



The Scruffy Post

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www.smartsvillehistoricchurch.org

Dec. 31, 2024

6th Annual *Wreaths Across America* in Smartsville

On a rainy Saturday, December 14, 2024, the national day called *Wreaths Across America* took place in Smartsville at the local cemeteries to honor our veterans with wreaths placed upon their gravestones. In the photo above you see Tim Clark, a former local Smartsville firefighter, place the last of this year's 68 wreaths on the redwood tree by our historic church to honor all our local veterans. The plaque below the wreath was placed there in 1919, honoring local veteran Edward "Ned" McGanney, a casualty of the Battle of Argonne in France during World War I.

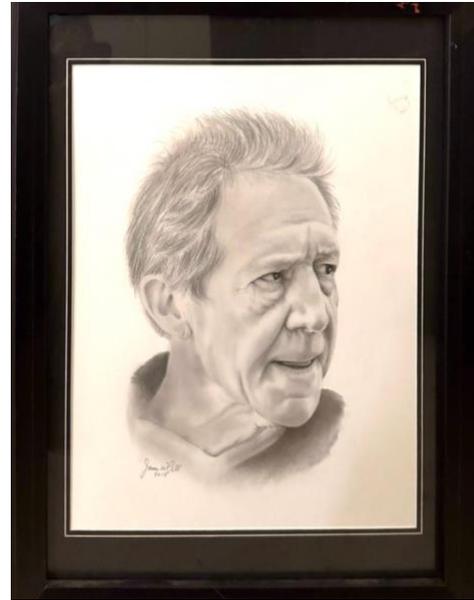
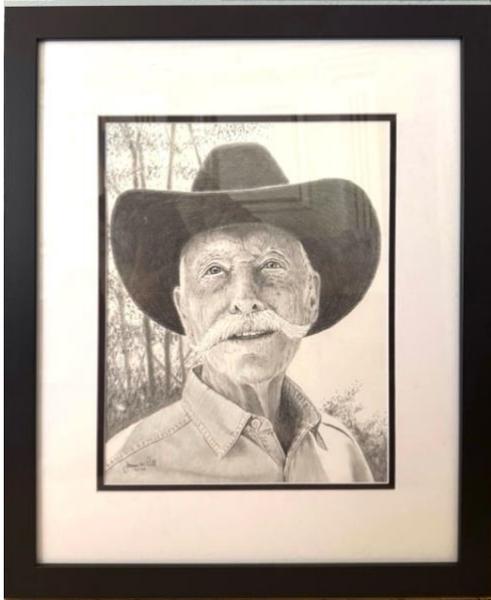
Thanks to the leadership of Mary Clark, we have seen a six-year tradition which celebrates Wreaths Across America in Smartsville. Mary says that if you use this [Wreaths Across America/Smartsville Wreaths for Veterans](#) link until January 17th and sponsor a wreath for next year, your donation will be doubled. Each wreath costs \$17.

Mary shared her thoughts about the work she has led these many years. Standing out the most is honoring all who have served our country. She really enjoys seeing others who share her passion for Veterans. The biggest challenge has been making sure she does her research to find all the Veterans buried in our local cemeteries. Other challenges Mary has faced are to have enough people to help, getting enough wreaths sponsored, and the weather. This year's rain didn't prevent the success of laying every wreath, stating each veteran's name, and expressing gratitude for their service. In the photo below is one of the helpers, Jeff Tuttle, who has family in the Fraternal Cemetery. He rang the church bell in honor of all the veterans.

