

GOLD BUG GAZETTE

Volume 2/No.1/March 2018/Hangtown's Gold Bug Park Development Committee, Inc., Placerville, CA

WELCOME TO OUR THIRD EDITION, VOL 2 NO 1

In an effort to keep our Hangtown's Gold Bug Park Development Committee members, park employees, and friends in the "know", we are proud to present our third newsletter. We hope to make this a quarterly newsletter, but it will take time. Please be patient with us. This publication will be emailed to members of the Hangtown's Gold Bug Park Development Committee, volunteers, park employees, and friends of the park. Danny Johnson, Editor. Beverly Johnson, Co-Editor, Historian

WE HAVE A NEWSLETTER NAME, BUT WE STILL NEED A LOGO FOR OUR NEWSLETTER MASTHEAD

We still need a logo for our masthead. Don't be shy. Send in your ideas. All nominations will be considered. Please send your nominations to Danny Johnson, our editor, at dmjente@yahoo.com

DIDN'T RECEIVE A NEWSLETTER?

Send your email address to Danny Johnson at dmjente@yahoo.com

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT



In the Diggin's

By Charlie Basham, President
Gold Bug Park Development Committee

Wow, we're already a quarter of the way through 2018! There are lots of fun and interesting things planned for Gold Bug Park for the rest of this year. The school tours are running nearly every day and the park opens its gates seven days a week on April 2nd.

At the top of the list of notable activities is the 130th anniversary of Gold Bug Mine! It was January 2, 1888 when William Craddock started digging into the quartz drifts along Big Canyon Creek and named his claim the Vulture. We're working on creating some celebratory activities for the summer and will keep you posted on what we come up with.

We have a few fundraising activities planned for this year. Our fundraisers are the lifeblood of the Gold Bug Development Committee -- and 100% of the proceeds funnel right back into the park as exhibits and support for the educational programs.

Recent examples of our handiwork include the large mining equipment featured elsewhere in this Gazette. And the new, bigger and better gold panning troughs are ready for the public to find their fortunes the day after Easter.

On Saturday May 26 (Memorial Day weekend) we'll conduct our popular Priest Mine Tours. On July 14 we're hosting the second annual "Murder in Gold Bug Mine" mystery dinner. For Labor Day weekend we'll again open the Priest Mine on Saturday, September 1. Watch our web page www.goldbugpark.org for updates, dates, and times.

Finally, I want to acknowledge all of Gold Bug Park's amazing and generous volunteers. They annually give thousands of hours of their personal time to work with the students and visitors from virtually every state and every corner of the world. This park exists because of our volunteers' dedication and talent. April 15 marks the start of National Volunteer Week, a recognition started in 1974 to acknowledge those who give tirelessly to their community and fellow man.

I want to especially point out one exceptional park volunteer -- Dean Reed. He's celebrating his 20th year as a Gold Bug volunteer. Dean's contributions are countless, and he's done virtually every job at the park ranging from school tour guide to museum attendant to being elected a valuable and respected member of the Development Committee's Board. Thank you, Dean for your incredible work!

We need volunteers! If you know someone who likes to work with people, enjoys dressing in old clothes, has a passion for history and the Gold Rush and would like to give back to the community, please have them contact the park manager Frank Jacobi.

SHOWCASING GOLD BUG PARK'S OUTDOOR MINING EXHIBIT by Charlie Basham

The park's outdoor mining equipment exhibit near the Stamp Mill helps complete the story about how miners captured and processed quartz and other gold bearing ores. These items include an arrastra, a single stamp test mill, a hydraulic mining water cannon, and a vibrating "shaker" table.

This exhibit was built by our volunteers who also restored the equipment. A lot of outside help was provided by two Eagle Scouts and major contributions from the Doug Veerkamp and Jason Lussier companies. Our dedicated volunteers include Dick Carter, Rich Dvoracek, Keith Gibbs, Mark Acuna, Pat Layne and Charlie Basham.

Arrastra

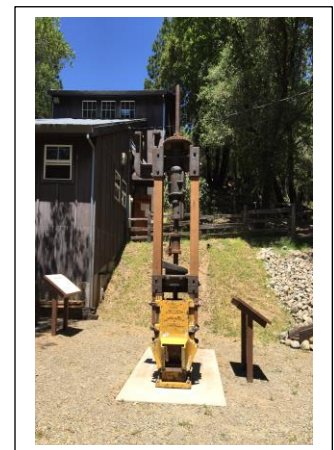
The arrastra (uh-ras-truh) is a simple device used for crushing the ores. It was first used during Phoenician times (1500 B.C. to 300 B.C.) and introduced in North America by Spanish miners in the 1500s. The word arrastra comes from the Spanish word *arrastre* – meaning to drag along the ground.

Here's how it works: the gold bearing ore is placed on the stone floor of the arrastra and a large "drag stone" is pulled around the arrastra using draft animals or humans. The drag stone grinds the ore it into a fine powder, releasing the gold. Mercury is added to the powder to capture the gold. Next high heat is applied which evaporates the mercury, leaving the gold. The arrastra is significantly slower than a stamp mill but is much more efficient.

