

# THE HUMBUG HERALD

FRIENDS OF NORTH BLOOMFIELD & MALAKOFF DIGGINS

PO BOX 1658 PENN VALLEY, CA 95946

*friends.nbmd.publicity@gmail.com*

*malakoffdigginsstatepark.org*

## THE SOUND OF SILENCE



### Governor Ok's Solar Funds

2016-17 Budget Approved

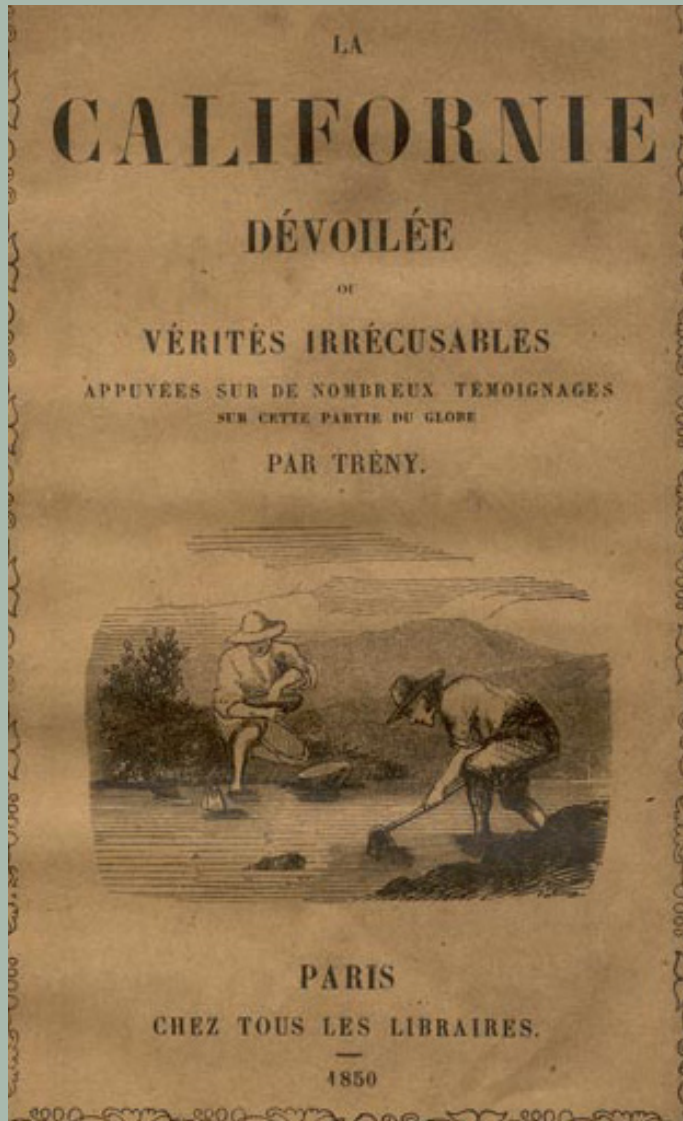
If one ventures out into the night in the Great Basin of Eastern Oregon, the serenity is so complete that it has been said they can hear the satellites blinking through the heavens. For the first time in 50 years, someone standing quietly in the night at Malakoff Diggins may soon hear what that star-gazer in Oregon heard,.....Silence! The prevailing sound around North Bloomfield, over the decades, had been the sometimes steady throbbing, sometimes sputtering, of huge deisel generators, the only means of electric power for the park, operating day and night. The considerable cost for fuel and upkeep of the generators was one of the main factors that had threatened the park with closure. Solar power should result in much lower costs for producing electricity and help perpetuate the park's existence.

Through the efforts of an unexpected collection of proponents: State Parks, Caleb Dardick, the South Yuba River Citizens League, Nevada County Supervisor Hank Weston with staff Allison Lehman & Eve Diamond, Assemblyman Brian Dahle, Assemblyman Richard Gordon, E Clampus Vitus 10 and many others, Governor Jerry Brown approved the 2016-17 budget, including \$700,000 for a solar power project at Malakoff. *"Here Comes the Sun"*.