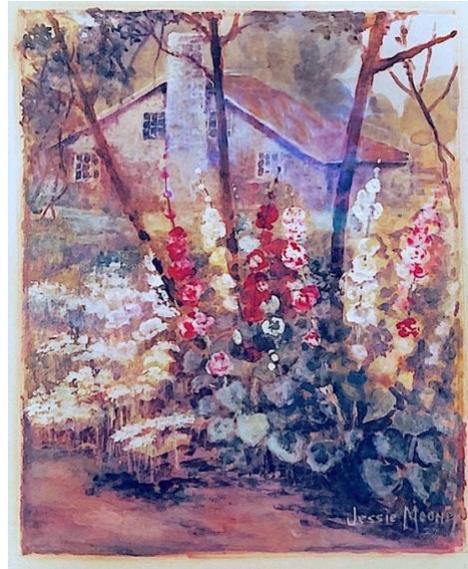


SCRFI's Art Collection

Periodically, we receive paintings, drawings, models, photos and posters which we happily display on Pioneer Day. Recently one of our long-time SCRFI Board members, Mike "Bo" Bevitori, brought two large, framed drawings made by his childhood friend, Jim Pell of Burney, California. One is of Kit Burton, SCRFI's president. The other is of Bo, also our Pioneer Day soundman, musician and stage manager.



Inside the church you may have already seen several paintings from the late 1800's and early 1900's by local resident Jessie Mooney, daughter of Thomas Mooney, owner of the large Empire Ranch during the Gold Rush where travelers were hosted. Living relatives, sisters Sally Knutson and Charle Lennon, tell us there are yet more paintings they'd like to add to the collection.



We've received other art work which perhaps you've seen already. Local resident Margaret Arnold made two incredible stand-up panel paintings with cut-out faces, fun for photo ops. Sue Cejner-Moyers inspired local craftsmen to build scale models of the church and Smartsville Gold Rush buildings.



On Pioneer Day SCRFI vice-president Kathy Smith shows many historic poster-size photos of the Smartsville and Timbuctoo area, including street scenes and building interiors.



Board member Lauren Green is restoring the store across the street, which she'll call Smartsville Salvage and Sundries. She plans to have a room serve as an art gallery for local artists.

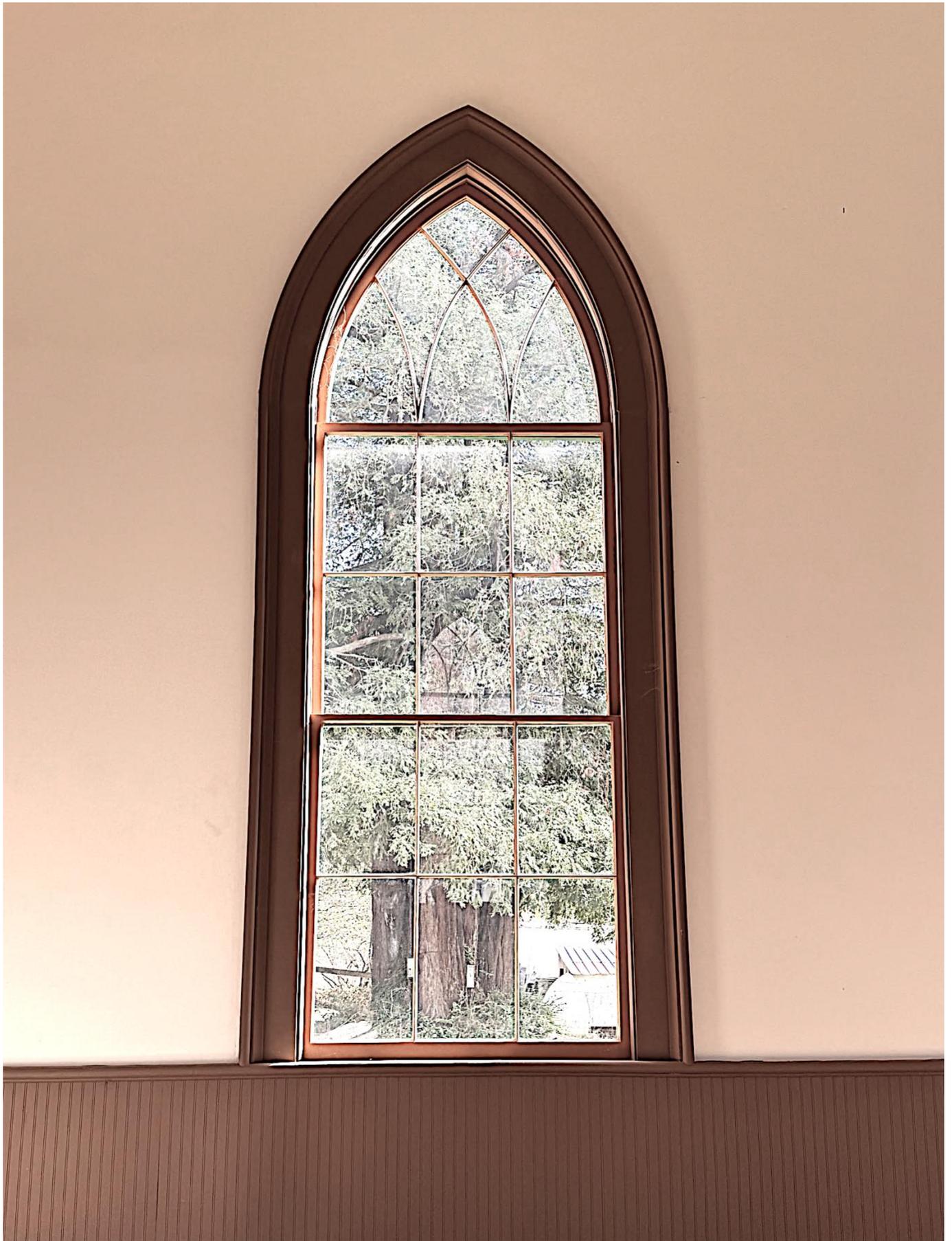
One of our goals for the church restoration is that it will be a museum showing you what it was like when it was the prominent church in town. Though we're still working actively on the projects which will complete the building's restoration, we gratefully receive artifacts and mementos of the past to share. For now, we'll reserve Pioneer Day for such sharing, but know that you're welcome to contact us for more information or to view inside the church.

