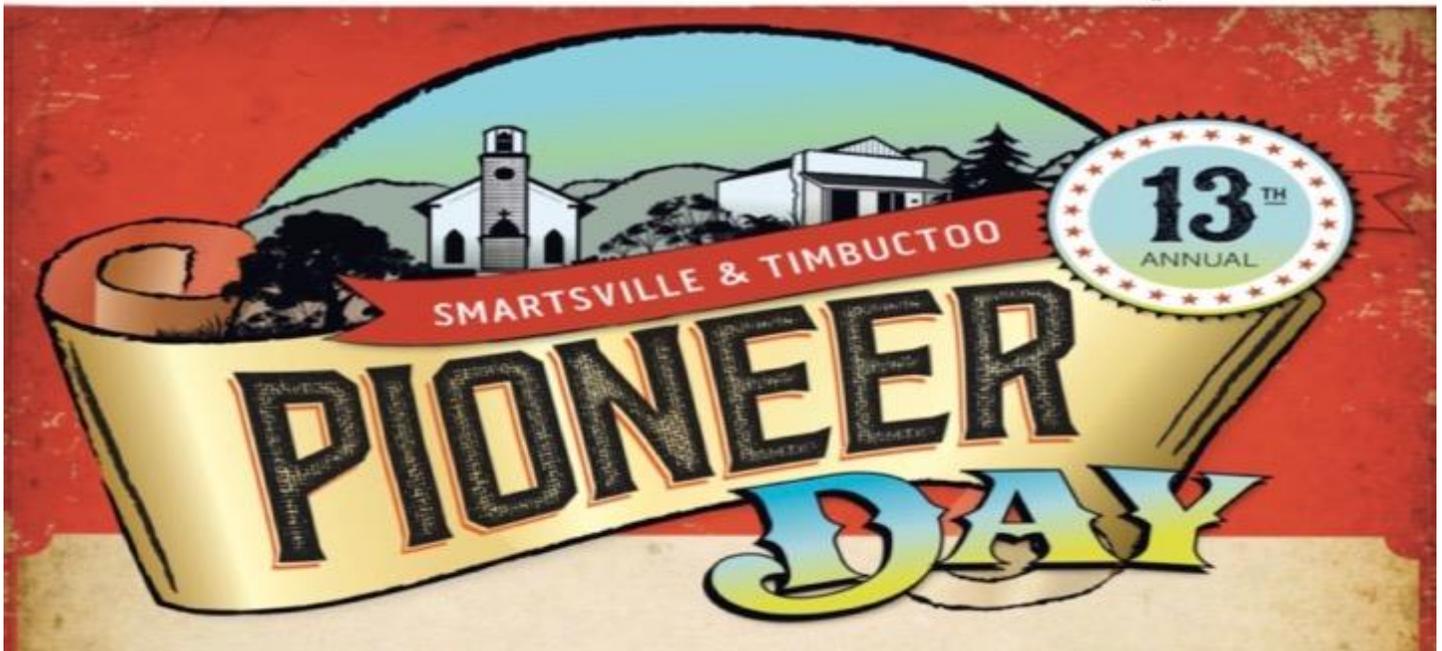


# The Scruffy Post

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## We'll Miss You!

We looked forward to this year's annual 13<sup>th</sup> Pioneer Day, but, alas, it wasn't meant to be. The following is a virtual tour of what we had planned for Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>.

The church's interior looks markedly improved. Aurel Onut of Byzantine Painting has done an amazing restoration of the church sanctuary and Father Twomey, portrayed by Leroy Trindle, president of Friends for the Preservation of Yuba Co. History would again be inside this year.



We would have displayed the newly restored portrait of Thomas James Mooney, pioneer and namesake for Mooney Flat and gold rush owner of the Empire Ranch in Smartsville. His daughter, Jessie Mooney, did the oil painting and we have reproductions of several of her other paintings, kindly shared by family members Sally Knutson and Charle Lennon, who also originated our winter event, Wreaths Across America and would have spoken in the Timbuctoo Theatre.



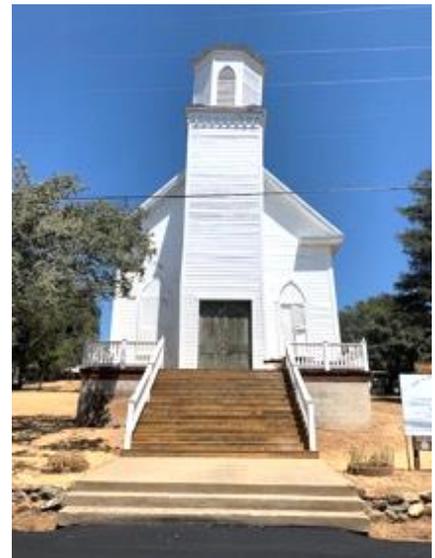
For the church exterior we began restoration of two new shutters and the front doors are being sanded and painted. We hired an expert carpenter, John Wright of Wright's Restoration in Grass Valley, to begin the windows. Aurel has volunteered to do the doors. Last year you would have seen the bell tower wrapped in scaffolding -- now the bright white tower is a landmark view. You can even see it from Highway 20 since the new road opened up.