*Humbug Herald Editor: Laurent Clark [fentclark@att.net](mailto:fentclark@att.net)*

*Publicity: John and Kathy Field*

*[friends.nbmd.publicity@gmail.com](mailto:friends.nbmd.publicity@gmail.com)*



*Pour la France*

## “CALIFORNIA UNVEILED, UNDENIABLE TRUTHS”

So says this Pamphlet  
Encourageing French Gold  
Seekers to sail for California

Thus they came to Humboldt,  
seeking gold, excitement,  
and a new life in America

*Ed.*

### **Planning Underway for a New Event Late Summer 2017**

Syd Brown Reports

The Friends of North Bloomfield & Malakoff Diggins are collaborating with researchers and local Francophiles to host a new event honoring the French mining pioneers responsible for much of the early technological and cultural developments around Malakoff Diggins.

Noted author and academic Claudine Chalmers and Sonoma Anthropological Studies Center Project Manager Mark Selverston are lending their expertise and enthusiasm for newly uncovered documentation surrounding the varied roles of early French emigrants. Envisioned is a festive, lively gathering for late summer 2017. Music, dancing, games, food and wine and walking tours highlighting the early French Connections are planned.

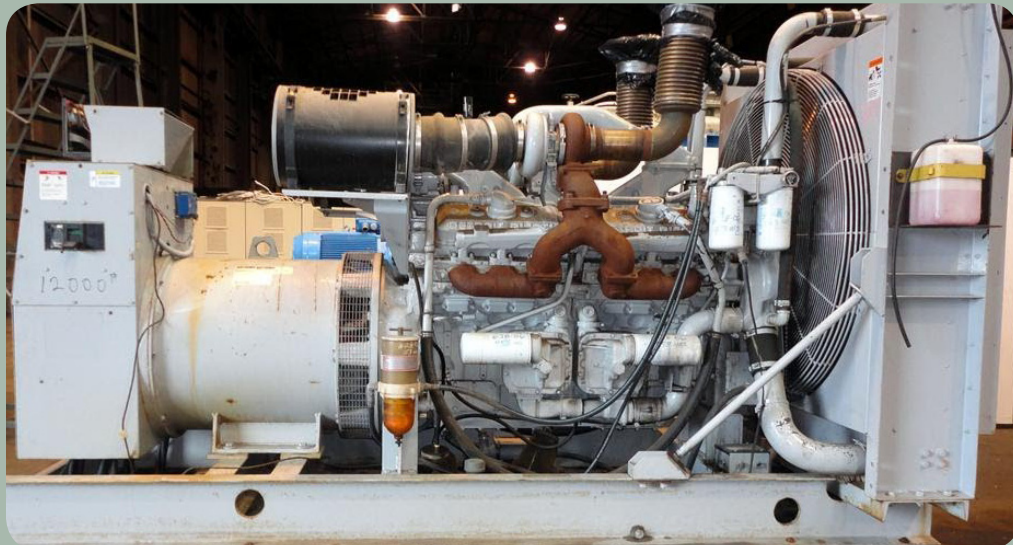
Stay tuned for more details, and a save the date announcement in our next newsletter. Syd 530-265-6344 (h)530-205-7068 (c)

## THE SILENCE WAS DEAFENING

In the middle of a winter night a man is startled awake by the sudden silence. As he sits up in bed, his wife mumbles, “The dang thing died again”. Throwing a parka over his PJs and slipping on fur boots, he crosses the Humbug Creek Bridge and opens a tin door to confront the monster; an ancient industrial Generator ticking hot and oozing oil. Checking the oil stick and the fuel gauge, he goes over the re-start procedures he knows by heart after his many years of a love-hate affair with the beast. He then gives it a whack and dons ear protectors as the detonation shakes throughout North Bloomfield.



Never was such an uproar so reassuring as it echoed 24/7, 365 day a year, after year, after year, lighting and powering the park town....at an excessive cost for fuel and spare parts.



Indeed, Tom Stark, became a venerable wizard at locating, trading for or fabricating replacements for the various parts the old dynamos would eject on a regular basis. Wire and Duct Tape were easy acquisitions compared to a long-distance vendors laughing,” they don’t even make most of those parts anymore.”

cont.

