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PIONEER DAY AGAIN POSTPONED

Sadly, we'll have to wait until the county deems it safe to have our gathering in Smartsville to hold the best small-town festival in California. For twelve years Pioneer Day had been our premier day on the last Saturday of April to share with everyone the progress on our historic church restoration and showcase our town. We hope to bring it back next year and look forward to an eventful, fun day for visitors and local folk.

We would have shared the magnificent sanctuary restoration inside the church, the recent completion of foundation work, the on-going window restoration and the beginnings of electrical work. Across the street from the church the historic store property there is ongoing repair and next door the historic mercantile building is also being prepared for use that will complement the community. Smartsville is transforming!

We'll miss the bands, the historical character presentations, the vendors, the booths, the food, the children's activities, the mining tours and the comradery of Pioneer Day. But we won't give up on keeping this tradition alive when we're finally allowed to hold this event once again. Thank you for your patience and support.





Wreaths Across America Returns!

Last December on Wreaths Across America Day, Dec. 19th, with the help of Mary and Tim Clark, our local cemeteries were honored for the first time with nearly 60 Christmas wreaths placed on veterans' headstones. The following day our church received two ceremonial wreaths, pictured below.

Mary led the fund-raising and many supporters pitched in. The two sisters who inspired us, Sally Knutson and Charle Lennon, again attended our small event, as did our generous benefactors, Ned and Carol Spieker. Ron Gross made the grounds beautiful, as always, especially around the old redwood tree, with its 1919 plaque for Edward "Ned" McGanney, who died in the Battle of the Argonne in France during World War I.

The inspiring words of Mary, Sally and guest speaker, long-time resident Letty Litchfield made it worthwhile to attend. Sally said to teach our children the value of freedom. Letty conveyed words of Walter Shackelford, US Air Force colonel whose memorial bench sits on our lawn – "My debt to society is huge." Her father, Col. Robert L. Litchfield, had a motto spelled PRIDE: "professional result in daily effort." The lessons we learn from the hard work and sacrifices of our soldiers should never be forgotten.

Mary Clark, Kyle, Sally Knutson, Charle Lennon, Letty Litchfield, Kit Burton, Carol and Ned Spieker, Tim and Mary Clark, Ron Gross



Renovations nearby the Church

It's exciting to see that two historic buildings next to and across from our historic church are being worked upon. Two goals include structural safety and retaining historic integrity, as we have done with the church restoration. A focus on community is felt in both projects.

One project is the old Smartsville grocery store across the street with its start on the foundation. We'll share the ideas of the new owner Lauren Green in the next newsletter.

The former Mercantile next to the church, once called McQuaid & Allread's General Store, is getting major attention by its new owner, Jacob McDonald, and his father, John. They have removed porch partitions and hope the old porch will one day receive visitors to sit and enjoy our idyllic town. Jacob is musical, too, and hopes to host get-togethers to make music. The central room in the building may be used in the future for events, says Jacob, perhaps even in conjunction with our church once it's restored for community use.

Both new owners are disappointed, along with many of us, that Pioneer Day is again postponed. We'll just have to keep working and have patience.



Jacob McDonald



John McDonald

Recent Donations

Rosemary Freeland Crecelius, great-granddaughter of Smartsville resident Asa Fippin, was serendipitously at the Rough and Ready Fire Department a while back when someone drove up with a trunk load of paintings by Pat Miller. Before Pat died, she requested that her historic paintings go to an appropriate home. Rosemary received the painting of Fippin Blacksmith Shop (she's related to John Fippin), which is now on display at the next-door fire department. She brought us the painting of the Wells Fargo building in Timbuctoo for display at our events. By the way, it is her fiddle which is on our masthead above, discovered under Asa Fippin's home in Smartsville. A fiddle reminds us of the kind of music you would have heard in the past and would hear again on Pioneer Day, once we can have it.

In our last regular SCRFI meeting announcement, our president, Kit Burton, notified you of the generous offer by our wonderful benefactors, Ned and Carol Spieker, to match donations. Soon after we were contacted by Ken Freeman and received a donation from Ken and his wife Sharron. He has been our Master of Ceremonies at Pioneer Day for several years and often supports community businesses and non-profit work. He is instrumental in presenting Marysville History Days, where SCRFI is also represented. We also had a generous donation from Father Dan Madigan, whose great-uncle was the founding pastor of the church, and who hopes to visit us again.

Thanks to all of you who support our restoration work in whatever form you can. This March we're looking forward to John Wright of Wright's Restoration beginning his second phase of window restoration. Note his first phase work in the photos below.



Rosemary Freeland Crecelius and Janet Burton with the Wells Fargo building painting



Kit Burton receiving donation checks from Ken Freeman