

EL DORADO COUNTY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



K. Payne # 10 BOS
8/15/2017

Fountain & Tallman Museum
524 Main Street
Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 626-0773
www.eldoradocountyhistoricalsociety.org
eldoradocountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

May 28, 2017

El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
330 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667

Respective Supervisors (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5):

We support the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce maintaining its occupancy of 542 Main Street. Recently, it came to the attention of the EDC Historical Society that the County property at 542 Main Street is under administrative review for possible change in tenant occupancy or status of the County's property. I have reviewed the video recording of May 9, 2017 BOS Agenda, Item #39 in behalf of the Society and feel the Society is knowledgeable about the content of this matter.

The El Dorado County Historical Society has a long standing relationship with the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce, the current tenant at subject property. By coincidence, the addresses of the EDC Historical Society's Fountain & Tallman Museum (F&TM) at 524 Main Street and the County's property at 542 Main Street by address gets periodically mixed up by digit transposition. The Fountain & Tallman Museum is west within a few lots of the Chamber of Commerce and on the same side of the street. So within our favor, the digit transposition generally benefits us by improving our visitor exposure.

The El Dorado County Historical Society was founded by a Chamber of Commerce historical committee in 1938. (See attached Wednesday, February, 10, 2016 Mountain Democrat article entitled "El Dorado County Historical Society Retrospective".) The Chamber of Commerce is therefore part of the legacy of our organizational existence.

Finally the most important consideration, we have a direct relationship with the Chamber of Commerce by membership and by informal agreement to operate as a Chamber of Commerce associate, providing Saturday and Sunday tourism information at the F&TM. The Chamber of Commerce is not open on Saturdays and Sundays (operational hours are Monday-Friday, 9:00AM-5:00PM.) A directional poster is posted on the Chamber door directing, on Saturdays and Sundays, the Chamber visitors to the F&TM for visitor information. This Saturday and Sunday relationship works for the Society because of the close physical proximity of the two facilities and because it results in increased visitor numbers for F&TM. Our donation box funding is a primary revenue source for our budget. With increase visitors comes increase donations.

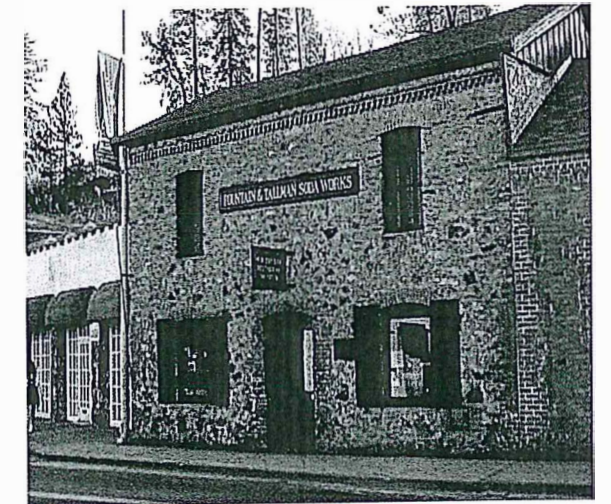
We as the Historical Society want to maintain our current relationship with the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce with the least amount of change (inconvenience or disruption.) We look to the BOS to recognize the importance of the Chamber at 542 Main Street to maintain our existing relationship and for our future.

Sincerely,


Kris Payne, President of the EDCHS

The El Dorado County Historical Society

Fountain & Tallman Museum



Located at 524 Main Street in
Historic Downtown Placerville

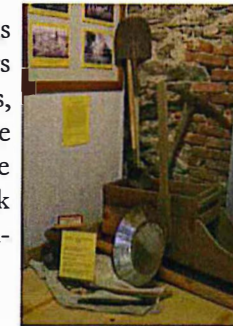
Open Wednesday-Sunday
11:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Admission is Free
Donations for upkeep of
the building are welcome



The Fountain Tallman Building, constructed in 1852, is one of the oldest buildings in Placerville and was the site of the first soda works, where water was bottled and sold to miners.

Placerville's early history was as a mining town where miners could purchase their supplies, get a hot meal, and find a place to relax. As mining became harder, other businesses took over and Placerville has continued to thrive.



The Fountain & Tallman Museum's exhibits are about these early days of Placerville's history and provides a glimpse into its colorful past.

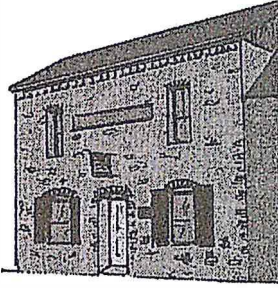
El Dorado County Historical Society
524 Main Street
Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 626-0773



EL DORADO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY RETROSPECTIVE

This article was prepared with the assistance of Kris Payne, President of the El Dorado County Historical Society and the Mountain Democrat.