Single Stamp Test Mill

Stamp mills were the backbone of the hard rock gold mining process. They crushed the ore into a fine powder, so the gold could be separated and recovered. Like a large hammer, the heavy steel stamp was brought up and down using a motor and gears. This single stamp is a much smaller version of the large eight-stamp machine we have housed in the Stamp Mill.

The ore was fed into a "hopper" box where it was crushed under the stamp. The powder was then processed with mercury to draw out the gold.



Much of the history for the park's single stamp has been lost to time. But we do know it operated between 1928 and 1985 at the Red Cloud Mine in Mariposa County east of Modesto.

This stamp mill was used in a quest to find a lost vein of gold rumored to be located at Greely Hill. It was donated by Mining Enterprises of Placerville.

Hydraulic Mining "Monitor"

Hydraulic mining used a high-pressure jet of water from an iron nozzle called a "monitor." The water dislodged massive amounts of rock and dirt which would flow through a sluice box to trap the gold. This mining process literally washed away mountains under the simple premise that the more gravel processed, the more gold would be found.

Hydraulic mining originated in ancient Roman times and came to California during the Gold Rush. In the Placerville area the hydraulic miners brought water via aqueducts from the Sierras to holding ponds hundreds of feet above the area to be mined.

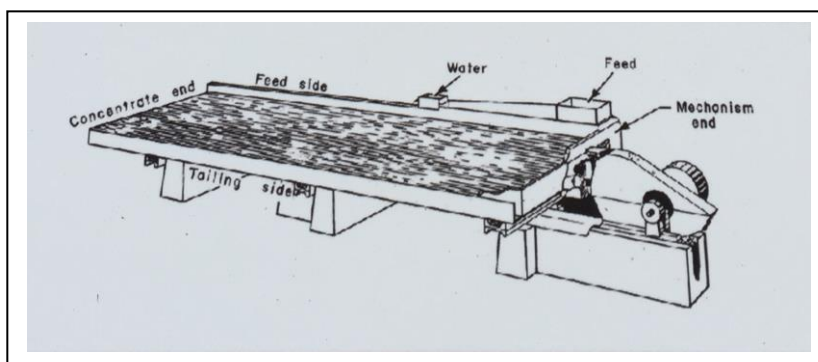
Though successful in extracting gold-rich minerals, the widespread use of hydraulic mining resulted in extensive environmental damage – including flooding, erosion and the sediments clogging waterways and covering farmlands in the Sacramento Delta. It was declared "a public and private nuisance" in 1884 and banned in California. But in 1893 it was allowed again on a much smaller basis, provided sediment detention structures were built.

The monitor was generously donated by the Ken Wyman Family who used it for three generations.



Shaker Table

The mechanical vibration of a shaker table acts just like a gold pan in the hands of an experienced miner. Only on a much larger scale! As crushed ore and water wash over the riffles in the table the heavier gold separates from the other materials and lodges along the base of the riffles. After a day's work the miners would take this concentrate and either mix it with mercury to draw out the gold or pan the materials by hand. Gold Bug's shaker table is currently being restored to its original specifications



HATTIE'S HISTORY CORNER by Beverly Johnson

What happened to the Vulture after Craddock's death?

After William Craddock's death in 1920, the Vulture changed hands many times. In 1922, Emma, Craddock's wife, transferred 1/3 interest each in the Vulture claim to her son, John C. Fehnemann and son-in law, George Hill Clark. When Emma died the remaining 1/3 went to the three remaining daughters. However, they did not want anything to do with the mine, so they transferred it to their brother, John Fehnemann who worked the claim for a couple more years.

In 1926, a man named John McKay filed a location notice, changing the name from the Vulture Quartz to the Gold Bug. Mc Kay was born in Coloma and had four sisters and a brother. By 1910 we find him living on the ranch with only his mother and a niece, Margaret Veerkamp. In 1916, he bought a house on Bedford Ave, renovated it, and rented it to Benjamin Federer, claimant of the Liberty mine. He then bought a larger house across the street, living there until 1930.

While living in Placerville, John developed an interest in local politics, worked for the local Democratic committee, and even ran for public office, though he didn't win. He was also a member of the Freemasons, the Royal Arch Masons, and the IOOF.

John McKay probably developed an interest in mining because his grandfather had done some mining. By the early 1900s, McKay had a mining interest in Amador County, which he found to be unsuccessful, so he sold it. Unfortunately, for him, after the sale, the mine became quite lucrative.

McKay evidently did not work the Gold Bug for long because in 1928, The California Mother Lode Mining Company filed claim on the Gold Bug Mine as well as on other mines residing on the Gold Bug Park Property. This mining company was one of many who worked old or abandoned claims on the chance of finding gold.

By 1930, the California Mother Lode Mining Company had ceased working on the claim, and a local man, Fred Mayer, filed for claim of the Gold Bug and Silver Pine. He worked the claim and refused to give it up. Under pressure by 1932, he quitclaimed 1/6 interest each in the claims to H.P. Moulton, H.M. Moulton, Henry Gede, Jr. and William G. Meagher. Mayer finally reneged in 1934, after William Meagher continually pestered him to transfer the remaining interests.