Kit Burton with John Wright



Aurel Onut



The grounds look park-like, thanks to neighbor Ron Gross. The “Memorial Tree” displays the plaque of Edward “Ned” McGanney, plus the photo and memorial bench of local citizen Walter Shackelford, the tombstone of gold miner Robert Herbert and a new photo of Bonnie, the beloved Dalmatian of Mary and Tim Clark, a faithful attendee in Tim’s antique fire truck.



We would have had our fascinating tractor-pulled mining tours, led by Brian Bisnett and Chris Ward, with antique tractors driven by Thomas Diede and his friend Rob, kindly delivered by Jim Escherman. Mining tours have remained one of the most popular events at Pioneer Day.



You would have enjoyed our bands of the past, again volunteering to entertain us all day on the main stage – The OCD Band, Buffalo Gals, the Stamp Mill Stompers, Beau Bivotori and his friends, and also Plinky and Plunky with children who enjoy playing a rhythm instrument.



The Timbuctoo Theatre would have had a full schedule of performers and speakers, and Sue Cejner-Moyers and Mike Moyers had a Gold Rush Bingo game planned. Children's activities highlight the day for the many little visitors we have. Our face painter, Ema Arteaga, planned to bring her granddaughters and friends to help this year. The art contest gift cards prizes will have to wait for the next event, perhaps at the Open House we have in mind. Neighbor Margaret Arnold is making a photo board for posing. The Petting Farm was going to be there again. And it wouldn't be Pioneer Day without our Acorn Lady, Carolyn Jones-Rodgers.





Our vendors are of course disappointed, as are we. The food and crafts and comradery are a highlight of Pioneer Day and we'll especially miss them. Their raffle prizes are the best, and we have the church model made by Lee Classey as a prize. The informational booths are always a pleasure to visit with our local fire department, history groups, and our greeters, Brad and Evelyn Allis and supervisor Randy and Kathy Fletcher.



Several of our vendors donated back their fee this year, including Nick Vogt of Paintings of Historical Significance, Jim Ouelette of General Jim's Burgers, Friends for the Preservation of Yuba County History (who also donated \$1,000!), Dale Mansfield, and Pete Hupp of Lhakpa's Handicrafts. Thank you for your kind generosity. Some of our Scruffy friends also send checks to SCRFI periodically, and we hope you know how much you're appreciated.



Kit, Kathy Smith, Vickie Tudor, Leroy, Aleatha Martin, Ginnie Tudor



Nick Vogt's wife, Chris, with her fun ink painting on tiles

In spite of the unexpected events of the past couple of months, we have high hopes for renewed progress on the church restoration and have been blessed with the announcement of further matching funds from the generous gifts of Ned and Carol Spieker. We have great need for the other half of the funding, so please realize how much your donations are helping.



Kit, Ned, Aurel



Carol Spieker, Kit, Ned Spieker

After the historic episode of this terrible pandemic is over, we'll work on planning another, smaller event, and will let you know. In the meantime, we hope you've enjoyed reminiscing on Pioneer Day and look forward to a brighter day when we'll celebrate in Smartsville again!

# Restoring the Sanctuary

Probably the most impressive part of the interior of the historic, former Catholic church in Smartsville is the sanctuary. Its curved wall, called the apse, is striking and awe inspiring even though it once was damaged by water from a leaking roof.

SCRFI's desire to preserve portions of the original building is so that it depicts the role this church played in the history of the area, as well as the value the original parishioners placed on it. We also want to share building techniques that are rarely seen today.

The apse consists of a skeleton of wood studs and cross braces creating the rounded concave shape. Covering this framework is a layer of thin wooden lath which, until recently, supported a coating of plaster. Missing plaster revealed a large section of broken lath and damaged substructure.

Clearly a significant restoration program was needed, and we found the perfect artisan for the job. His name is Aurel Onut of Byzantine Painting Studio, an expert in lime plaster restoration in historic buildings, as well as an expert on church iconography painting. He has nearly completed the work on the apse and offered to restore the alter and two side alters, at no additional cost, in between coats of plaster which needed to cure.

Plaster removed from two adjacent side walls on either side of the apse reveals the lath to be in good condition. Onut has requested that we consider having him plaster them in the same technique as he has the apse. His contention is that finishing it in the same lime plaster technique would enhance and compliment the spectacular work he has done on the curved portion and show it in its best light. He has offered to do it for an additional five thousand dollars. To complete that same wall in a current gypsum board/drywall technique would cost less, but it seems a shame to not take the opportunity to restore in the original material and technique to make this the work of art that it once was. This will make the whole south end of the building a beautiful work of art and historically significant exhibit.

Restoration of the three sanctuary tables turned out to be an archaeological excavation of sorts. As he sanded and scraped, it revealed previous versions of restoration, different colors of paint and even paint covering the original gold leaf. The most recent discovery has been uncovering the original graphic.

Perhaps some of you will help us with the additional expense.



The graphic we've seen for years and the newly uncovered original graphic (right), representing Jesus' name.