



The Scruffy Post

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17th ANNUAL PIONEER DAY IS COMING SOON!

We're gearing up for the next Smartsville & Timbuctoo Pioneer Day for Saturday, April 25th. The most remarkable part will be what you see inside the church. Though several projects are yet to come, the beautiful restoration work that has continued since last Pioneer Day is impressive.

Of course we'll have the familiar and fun activities that have made our event the "best small town gold rush festival" -- the main stage performances and Timbuctoo Theatre acts; demonstrations such as blacksmithing, weaving yarn on a loom and spinning; tours to the Blue Point Mine, Sucker Flat, and Timbuctoo; things that appeal to children like art and craft projects and displays; good food and baked items; vendor booths to visit with handmade crafts, jewelry and clothing; historical and informational booths; and a costume contest and raffle.

Honored this year on the Ken Freeman Pioneer Day Volunteers plaque is a family who has been with us since the inception of Pioneer Day in 2008: Sue Cejner-Moyers, Mike Moyers and Stacey Hinton. Their contributions are appreciated and key to the festival's success.

Plus, the new and magnificent tribute bench for our main donors, Ned and Carol Spieker, will be unveiled. Without their generous endowments, we wouldn't have been able to make the progress you see.

We hope for good weather, a good turn-out, and quality time to spend with you.

FUNDS REQUESTED

One of our Pioneer Day funding sources, Yuba Water Agency, is unable to give an educational grant this year after experiencing a disastrous penstock pipe rupture on February 13th. Their repair expenses will be enormous.

The agency kindly allows us on their property when Brian Bisnett and Chris Ward give their Blue Point Mine and Sucker Flat tour. You can see them posing with driver John Crandall in the masthead picture above. They are volunteers and have been doing this for the sixteen years we've held Pioneer Day.

Last year we rented a large van to bring Pioneer Day visitors on the mining tour using the grant Yuba Water gave us. This year we'd hoped to get a second rented van for a Timbuctoo tour. Now we're faced with less funding and are hoping to solicit sponsors to finance the tours. Each van costs approximately \$600 to rent, including gas expense. Donors who can give \$100 or more will have their name printed on the magnetic signs placed on the vans.

If you'd like to help, you can mail a check to SCRFI, P.O. Box 374, Smartsville, CA 95977 or use the [donate button](#) on our website.



Lane "Timbuctoo" Parker leads the Pioneer Day tours to Timbuctoo and is co-author of Smartsville and Timbuctoo and co-editor of The Sage of Smartsville, The Collected Stories of George Rigby

Memories of James “Jim” Emerson Hapgood

By Janet Burton

In honor of a distinguished Timbuctoo descendant, Jim Hapgood, who passed away on November 1, 2025 at the age of 100, here are some memories and family stories. Though he was born in Sacramento, Jim’s childhood was rich in visits to his grandparents’ home in Timbuctoo. One of his daughters, Janelle Makin, shared his [obituary](#) which you can read in the link.

Jim led a successful life as a college student, a naval seaman, the accounting manager for the city of Sacramento, and general manager of a Ford Motor Company in Turlock. He was active in his church and a decorated Shriner member. He married Beatrice Enos and raised six daughters -- Janelle, Karen, Lauren, Joy, Wendy and Emma.

Another family from Timbuctoo, the Marples, became connected with the Hapgoods through marriage. As Janelle conveys, “My great-great grandfather, Richard Whitten Marple, built the house in Timbuctoo around 1855. He and his wife, Elizabeth, had 17 children there, many of whom did not survive. Their seventh child was Fannie Elizabeth Marple, born in 1862. In 1894 she married James Mortimer Hapgood, my great-grandfather. After they got married, they were given the house and my grandfather, James Lester Hapgood, and great-aunt, Lavinia Hapgood, were born there.”

Following is the family story of how the town got its name, as told to the Sacramento Bee, June 7, 1956 by Jim’s father, James Mortimer Hapgood, 84 years old at the time. “Marble, a Pennsylvania bachelor, came to California in the winter of 1849-1850 to try his luck in the gold fields at nearby Long Bar...When the pickings got poor, he wandered into a ravine below what is now State Highway 20 west of Smartsville. There he found three mining partners, one Negro who said he had come from Timbuctoo, Africa. On return to camp, acquaintances asked Marple where he had been. He joked that he had been over the hill to Timbuctoo. The name stuck.”



I was privileged to meet Jim Hapgood in Smartsville at the historic Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception on Pioneer Day in April of 2015. He specifically sought my husband, Kit Burton, president of the Smartsville Church Restoration Fund, Inc. (SCRFI) since 2001. “Jimmy”, as Kit called him, presented us with a substantial donation towards the church restoration that day. It was a huge amount in the days when we relied mostly on volunteers for restoration. I was impressed that a local person cared so greatly for our work and Jimmy was impressed that the job had progressed that far.

RESTORATION PROGRESS AT THE CHURCH

Two projects have recently been completed -- the sanctuary railing restoration and a new footbridge over the irrigation ditch behind the church. Restored doors will be installed soon.

The railing needed repair, cleaning, painting and installation. The original wooden floor pegs were missing or broken. Our trustworthy carpenter, Brandon Senn, who has worked on our windows and wainscoting, and with the help of his son, did the job, crawling in a very narrow crawl space beneath the floor to re-attach the rails. Alan Cartwright of Sierra Premium Hardwoods will build us a new step up to the sanctuary.



A second project was the recent construction of a sturdy bridge over the ditch by Walker and Brittany Marshall of Marshall Metal Arts, who installed handrails on the front porch and the new Spieker tribute bench. The new bridge got good use during 49er Days recently when Native Sons of the Golden West Quartz Parlor and Yuba Parlor 55 had an outdoor picnic. That's the kind of community use we're glad to see happening on the church grounds.



Kit Burton, Walker & Brittany Marshall