Tom's experience as an instructor of things mechanical at American River College allowed him to be, often, the only person in the immediate vicinity of the diggins with the ability to coax the apparatus back to life.

For decades, his presence, knowledge and willingness to respond to the generator's spasms, seizures or out-right break-downs, and any other urgency in the park, are unique and have been a blessing for the protection, preservation and up-keep of North Bloomfield.

His home, on the "other side" of Humbug Creek, almost opposite the generator shed, is the family residence with his wife Chris, daughter of the late Richard and Helen Rohde, all of whom, along with daughter Jennifer, have been involved with MDSHP since its founding; as state park employees, volunteers and cooperative association members.

Fortunately, just a few years ago, the ancient engines were replaced by new generators, which, though still expensive to run, don't require Tom to make so many night-time forays.....But, If the new Solar Array is interrupted by a black bear napping on it's warmth, Tom will likely be the first on scene, PJs or no.



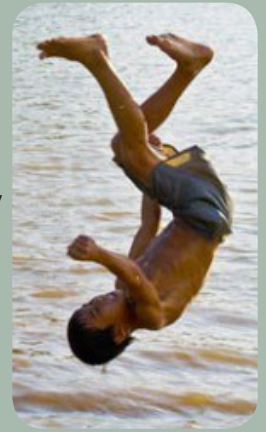
Tom Stark  
The Wizzard of North Bloomfield

*Ed.*

# **GOLD DIGGIN'**

*BY DEBORA PFANNER, PARK INTERP. SPEC.*

The Annual Kids Fishing Derby was held this year on Saturday, May 14th. It was a very good turnout as usual. This year there were games for children all throughout the day on the Skidmore lawn, as well as fish cleaning, BBQ, and raffle for the kids. And yes, a few children did "fall" into the pond. Many thanks to Debbie Dajas & crew.



There was a large land slide that happened this Spring and the back portion of the lake remains closed, but it didn't hamper the derby. It was due to a broken water line from Humbug Creek that runs on top of the hill; the water softened the ground, which resulted in the slide.

We did hold an Ice Cream Social this past 4th of July weekend for daily visitors and campers. The count was around 80 people. Ice cream cones were served and participants had their choice of several toppings. It was a great social gathering on a warm day. On Sunday, September 4th at Noon we will host another ice cream social for daily visitors and campers of all ages..

Supervising Ranger Dan Youngren is working on keeping the cabins and camp - ground open through Nov. 30th with more events in the fall as well.

I am putting together an all-volunteer campout for volunteers from Empire, South Yuba, and Malakoff. It is in the preliminary stages, but it looks like it will be held in our Environmental Living campground the second or third week in October.

Currently, the visitor center is open from 10:00 am through 6:00 pm until the end of the season. The three of us are working 4/10 days. I am putting on a campfire program every Saturday evening at 7:00. So far the turnout has been very good. The campground is at least half or three-quarters full each weekend. We did have a full campground on the July 4th and for the annual Storytelling Festival weekend a few weeks ago.

We have had a few break-ins this summer. The VC was broken into, gas was also stolen (again), iron rangers were broken-into, the iron ranger cash box was stolen from the campground, and the freezer was broken-into. Apparently, this is going on all around the ridge with break-ins to businesses and homes.

*Get a mean dog!*



# O'PIONEERS

Tucked in behind St. Columncille's Church and the North Bloomfield School is the Humbug – Bloomfield – North Bloomfield Cemetery. Operated by the Nevada Cemetery District of Nevada County, the place was also known as the North San Juan Cemetery at Humbug – Bloomfield - - -you get the idea.

As one of the first establishments to pop up out of necessity, with the inception of gold mining here; people were just dying to get in. Explosions, landslides, falls, duels, suicides, pneumonia and frontier child-birth required an available plot to plant. However, I was unable to find graves for any of the characters who perished at the hands of others as listed in the state park history.