The Year in Perspective

We at Smartsville Church Restoration Fund, Inc. have much to be grateful for in 2024. Construction work in the church continued with stunning results on the beautiful and enormous windows, the wainscoting, the new hardwood floor, and the back steps. Our park-like grounds often looked beautiful with the help of Board member Jacob McDonald's friend Brian Arnold, who irrigated the west lawn, and our good neighbor Ron Gross who kept it mowed. Pioneer Day had its 15th year of success with many visitors at a fun-filled Smartsville festival, focused of course on the church restoration. Many dear friends volunteer their time and talents, as well as community agencies, to make this day possible.

Our donors finance the actual construction on the church. The end of the year was a time you were especially generous during and after Giving Tuesday, a worldwide event following Thanksgiving. It led to donations, including from our Board officers Brian Bisnett and Janet Burton, and from Kit Burton's son, Matt and from Eileen Mahoney. We received donations during the year from Friends for the Preservation of Yuba County History, Father Dan Madigan, Sally Knutson, Charle Lennon, Margaret Binderup, Patty Totman, and Board member Lauren Green. A large donation pleasantly surprised us from Board Member Mike "Bo" Bevitori's long-time friend, Jim Odling, who once had family in Smartsville. During the year we received an unexpected check from the PayPal Giving Fund because we are a non-profit group registered with them. We also received donations through PayPal via our website, monitored by vice-president Kathy Smith; a sponsorship from Yuba Water Agency initiated by Brian; and a Pioneer Day surprise check from E Clampus Vitus who drove on the Timbuctoo tour and collected donations. Several of you bought raffle tickets at Pioneer Day and many winners left with the nice prizes donated by our vendors. The Historic Preservation Foundation of the Native Sons of the Golden West both appeared at Pioneer Day as a food vendor and presented another generous grant this year towards our window restoration.

Without the wonderful generosity of Ned and Carol Spieker, most of the work on the church since and including the bell tower restoration wouldn't have been possible. They have consistently monitored our needs and provided the funds that make the big projects a reality. This coming Pioneer Day we have an idea to honor them, in the works. Stay tuned!



Here's hoping everyone is blessed this New Year and that we will see you soon!