



CLARKE MUSEUM

The Golden Spike Exhibit

FALL 2014

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Completion of the Northwest Pacific Railroad

It was an event worth celebrating then and now. A new exhibit commemorating the completion of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad will open just in time to celebrate the original opening 100 years ago. The railroad, which connected Humboldt County to the markets of the Bay Area and Southern California, strengthened the region's economy and partially lifted the ever-present Redwood Curtain. The following is an excerpt from the souvenir booklet, "Re-Driving of the Golden Spike, June 16, 1965," sold at the re-dedication of the railroad after it was rebuilt following the destructive 1964 flood.



"At the turn of the century, the beautiful Redwood Empire, with its vast timber resources, was still almost entirely isolated from the rest of the state and nation. Little local railroads were coming into being in Humboldt County, but the only channels of commerce to the outside world were ocean-going vessels that had to traverse rough seas and cross dangerous harbor bars, and horse-drawn vehicles that had to labor over hundreds of miles of dirt roads that were little better than mountain trails. When

two transcontinental rail builders began to focus their attention on Northwestern California, it was an area waiting only for a rail connection to market as the key to the development of its natural resources. After five long years, the North West Pacific Railroad completed its line through the Eel River Canyon— one of the most difficult railroad construction jobs ever attempted.

On October 23, 1914 in a gala ceremony at Cain Rock, Warren S. Palmer, president of the NWP, drove a gold spike into a tie of polished birdseye redwood, marking the completion of NWP's rail line from San Francisco Bay to Eureka, Calif. Notables from San Francisco and Eureka, including the mayor of both cities, cheered as Palmer's daughter, Alice, shattered a bottle of California champagne on the rail."

The Golden Spike exhibit will be open in late October, coinciding with the 100th Golden Spike Celebration, which takes place October 23-25. Check our website for more details.

Pictured: Christening of the completion of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad, October 23, 1914.

Stories from the Clarke

The Clarke Museum, in collaboration with KEET-13 and Clarke board member Bill Morrill, is producing a three-part series of 30 minute historical documentaries entitled "Stories from the Clarke," slated to air locally in January 2015. Subjects explored include the life and mission of museum founder Cecile Clarke, the museum's Native American collection, local pioneer artifacts, and the Bank of Eureka building in which the Clarke Museum is located.

Also explored in the upcoming series is the social, cultural and historical significance of the bars, bordellos, and entertainment industry in Old Town from the old logging days through the 1980s. Another segment will focus on the significance of Eureka as a port city, starting in 1850. All segments will include interviews which will serve as oral histories on the various subjects.

The "Stories" project has been funded through grants from CalHumanities, the Humboldt Area Foundation, the Sierra Pacific Foundation, and the A.J. Cleland Educational Trust.

Pictured: Bill Morrill interviewing Board Member Rosemary Hunter in Nealis Hall, on the set of "Stories from the Clarke."



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The Mission of the Clarke Historical Museum is the acquisition, preservation and educational display of objects relating to the history of Eureka and Humboldt County.



The Albert and Vivien Hailstone Collection

The donation of the Hailstone collection is a magnificent gift to the Clarke Historical Museum. The basic collection consists of baskets Vivien put aside from those she was selling at I-Ye-Quee gift shop in Hoopa beginning in 1959 for about forty years. Then her son Albert, added other baskets to the collection. Thus this collection is mostly from the revival period and primarily consists of “made for the trade” or baskets made for sale. Vivien’s belief was that baskets were “art” not just craft. The trinket or fancy basket is at the heart of “made for the trade” baskets and are the most numerous in the collection. There are also some wonderful flour trays and other utility baskets made much earlier.



The Hailstone collection is mostly Yurok baskets, whereas the Hover collection is primarily Karuk baskets. Both collections have over two hundred baskets and perfectly complement each other in the Clarke Museum’s overall holdings. The Hover collection is mostly from the golden age of basketry beginning in the 1880s to the 1930s. The Hailstone collection is from



the revival period beginning in the 1950s for about forty years. This collection has a large number of baskets by known weavers, which is rare in most museum collections. These include most of the greatest Yurok weavers: Amy Smoker, Ella Johnson, Lena McCovey, Queen James, Ada Charles, and other well known weavers. This was the period in which small trinket and tobacco baskets were favoured and there are many beautiful examples in the collection.

In addition there are Karuk baskets by the Davis sisters, Madeline and Grace. Perhaps the most finely woven baskets in the collection are two attributed to Louisa Hickox from the 1920s. These were added to the collection by Albert.

