engaging social activities.

- $1000.00 - Gold Member
- $500.00 - Silver Member
- $250.00 - Bronze Member
- $150.00 - Donor Member
- $50.00 - Family Member
- $30.00 - Individual Member

CIRCLE LEVELS
- $250 – Business Level
- $2000 – Patrons (5-Yr Commitment)

WE ARE SUPPORTED SOLELY BY THE GENEROSITY OF OUR DONORS

Please call the Museum (559-841-4478) to join or visit our website at www.sierrahistorical.org & click on membership to join.
THE STORY BEHIND THE STUFF  
By Deb Bell, Museum Assistant

July 2020 here at the Museum has been like no other. Some things, however, never change. One of those things is the chance to meet visitors with intriguing stories to tell. A couple of weeks ago, Joy and I were staffing the Welcome Center (that is, seated in folding chairs near the shuttle parking). A couple of visitors approached, masked, and respectful of the fact that the indoor exhibits were off-limits. One of the gentlemen mentioned that he worked summers at Vermillion Valley Resort and that many years ago, he had donated a model sawmill to the Museum. He had stopped by to see it once again. Here is Dave Mau’s story:

MODEL SAWMILL AND STEAM DONKEY  
As Told by Dave Mau

My father, Robin Paul Mau, was the one who gave me my love of the mountains. He was kind of a frustrated Jeremiah Johnson, who first took me to Yosemite as a kid, and after that, I was done for. My late brother Chris and I were into model trains around that time, too, specifically narrow-gauge lumber and mining railroads along with my Dad. For Christmas one year, he gave me a Fine Scale Miniatures sawmill kit, and I was beyond thrilled. Back then, that company made the absolute best, with jeweler grade castings for the machinery and other old-timey stuff.

I kept the model for more than 30 years until my father died in 2002. That summer, I worked at Vermilion Valley Resort and took the model up there with me. Figured since my Pops was gone, maybe it was time to finish it up. So, I spent a month solid in my cabin, building it using my time off from working in the kitchen. Then it had been at least 20 years since I made a model of any kind. On my way out, I swung by the old location of the CSHS and, on a whim, decided to donate it. It made sense to me that it should be in the mountains where it belonged, and my old man would probably want it that way.
AN OPEN LETTER TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

We, the Staff and Board of Directors at the Central Sierra Historical Society & Museum, wish to thank you for your patience and understanding during these unusual times dealing with the Covid-19 Pandemic. As you all are aware, we have been unable to hold any of our usual summer activities, activities that you are all a part of in one way or another. We have a fantastic group of volunteers that keep the wheels of the Museum moving forward. The longer the Pandemic is here, the longer we realize we may not be seeing many of you until Spring 2021. We miss seeing you, but we are looking forward to seeing you again soon.

As a result of the situation, we have closed the inside of the Museum to visitors, but the outside exhibits are open Friday-Sunday 11 am to 3 pm until Labor Day Weekend. We are thankful that some of you have offered to docent on those days. It allows the staff to be more flexible while juggling their other duties.

We are canceling all the remaining steam-ups and powerhouse demos. We have also canceled all remaining Sierra Voices Presentations as well as the Hikes for History Program. The event we had to cancel that hurt the most (besides the Ice Cream Social and Pancake Breakfast) was the In A Landscape Concert, but we have a commitment from Hunter Noack that he will return next summer. We have postponed the Annual Meeting until we can safely gather again. You will be informed if that will happen.

As you know, the Museum's annual operating expenses are funded by our two most significant fundraising events every summer, the Annual Fundraiser Dinner, and the Annual Black Pot Cook-Off Event. To fundraise, we have joined forces with the Shaver Lake Fishing Club and the Steve McDonald Family to create a virtual Black Pot Cookoff Event. You should have received an email from them within the last few days. We intend to do the same type of event for the Annual Fundraiser Dinner. We had initially postponed it to a later date, but it looks like it will not happen this year. The staff is watching and learning how the Black Pot Event works before we launch a virtual Fundraiser Dinner. Please be patient with us as this is something we have never done before. We would hugely appreciate any of your ideas on making this project a success. If you can help, please let the staff know.

Don't give up on us. We need you! We value you more than you know. Please call the Museum if you would like to join our fantastic group of volunteers. All help is appreciated.
TAKE NOTE – PLEASE DON’T LET THIS HAPPEN TO US…

STATUS OF AMERICAN MUSEUMS DURING COVID-19
USA TODAY 07/22/2020

According to a survey taken of 760 museums from June 8 to June 30, America’s museums have suffered serious financial losses during the coronavirus pandemic — and, according to new research, many museum directors fear their institutions will not be able to recover.

According to data from the New Hampshire-based firm Dynamic Benchmarking, many museum directors worry they will not be able to sustain their organizations in the coming months. The data was published in a report Wednesday from the American Alliance of Museums (AAM).

"Museum revenue disappeared overnight when the pandemic closed all cultural institutions, and sadly, many will never recover," AAM's president & CEO Laura Lott said in a statement. "Even with a partial reopening in the coming months, costs will outweigh revenue, and there is no financial safety net for many museums."

"The distress museums are facing will not happen in isolation," Lott continued. "The permanent closure of 12,000 museums will be devastating for communities, economies, education systems, and our cultural history."

Lott added that funding from public and private sources is "crucial to saving the museum field."

USA TODAY 7/22/2020

SUGGESTED OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPONSORSHIP

Have you wished you could have a lasting impact on the Museum of the Central Sierra? Here is your chance…. Donations are appreciated to fund the following projects:

1. Ceiling fans for main Museum.
2. Roll-out shade awning for the Museum patio.
3. Computer topo map projection display.
4. Restoration of an Alison Steam Boiler/Engine Mining Exhibit.
5. Restoration of the Musick Mountain Steam Donkey.

Please call CSHS at 841-4478 for more information on how you can sponsor one or more of these projects.

MUSEUM STAFF:
Kerri Elizondo - Office Manager and Bookkeeper
Rebecca Davis - Membership Coordinator, Newsletter, and Interim Board Secretary
Deb Bell - Museum Assistant
Joy West – Museum Assistant