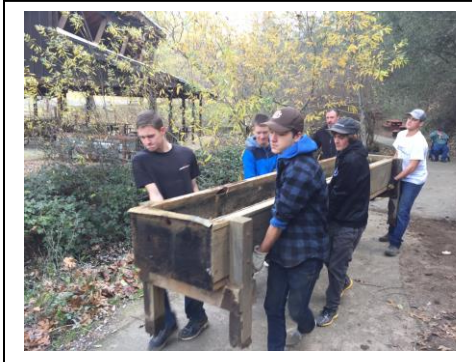
William Meagher worked the claim until around 1950. He was from Oakland, CA and owned the Independent Iron Works. Eventually the land was returned to the Bureau of Land Management. In the early 1960s, the City of Placerville leased the land from the Bureau of Land Management for purposes of a park, and in 1981, the city applied for and was granted the official land patent.



Emma Craddock (center) with Hazel and Mabel.

NEW PANNING TROUGHS READY FOR SUMMER FUN!

On any summer day it's common to see a dozen people – kids and adults alike – standing shoulder to shoulder along the park's gold panning troughs. They're hunkered over their dripping pans looking for a ruby-red garnet, a chunk of shiny pyrite or a beautiful chip of turquoise. Squeals of delight echo out when someone finds the treasure. And everyone gets excited!



Eureka!

Gem panning is one of the most popular activities at the park. It's the perfect way to become a '49er -- if only for an hour.

But, after nearly 30 years of faithful service, the panning troughs had seen better days and were starting to leak. Over the winter the Gold Bug Park Development Committee worked in tandem with an energetic Eagle Scout candidate, a retired carpenter and a generous local construction firm to improve the panning experience. The troughs will open the day

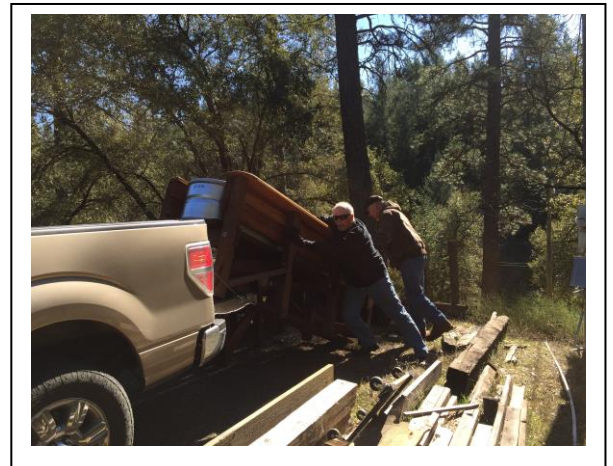
after Easter.

The panning area was expertly excavated and prepared by a work crew and heavy equipment donated by Doug Veerkamp General Engineering. They leveled an expanded panning pad and applied a filler material made from recycled road asphalt.

The scout is Kevin Haverson, from Placerville's Troop 58 of the LDS Golden Empire Council. For his Eagle Scout community project Kevin and a team of fellow scouts removed the old troughs, relocated water lines and built a retaining wall that nearly doubled the size of the panning area.



There are four new eight-foot panning troughs made from sheep tanks. Their supporting redwood structures were made by local resident Roy Carter.



With the addition of another 10 feet of trough length and the expansion of the panning area, we look forward to accommodating more "miners" looking for their treasure. We also look forward to hearing their excited shouts of "Eureka!"

ARTIFACTS

The executive director of Leoni Meadows (the organization that purchased the Baltic Tower) said he would love to have the tower artifacts that were on display at the Stamp Mill. He promised to put them on display in their museum and occasionally bring them out for special events at the tower. The items include a round spotting map, an old dial-less telephone, an extremely outdated walkie talkie, a first aid kit, a canvas fire shelter bag and two forestry service manuals. These items have been boxed up and sent to Leoni Meadows. We are storing the display case in the trailer for future use.

The HGBPDC board has accepted a hard rock miner's evacuation board donated to the Committee by the Folsom Historical Society. The handles were crafted by a blacksmith. The FHS does not know where it came from, but they found it recently in their warehouse and thought it would be a good fit at Gold Bug. FHS believes that it is at least 70 years old. This artifact could become part of a new museum display that talks about mine safety, safety equipment (hard hats, lighting, the bell system, etc.) and pioneer medicine. Until we can find a place for it, the rescue board will be stored in the trailer.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 10 – City Council Meeting (Need park volunteers in costume at meeting)

April 15-22 – National Volunteer Week

May 8 – General Meeting Town Hall 8:30am

May 26 - Priest Mine Tours

June 13 – Trough and Mining Exhibit Dedication

June 28 – Chamber Mixer

July 14 – Murder in Gold Bug Mine Dinner

September 3 – Priest Mine Tours

November 23 – Self-Guided Mine Tours and Gift Shop will be open.

TBD – Park Recognition Dinner