Vivien herself was a talented weaver, teacher, and advocate for basketry. She specialized in medallions which are well represented in the collection. She was certainly among the most prolific creators of medallions. These became very popular, since they were mainly hung around the neck and hers were backed with buckskin. She may also have assembled and finished medallions by other weavers.

There are so many beautiful baskets in this collection that viewers will undoubtedly be awed. The Clarke Historical Museum is very honored to be the recipient of this great collection and all of us extend our warmest thanks to Albert Hailstone for his vision and generosity.

The exhibition opens Saturday September 6th and will be on view for a year. **-Ron Johnson, Special Exhibit Curator**

Above right: Acorn Eating Basket, King Snake Design

Above left: Woman’s Ceremonial Cap with Sharp Tooth Design

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the
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100th **GOLDEN SPIKE** CELEBRATION

1914 2014



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OCT. 23

139 2nd Street, Eureka

**Dinner, theatrical re-enactment,
period costumes and more at the
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OCT. 24

240 E Street, Eureka

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Museum**

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and more at the Clarke Plaza**

**Celebrate
100 years of
railroad
history**



For more information call (707)443-1947
or visit www.clarkemuseum.org
Tickets are available at the Clarke Museum
240 E Street, Old Town Eureka



History of the Clarke Firearm Collection

Almost half of the items in the Clarke's gun collection are from the Reinhart Collection. Precise information on how these items reached the Clarke is missing. James E. Reinhart is listed in Polk's directories as a resident of Ferndale from at least 1915, listed initially as a shoemaker, then as a machinist. In 1923 & 4, Polk's lists him with simply "Sporting Goods" as an occupational reference. Two years later, Reinhart was able to purchase two locations in Eureka: his home, at 234 Pratt street, and a commercial property at 109 F street, where he is listed as a "gunsmith." This listing continues until 1936 when his wife Orilla is listed as a widow. Among surviving paperwork concerning the collection, which includes rifles, muskets, shotguns & a variety of handguns & revolvers, is the notation: "REINHART COLLECTION OF GUNS ON RACKS PURCHASED BY MR. ALBEE..." No information regarding the date of acquisition exists, but it is known that the guns were on display and/or stored at Eureka High School until Cecile Clarke opened the Clarke Museum in 1960.

George Albee was the Superintendent of Eureka schools in the 1930s. It is unknown whether Albee purchased the guns, the racks, or both and whether they were bought with city money or with funds out of Albee's pocket. We do know the guns, or the lion's share of them, became part of the Clarke collection when, because of lack of room at the school, many items were bought by Cecile and transferred to the former bank building that became the Clarke Museum's home.

A second donation of weaponry worth noting came in 1931 from Ida Wheeler, the widow of prominent Eureka lawyer, Charles Wheeler. The Wheelers were natives of Marysville, CA, but spent most of their adult lives in Eureka. Mr. Wheeler became the chief attorney for the Hammond mill. He was very active in Eureka civic affairs and was a founding member of the Fieldbrook gun club. The Wheeler guns are not as numerous as the Reinhart weapons, but are in better condition and of higher quality.

Quite recently, the Clarke received a donation of a gun collection from Humboldt State University, a passage that amassed quite a history before the firearms actually reached the Clarke. They were described as belonging to a university group listed as the HSU Gun Club, though in a 1980 article about the weapons from the *Humboldt Stater*, student writer Tom Rooth, does not mention the gun club. It does, however, provide an historical background for the items. According to Rooth, the guns were given to HSU by James Blake, who moved to Humboldt County in the early 1900s. Blake was the founder the Blake Telephone Co. which was the first to service the Arcata area. The weapons were displayed in Founders Hall from the mid-1930s to 1968, after which the guns were placed in storage.

Then, in 2013, contact initiated by HSU reopened the case of the Blake guns, ending with the collection finding a home at the Clarke. Among the items, 2 in particular stand out. They are both .50 cal. octagon barrel hunting rifles that belonged to early Union (Arcata) settlers.

GUN #1: Charles Schumacher was a Union-Arcata gunsmith whose name is incised on the barrel. He & several brothers emigrated from Prussia and he arrived in Arcata no later than 1856, at which time he opened a gunsmith shop on the plaza. He almost certainly made the gun described below as well as the one with his name. In 1866, Schumacher moved to Walla Walla, WA, where he lived out the rest of his life until his death in 1898.

GUN #2: A very similar weapon, the name incised on the barrel is Charles Liscom. Liscom was a leading member of the Union Company that founded Union (Arcata) in 1850. He was known as Captain Liscom. His family arrived 3 years later from Boston. Liscom tried to settle near what became Blue Lake on a hill that became known as Liscom Hill. However, difficulties with Native Americans (who burned his home) caused him to move to a 640 acre farm west of Arcata where he prospered. A young man then in the Arcata area who would later become a famous writer, Bret Harte, was engaged to tutor the Liscom children.

