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# Centerville School Bell

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Chico, CA 95928

**Centerville**  
Recreation & Historical  
Association  
13548 Centerville Road

## September 2023



### CALENDAR

**Saturday October 21st**  
**Potluck**

Bring a potluck dish to share and beverages if you like! Hosted by Angel and Mike Clifford  
6:30pm at the Schoolhouse

**Sunday November 5th**  
**Camp Fire Memorial Event**  
1:00pm at the Schoolhouse

**Saturday November 18th**  
**Potluck and Dessert Auction**  
Bring a potluck dish to share and beverages if you like!  
6:30pm at the Schoolhouse

**Sunday December 10th**  
**Holiday Gift Sale with Santa**  
11am - 4pm at the Schoolhouse

**Sheriffs Safety Meeting**  
The Butte County Sheriff will be leading a community meeting to help us to keep our homes and roads safer. Please keep your eye on Next Door for date and time.

### ANNUAL BUTTE CREEK CANYON CLEAN-UP

Saturday, October 7th, 8:30 am.

Meet at the last parking area before the Covered Bridge on Honey Run Road. We'll provide trash bags, trash picker-uppers, water, coffee and snacks.

**Please help us clean up the canyon after a busy summer of visitors! Hope to see you then!**



## CANYON COMMUNITY MEMBERS' DISPLAY

The museum continues to display canyon community members' interesting collections. Marc Halet, a canyon birder and photographer, has set up a beautiful display of bird photos for us to enjoy. His collection will be shared in the museum during the months of September and October, followed by Bonnie Calhoon's collection of vintage hats in November and December. The museum will host Huibert Venema's European travel photos in January and February.

If YOU have a special interest and would be willing to put items in our safe display case for our visitors to enjoy, please give us a call and we'd love to schedule a time for you. (530) 521-7930

Visit the museum any weekend from 1:00 until 4:00 to view these interesting collections!

## CAMP FIRE COMMEMORATION

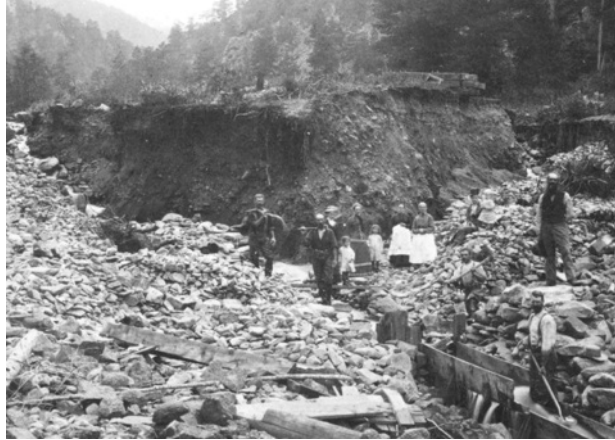
November will mark the 5th anniversary of the Camp Fire. CRHA and HRCB will host a commemoration event on Sunday November 5th at 1pm. We welcome the canyon community to come together and enjoy pie and coffee. The Museum is working on a permanent Camp Fire display. As part of our canyon history we would love to have pictures (before and after's of your homes or?), stories (handwritten is okay), or anything else that could potentially be used in our display. We will not be able to return items so only things you are willing to part with please.

Canyon folks may recall years past when daffodils graced our roads....CRHA will be giving away daffodil bulbs in hopes that they will provide a little beauty and continue us towards a fully renewed community. Questions? Call Julia 521-8563

## GOT ROCKS?

*by Tim Calhoon*

You may be curious about what type of mining went on in your backyard or neighborhood. The piles of rocks, or "tailings", can tell the story of what the early miners were up to.



### Ground Sluicing

One of the earliest forms of mining, was known as ground sluicing. A trench was dug into the ground and water was used to wash gold bearing gravel into the trench. Early on, the trenches were dug down to bedrock and as the slurry of water and gravel traveled through the trench, gold was caught in the cracks and crevices of the bedrock. Sometimes logs were used in these early ground sluices to create riffles to catch gold. Later on, when lumber and nails were more readily available, trenches were lined with wooden sluices to catch the gold. The characteristics of ground sluices in today's tailings are easy to spot. This type of mining was many times located on the banks above the creek where gold bearing gravels were left high and dry as the creek eroded it's way down to form the canyon over millions of years. Rocks were many times stacked on the walls of the trench to keep them from caving in or just to get them out of the way. Water was essential for these operations and above these tailings you will commonly find evidence of man-made dams and hand dug flumes for carrying water.



### **Hydraulic Mining with a Monitor**

By the mid 1850's a more advanced method of ground sluicing was concocted using a water cannon, or "monitor" to wash down whole hillsides and channel the resulting slurry into ground sluices to catch gold.

It can sometimes be difficult to determine if a monitor was used in a ground sluicing operation. Some evidence may be a cut in the bank above the tailings where the operation ended, abandoned riveted iron pipes that once fed water to the cannon, and sometimes rocks stacked to make a platform where the water cannon was placed.

This destructive practice was ended in the 1880's as the resulting mud and silt clogged the waterways endangering agriculture in the central valley.

### **Support Our Fire Company**

Tax deductible donations can be made to:



BCCVFC 26

PO Box 3171

Chico, CA 95927

## **DOCENT NEEDED**

For the 4th Saturday of each month.

Contact Julia for more info: 530-521-8563

### **The Dredgers**

With the advent of electricity at the turn of the century, a new industrial level of mining took shape in the form of Gold Dredges. These floating processing plants plied their way up the from the mouth of the canyon to as far as Centerville, tearing up the floor of the canyon and creating large piles of rocks. The dredge floated in a pond of its own making continually digging the pond as it moved forward and filling it in with tailings on the back side.



Huge iron buckets, each similar to a backhoe bucket, were connected in a circular chain. It was like a giant chain saw chewing through the earth. The tailings are easy to spot as huge piles of rocks along the floor of the canyon. Many have been flattened by bulldozers to make space for houses. Undisturbed tailings seen from above form distinct linear patterns as the dredger maneuvered back and forth leaving behind piles of rocks in successive lines. Is there still gold in your backyard? Even with all of the mining activity, they didn't get it all. My advice is though, don't quit your day job. It's a fun hobby, but it's really hard work finding the left-overs. Next time we'll talk about the sources of gold in the canyon and if you're lucky enough to have a tunnel on your property, what that means about the mining that was going on there.

# Butte Creek Canyon



Honey Run Covered Bridge ■ Colman Museum ■ Centerville Schoolhouse

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## ENTERPRISE-RECORD

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**Museum Website:** [CentervilleMuseum.com](http://CentervilleMuseum.com) **Bridge Website:** [hrcoveredbridge.org](http://hrcoveredbridge.org)  
**Phone:** (530) 893-9667 **Facebook:** @Centerville Schoolhouse @HRCBA