Many stones in the pioneer area are dated 1870-1890, which would be a logical span for the miners, etc. who came here in the 1850s-1860s. Names we know well, of individuals and families who made North Bloomfield what it was; Carter, Gaus, LeDue, Sherwood, Landsburg, Skidmore, etc., lie juxtaposed for eternity, as they may have been in life.

It is natural to try to interpret the meager carvings on tombstones, hoping for a clue to the resident's circumstances. Much is left to one's imagination.

Strikingly, Charlie Gaus, 1832-1916, outlived his wife, a son and three daughters.  
The melancholy graves are neatly lined up, together in death as in life.



Another son, also Charlie, lived to be 95, 1878-1973.

Markers often reflected a need to connect the frontier-departed with the "world" whence they came: George Wolders, 1821-1897, a Native of Holland and his wife Adelaid, 1826-1907, a Native of Ireland. Simple words conjuring up enough fleeting impressions for a Historical Romance Novel. Tommy-knockers wonder if this fascinating family record is written down in an old bible somewhere.

North Bloomfield Cemetery is listed as an "Active" burial site. The District was not amused when I inquired whether "Active" was a pun. They take their responsibilities deeply. The lower area, on your right as you enter, (upright, I hope), is the "active" area. Cost of residency is \$660 with prior arrangements. No drop-ins allowed! Veterans and memorial markers will be set by the District for \$200. They have a brochure available with all necessary information. Included there-in is a list of Active and Inactive Cemeteries so the dearly departed do not get cited for trespassing.

Visitors may tour the North Bloomfield Cemetery any day of the year. Aficionados are invited in to relax beneath a full moon. Just recline against a comfortable monument and quietly watch shadows passing in the moonlight. Not to worry, any breathing you hear will just be a bear or mountain lion!

*L. Clark*



The day wasn't a day at all, but was the culmination of loving attention and effort by many people who gathered to honor the establishment of Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park 50 years ago. From start to finish, the day was joyful, entertaining, educational and inspiring. The Boy Scouts opened with a flag ceremony and Shelly Covert from the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan gave a blessing song in the indigenous Nisenan language. Cheri West, Assemblyman Brian Dahle's legislative director,

presented *Member's Resolution 1286*, commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Malakoff Diggins as a state park, to Superintendent Matt Green and to *E Clampus Vitus Chapter 10*.

In addition, Jennifer Stark was presented a *Certificate of Appreciation* and Gift Card from *Friends of N. Bloomfield and Malakoff Diggins* recognizing her many years of dedicated service on behalf of Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park.



Entertainment included music by the Buffalo Gals and dancing by the Tommyknocker Cloggers. Education and interpretation in the form of story-telling and living history demonstrations of blacksmithing, weaving, candle making, tin punching and gold panning was punctuated by re-enactments of an old west shoot-out. A delicious barbecue hosted by the E Clampus Vitus (Clampers), ice cream, root beer floats, popcorn and snow cones all provided sustenance and "bio fuel" for the event. Wagon rides, children's games, shooting of the water cannon (by FNB&MD board members David Anderson and Paul Keasberry) and the world's shortest parade (please, no fact-checking!) generated a vibe of good will, family fun, and appreciation for this special park.

Volunteers from the three Gold Mines Sector Park Associations, *South Yuba River*, *Empire Mine* and *Friends of North Bloomfield & Malakoff Diggins* (FNB&MD) all contributed their time and expertise.



*cont.*

The FNB & MD membership table was a source of park information, sales of newly designed FNB & MD T-shirts, and distribution of park visitor questionnaires to inform the organization's strategic planning effort. Park staff worked seamlessly with volunteers and even participated in the parade (Sierra District Superintendent Marilyn Linkem piloted her vehicle for a couple of laps in the parade with red lights flashing and siren blaring, with board member Marianne Bryant in the co-pilot seat).

North Bloomfield sported some freshly painted building fronts, abundant festive bunting, and a crisply colored gazebo as the "stage" for the emcee (Alkali, last of the 49ers as portrayed by Rick Toles). All in all, the 50th Annual Humbug Living History Day celebration was successful, thanks to the many volunteer and park staff hours of planning, set up, day of event participation and post-event wrap-up and clean up.