Together, the 3 sources described above account for over 60% of the Clarke's firearms collection. -Art Barab, Registrar

Pictured: Several firearms from HSU Collection, currently on display at the Clarke





CLARKE HISTORICAL MUSEUM



FALL 2014

Thank You for a Job Well Done!

Beginning this last July, former Clarke employee Carly Marino accepted a full-time position as reference librarian in the Special Collections department at Humboldt State University. While she will be sorely missed here, we know she is going to do a great job at HSU.

Carly began at the Clarke Museum as an intern in 2011 and soon took over as office manager. Once she completed her M.L.I.S., her position and responsibilities changed. Attaining the title of archivist and museum coordinator, Carly focused on managing the Clarke photo archives. Other responsibilities included working as the intern and volunteer coordinator, as well as improving the website and social media outlets. She also prepared the quarterly newsletter, wrote grants, worked with researchers, took care of the textile collection and helped with fundraisers. While her responsibilities were many, she regularly went above and beyond in all facets of her work. Her positive, can-do attitude led her to accomplish a tremendous amount during her time here.

Carly helped to raise a significant amount of money towards repairing and restoring the water damaged south facing wall of the Museum. She was instrumental in the revision of many museum policies and worked tirelessly to win many grants which paid for a climate monitoring system, a museum grade vacuum, dehumidifiers, new computers, an educational booklet she engaged to assure the preservation of two letters connected to the quilt's history. In addition to all her hard work, Carly still found time to make the office a brighter place. Her sense of humor and dedication to her coworkers was ever apparent; she made sure we all had our favorite cakes for our birthdays and regularly boosted moral with coffee or cookies. We all wish her the best with her new position and look forward to her volunteering here. -**Ben Brown, Director and Curator**

What's New in the Gift Shop?

The *Nettie Ruben Exhibit Catalog* is now available. Nettie Ruben is considered one of the finest Karuk basket weavers of all time but has been overlooked and underrepresented until now. This catalog is full of black and white photographs of Nettie Ruben and her family as well as color photos of her baskets. The catalog is a great companion to the exhibit and makes a great addition to any library.

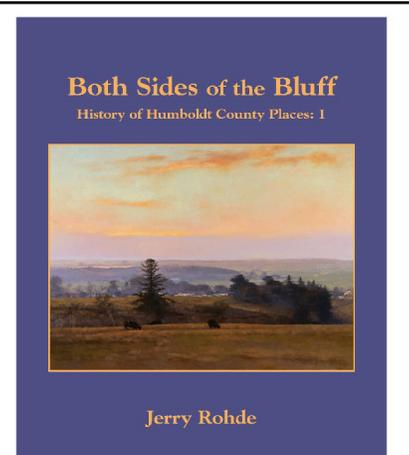
The gift shop committee has been hard at work making sure the museum store continues to help generate much needed revenue by seeking out the talented artisans of Humboldt County. We try to incorporate new artists and work regularly so check in often to see what's new.

Fourth Leaf Woodwork is our newest addition; his work features handmade wooden toys, decorations and business card holders. These works of art are all made from recycled wood in Humboldt County.

One of our bestselling jewelry artists, **Happy Woman** has new designs that incorporate sea glass and mirage color changing beads, these unique pieces are sure to make great gifts.

Our sale item of the summer is *From Sawdust to Uranium: The History of Electrical Power Generation in Humboldt County and Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Humboldt Bay Power Plant 1883-2019*. This hardcover book is a steal at just \$5. The book makes a great souvenir for those who remember the PG & E exhibit of 2012 and a great source of information for anyone else.

Shopping in the gift shop helps supports the museum, local artists, and authors. Don't forget, as a member you receive a 10% discount on all products in the gift shop.



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CLARKE HISTORICAL MUSEUM



FALL 2014

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Thank you for supporting the Clarke Museum in our effort to match the generous endowment left to us by Barbara Brown. Your donations have put us one step closer to our goal of \$10,000. Barbara hoped to spur the community to not only match her contribution but to galvanize others to begin similar matching programs to safeguard Humboldt County history far into the future.

Want to help us meet this challenge? Send in a check, or credit card, or donate online. Consider giving a gift of stock or making the Endowment Fund a beneficiary of an IRA. Call the Museum at (707) 443-1947 to contact Ben Brown (Director/Curator), Roy Sheppard (Board President), or John Winzler Finance Committee chair to talk about these or other possibilities for giving.



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