EL DORADO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



A meeting of great interest and importance to the public-minded citizens of El Dorado County will take place at the County Court House on Friday, August 5 [1938] as written in the Mt. Democrat. So began the legacy of the El Dorado County Historical Society that has endured the past 78 years. Thirty-six representatives of 23 separate fraternal and civic organizations met at the court house on that Friday, August 5 for the expressed purpose of forming a county historical society in El Dorado County. The object and purpose of the organization was [and continues to be] to collect and preserve historical relics, historical items and information about El Dorado County; and to provide a suitable home for these items.

Throughout the years leading up to the formation of the County Historical Society, many citizens of the community realized the necessity of a building, which would house the relics, many of which were fast getting away either through theft or by purchase by neighboring counties. Further delay it was felt would result in additional inroads into our pioneer relic stores until within the near future, suddenly we would find ourselves literally stripped of the materials which link us with our historical past. As the years advance the relics as it was believed then [and it is still considered] more and more valuable to collectors.

7/14/1938 Mountain Democrat "Historical Society May Be Formed"

More than forty civic and service organizations of the county have been asked to send representatives to a meeting called by the historical committee of the County Chamber of Commerce to be held at the courthouse on Friday August 5, in furtherance of proposals to form a county historical society and to support plans for a county museum.

The following statement calling the meeting was issued by the Chamber of Commerce: A meeting of great interest and importance to help the public-minded citizens of El Dorado County will take place at the county court house, on Friday, August 5th.

Through its historical committee, the Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring the organization of a County Historical Society which will have for its object the acquisition of a suitable site and the erection of a pioneer historical building. It has been suggested that the proposed building should provide fireproof protection to the many valuable relics and mementos of the early mining days and also provide a home for the Chamber of commerce which could act as guardian of the building.

Invitations are now being mailed by the Chamber of Commerce Committee to over forty civic and service organizations in the county inviting each of them to send a representative to the meeting on August 5th. The committee consists of Ernest Van Harlingen; chairman, Henry Lyon, M.T. Kelly, Joseph Quigley, Don Goodrich, Lloyd Raffetto, and L.J. Anderson.

8/10/1938 Placerville Times "Historical Groups Will Form Historical Society"

Thirty-six representatives of 23 separate fraternal and civic organizations Friday evening met at the court house for the purpose of forming a county historical society in El Dorado County.

So unmistakable was the response to the suggestion that the entire group voted unanimously to form the organization.

It was later announced that the second meeting of the series will be held Thursday evening, August 11, when the committee of fifteen appointed by chairman E.E. Van Harlingen, will present plans for the forwarding of the movement which is an outgrowth of the work of the sponsoring committee of the El Dorado County Chamber of Commerce.

Among the distinguished visitors of the evening introduced by Van Harlingen were Joseph Ghitto, noble grand arch of the Druids and Edward H. Mossi, grand secretary.

This society, it is believed, fills a long felt need within this county for the collecting of much valuable historical data and for the preservation of many of the priceless relics that yearly are finding their way into other sections.

A further and eminently important goal in which such relics may be deposited for safe keeping.

Further recommendations will be made Thursday when a suitable name for the society will be presented for consideration.

Those organizations represented Friday, included the Druids, Lions, N.S.G.W., Chamber of Commerce, Eagles, Eagles Auxiliary, American Legion, Foresters of America, Hangtown Grange, Smiths' Flat P.T.A.,

Episcopal Church Guild, N.D.G.W. Leona Rebekah Lodge, Rainbow girls, Coloma-Lotus-Gold Hill Farm Centers, Shakespeare Club, Lake Valley Community Club, Boy Scouts Troop No. 57, Placerville P.T.A., O.E.S., U.S.V.W., and DeMolay.

A committee of fifteen was named to make recommendations. They were Wilder Immel, Mrs. Verna Brame, Mrs. Mary O'Connell, Mrs. Nora Gray, Mrs. Ethel Wickes, Joseph Quigley, Emmet Golden, Miss Jane McCusker, T.F. Lewis, Henry S. Lyon, H.E. Dillinger, Cecil Barker, Mrs. Amy L. Drysdale, and E.E. Van Harlingen.

9/14/1938 Placerville Times "County Historical Society Lays Foundation for Active, Permanent Organization", "Constitution and By-Laws Drafted; Opportunity for Everyone in the County to Participate Under Three Types Membership"

The executive committee of the El Dorado County Historical Society met at the Court House on Monday evening to make their recommendations for an emblem, incorporation and to name a membership committee as well as to make preparations for a booth in the County Fair.

On Thursday night, a general meeting will be held at the Court House in the Superior Court rooms to decide upon these recommendations. All interested are invited to attend this general meeting.