-Syd Brown  
Executive Committee Member  
Friends of North Bloomfield & Malakoff Diggins



# HUMBUG CITY 1850s

June 15, 1859

Two Killed



Jack Wilson, an Englishman  
and Jean Richards, a Frenchman  
Employed by G. K. Reed  
Mangled in tunnel at Relief Hill  
Tapping out clogged shaft.  
Accumulated dirt and water escaped.  
Sluiced them out and down hillside.

1855

A Lodging House  
has been established  
in Humbug City.  
The  
Hotel de France  
of one and one half stories.  
Located just North of the  
Livery Stable and Now  
Receiving Guests

1857

Westerfield & Company  
in operation next to  
U.S. Hotel  
selling hats, caps,  
boots and shoes;  
gentleman's  
furnishing goods.

1856

Farmers in Marysville  
complaining of debris in rivers  
but because of mining income  
to the community  
built levees to  
protect farmlands

1853

Sheet-Iron Pipe  
Introduced and used  
by R.R.Craig  
on American Hill  
in Nevada City

1853

Franklin Pierce  
Elected 14th President



## 'Never Buy a Pig in a Poke'

Might seem odd and archaic language.

It's true that the phrase is very old,  
but actually it can be taken quite literally and remains good advice.

The advice being given is 'don't buy a pig until you have seen it'.

This is enshrined in British commercial law as 'caveat emptor'.

Latin for 'let the buyer beware'.

It remains the guiding principle of commerce in many countries and,  
in essence, supports the view that if you buy something  
you take responsibility to make sure it is what you intended to buy.



A poke is a sack or bag.

It has a French origin as 'poque' .

Like several other French words its  
diminutive is formed by adding 'ette' or 'et' -  
hence 'pocket' began life with the meaning 'small bag'.



***Thus, gold miners usually kept their 'dust'  
in a small, easily concealed, 'poke'.***

A pig that's in a poke might turn out to be no pig at all.  
If a merchant tried to cheat by substituting a lower value animal,  
the trick could be uncovered by 'letting the cat out of the bag'.



Of course, a bird in hand.....never mind. *Ed.*

*photos: Google Images*

# BRIDGEPORT FALL FESTIVAL

**SOUTH YUBA RIVER STATE PARK**

**SUNDAY OCTOBER 23, 2016**

**11am - 4pm**

- \* Barn Tours \* Gold Panning \* Hayrides \* Music \* Root Beer Floats
- \* Children's Games & Crafts \* Food & Drinks \* Pumpkin Painting
- \* Live Birds \* 1930's Gas Station \* Surprise Attraction



**FREE ADMISSION ~ Parking \$5.00**

**17660 Pleasant Valley Rd, Penn Valley, Ca 530-432-2546**



<http://southubariverstatepark.org>

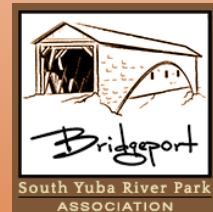
**SAVE OUR BRIDGE**



**YOU CAN HELP**

South Yuba River Park Association

P.O. Box 1658, Penn Valley, CA 95946 ♦ [www.southubariverstatepark.org](http://www.southubariverstatepark.org)