At the meeting of the El Dorado County Historical Society Thursday evening, Sept. 8 the constitution was adopted and the following officers elected: President-Wilder Immel, Vice Pres.-Mrs. Ethel Wickes, Secretary-Miss Metie Jamieson, Treasurer-Lester McKenzie, Directors-Reuel Whigam, Mrs. Nora Gray, Mrs. B.C. Celio, and Wm. Breedlove.

The purpose of the Society and its aim is to purchase a suitable lot and construct a building in which to house the pioneer relics of El Dorado County.

The finances will be raised by means of popular subscription and memberships.

9/29/1989 Mountain Democrat Time passages/Melbourne Z. Myerson "The Fountain Tallman building"

There's this little stone building at 524 Main St. just west of the Chamber of Commerce building that has a history worth relating. As a matter of fact there is often confusion between the two buildings because of the similarity of their addresses. The chamber is located at 543 Main. To accountants that's called a transposition of numbers and that has no bearing whatsoever on the subject of this piece.

Last year it became necessary to close the building, which is used as a museum for the El Dorado County Historical Society, for a period of time due to nearby construction which was inundating both the building and the artifacts with dust and dirt from the stones and mortar. It has been reopened now, rearranged, redecorated to some degree, and awaits the multitudes of visitors that should be walking through its doors.

The Fountain Tallman structure was built in 1853-1854 and financed by either John Fountain or Benjamin Tallman, who relocated their soda factory from across the street. It may be the only building that survived the disastrous fire of 1856 that engulfed Placerville. While most buildings in the area were destroyed, the Fountain Tallman building remains as a monument to our past. The façade of the original structure is virtually intact.

Some of the stones used in erecting the building were quarried from the hillside directly behind the building.

A variety of interests owned the building until in 1960 Pacific Gas & Electric Co. deeded the building to Roger Darrow and his wife with the stipulation that it would be maintained as an historical landmark, and a plaque was placed on the building by the Native Daughters of the Golden West.

On Feb. 2, 1981 the building was transferred to the Historical Society, which opened it as the Placerville City Museum on Oct. 23, 1983. The society also operates the main El Dorado County

Museum at 100 Placerville Drive. As you enter the front display area you can see the now-plugged holes in the wall where soda was piped. Water for the soda mill was taken from a rock spring behind the building, and the upstairs were living quarters in the olden days. The[s]e are times I truly wonder if miners who came to Placerville were really the hard-drinking, hell-raising men they are written to be when I consider the amount of soda manufactured, and apparently imbibed, in the city!

Between 1983 and 1988 the

society spent \$18,600 in making necessary changes for maintenance purposes and to make the structure safer for visitors.

Today the ground level display room has many interesting items from the Gold Rush days; and old hand-powered washing machine, Chinese artifacts and hundreds of other fascinating items. The upstairs room is mostly filled with donated items from the estate of Stella Tracy - furniture, personal items, dishes, books, etc. A walk through this room is a visit to the past.

While the building was reopened a short while back, the Historical Society is having a formal open house noon-4 p.m. Oct. 8 to celebrate the reopening. Some nearby good neighbors are assisting to make the party even more inviting to the public. Round Table Pizza, which allowed use of their parking lot during the reconstruction period has offered to provide pizza for the party. For the "sweet toothers" among us, the Chamber of Commerce will provide the same "dollar" chocolates which you enjoy at the county fair recently. Further Randy and Michelle Anderson of the Sunday Times are offering ice cream samples to the attendees. Much work was accomplished during the closure, and a good part of the expenses incurred in cleaning the building and the artifacts have been defrayed by the law firm of Dosh & Sample, our next door neighbors. Many of

our own members contributed a great number of hours to see the work to completion, and without their dedicated help, we might still be waiting for the doors to open. Those members are Joe and Bev Cola, Bob Harvey, Irene Barton, Maxine Chard, Shirley Grosche, Mary Mendenhall, Bud Blair, Peter Peters, Jack Clough, and Tom Mahach. If I have omitted any names I apologize sincerely and if you will let me know, I'll get those names in another column.

Contact the El Dorado County Historical Society for membership information
 (530) 626-0773 • 524 Main Street, Placerville • www.eldoradocountyhistoricalsociety.org
 Open Wednesday through Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Join Us - Support El Dorado County History
 Annual Membership Dues: Single \$20 - Family \$30 - Student \$5

The mission of the El Dorado County Historical Society is to honor the people who came before us by rescuing, preserving, researching, and displaying the county's rich history to ensure that its significance will be appreciated for generations to come.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City & Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

Mail Dues to: El Dorado County Historical Society 524 Main Street, Placerville, CA 95667 or drop it off at
Fountain & Tallman Museum, 524 Main Street Placerville, CA (Wed - Sun, 11 AM - 4 PM)
(The El Dorado County Historical Society is a 501(c) 3 Non-Profit Corporation)