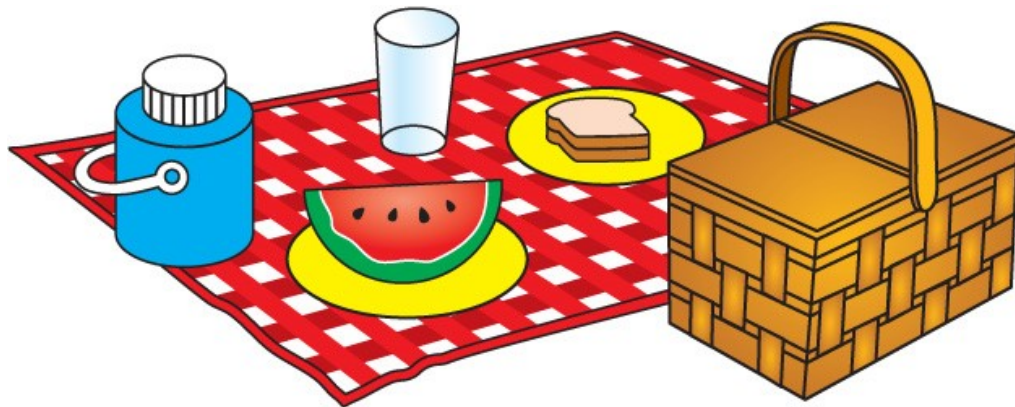


*Tons of fun since 1895 ☐ and everyone's invited!*

# 121st Miners Picnic

**Empire Mine State Historic Park  
10791 E. Empire St., Grass Valley**

**Saturday, August 27, 2016 • 11 am to 4 pm**



- ⇒ Bring your own lunch, chairs and blankets, and picnic on the grounds — **or** purchase food from local vendors
- ⇒ Living History with period costumes, **PLUS** a dramatic mine rescue at high noon!
- ⇒ Live music, entertainment, a silent auction, and raffle prizes
- ⇒ Vintage cars, an old-fashioned cakewalk, gold panning, games and non-stop fun for **ALL**
- ⇒ \$7 for adults 17 & over, \$3 for ages 6-16, **under 6 FREE**



**For full details phone:  
530.273.8522  
or visit [www.empiremine.org](http://www.empiremine.org)**



# Friends of North Bloomfield & Malakoff Diggins

## Membership Application

The Friends of North Bloomfield & Malakoff Diggins (FNB&MD) is a non-profit organization assisting the California Department of Parks and Recreation in the operation of Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park.

Your tax deductible membership in FNB & MD will

- help preserve, protect and enhance the man made and natural resources of Malakoff Diggins SHP
- support interpretation of the park's rich biological diversity, geologic features, historic and cultural resources
- provide you with a quarterly newsletter and other notices of Park activities
- include a 10% discount on purchases from the Malakoff Park Store.

### Membership Levels

- Annual Individual membership (\$20)   
Annual family membership (\$25)   
Lifetime individual membership (\$150)   
Lifetime family membership (\$200)   
Annual business sponsor (\$100)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in:

- helping the park organization financially
- becoming a trained docent
- becoming a park volunteer
- other

Send payment with membership application to  
FNBMD

P. O. Box 1658

Penn Valley CA 95946



## FRIENDS OF NORTH BLOOMFIELD & MALAKOFF DIGGINS

### Mission:

*We enhance the interpretive experience for visitors, promote park-based education for learners of all ages, and support and preserve the natural and cultural resources of Malakoff Diggins SHP. We also assist other cooperative associations and the State Park System mission for the benefit of the public.*

for more information call 530.265.2740 or check out our website:

[www.malakoffdigginsstatepark.org](http://www.malakoffdigginsstatepark.org)

[friendsofmalakoff@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmalakoff@gmail.com)

P. O. Box 1658 Penn Valley CA 95946

# FRIENDS OF NORTH BLOOMFIELD & MALAKOFF DIGGINS

Post Office Box, 1658,  
Penn Valley, CA 95946

[friends.nbmd.publicity@gmail.com](mailto:friends.nbmd.publicity@gmail.com)

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

David Anderson  
James Berardi  
Syd Brown  
Marianne Bryant  
Ron Ernst  
Paul Keasberry  
Holly Mitten  
Bill Stamatis

## CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

[malakoff.diggins@parks.ca.gov](mailto:malakoff.diggins@parks.ca.gov)

Matt Green Sector Superintendent

[matt.green@parks.ca.gov](mailto:matt.green@parks.ca.gov) 530-432-3024 w

Dan Youngren Supervising Ranger

[dan.youngren@parks.ca.gov](mailto:dan.youngren@parks.ca.gov) 530-273-3024

Ryan Randar Unit Ranger

[ryan.randar@parks.ca.gov](mailto:ryan.randar@parks.ca.gov) 530-273-3024

Debora Pfanner

Park Interpretive Specialist

[debora.pfanner@parks.ca.gov](mailto:debora.pfanner@parks.ca.gov)

530-265-2740

