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PIONEER DAY – NOT REALLY RAINED OUT

Though the rain forecast for April 26th scared away some vendors and visitors, the day was nonetheless blessed. Those who stayed had lots to do. The vendors did well; the bands were enjoyed; the restored Timbuctoo Theatre hosted several speakers; the Blue Point mining tour was successful; there was a Timbuctoo tour; the children had fun; the demonstrators forged, spun, and made pine nut bracelets; the costume and art contest winners were happy; and – best of all – the church restoration progress was admired. In spite of the challenges, we carried on and the rain wasn't really all that much. If you missed Pioneer Day this year, enjoy the photo collage. Hope to see you in 2026!



Scenes inside the church show the new floor, one of the new altar statues, the Clampers' vehicle "Clementine" (which sadly broke down), the blacksmith at work making square nails to give away, and Fr. Dan Madigan by the confessional with one of the many visitors he brought. Leroy Prindle took the stage at noon to receive the first annual Ken Freeman Pioneer Day Volunteer Award.



Children enjoyed the costume contest and face painting. Our busy SCRFI booth hostess, Cherette McGregor, also has the responsibility of caring for foster kittens. Alan Cartwright, our floor contractor, revealed his connection to Smartsville ancestry on the back of his Pioneer Day t-shirt.



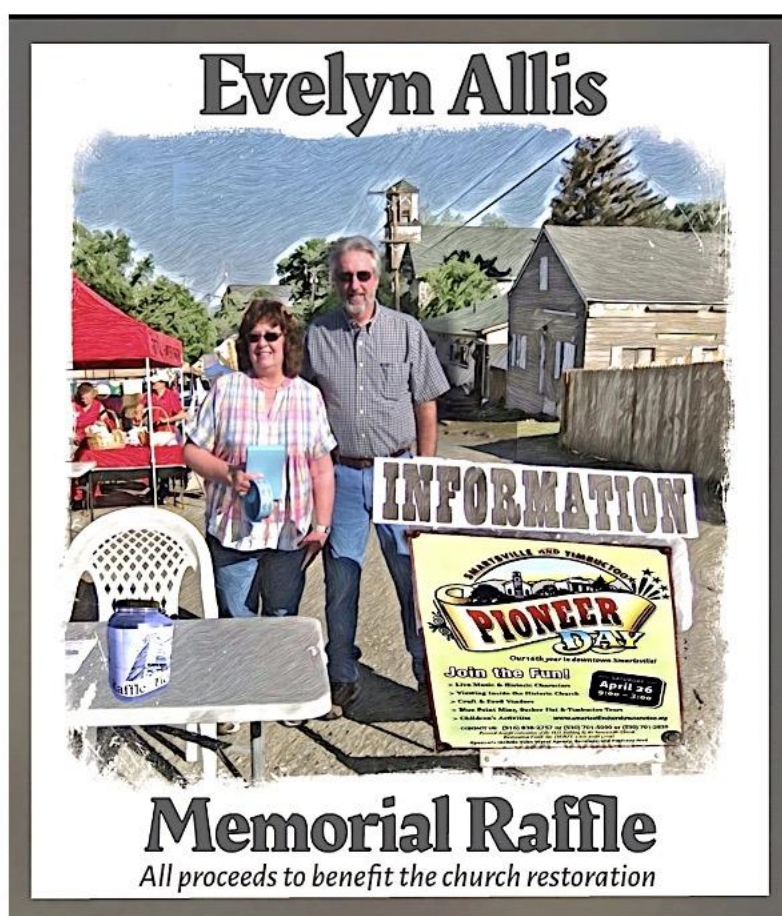
The Smartsville Fire Protection District and CalFire always give out information and souvenirs, including the rain-proof fire hat. Pastor Jerry Cooper is with his family, after performing gospel songs in the morning. Sue Cejner-Moyer poses before performing on the Timbuctoo Theatre. Tim Clark hands out information about the annual Wreaths Across American event in December.



Rachel Jasper said her cookies will have green doors next year! We hope our actual church doors are restored by then and painted green, like the shutters. Vendors brave the early morning rain. Our “acorn lady”, Carolyn Jones-Rodgers, became the “pine nut lady” this year. Note her necklace made of local pine nuts.

EVELYN ALLIS (1947 – 2025)

Originally from Marysville, Evelyn lived near Timbuctoo and Smartville by the Yuba River, and when Pioneer Day was conceived in 2008, she and her husband Brad Allis became involved. She came up with the idea of having greeters at the two closed ends of Smartville Road, which we also call Main Street. She and Brad were greeters until 2023. The two of them donated every year for the printing of the Pioneer Day Program, written by SCRFI vice-president Kathy Smith. At Pioneer Day they also promoted raffle ticket sales and bought many themselves. When our non-profit was recognized by the County Board of Supervisors, Evelyn showed up at the county office to support us. Her smile and cheerful heart will be remembered. We dedicated our Pioneer Day Raffle to Evelyn this year.



VISITS, GRANTS AND RESTORATION NEWS

VISITS: We've been busy showing visitors our historic Church of the Immaculate Conception and in one month had three large groups stop by. The first, led by Luis Vasquez, drove from St. Isidore Catholic School in Yuba City to learn about the pioneers and the gold rush era. Luis had brought another group a few years ago to honor an anniversary of the passing of Father Andrew Twomey (1887 – 1906), who had served in the church and tragically drowned when his horse-drawn cart overturned in a swollen creek on his way to mass. This visit hosted eager 7th and 8th students, reminding us of an objective included in our mission statement – that our building will be used as a cultural and educational facility.



Kit Burton and Luis Vasquez in the foreground with parents and students of St. Isidore Catholic School

The second group who visited was the Nevada County Sports Car Club, led by Jim and Debbie Luckinbill, and invited by their neighbor and our window restorer, John Wright of Wright Restoration. They drove in a caravan to see the church and John's work. Naturally, John arrived in his vintage Mercedes. One of the drivers shared memories of Smartsville's yesteryears, in particular how a bell was once rung in town to call workers back from their break. We hope to connect with him again to record these stories.



The Nevada County Sports Car Club



John's Mercedes leading the caravan parked by the church

GRANTS: Our group, Smartsville Church Restoration Fund, Inc., is a non-profit 501C, and is dependent upon volunteers, grants and donations. In April we received a cash donation of \$1,000 from Charle Lennon, one of the Thomas Mooney relatives who enthusiastically support our work, along with her sister Sally Knutson. The Yuba Water Agency gave us \$2,500. If you were at Pioneer Day, you may have seen their logo along with our Pioneer Day logo on the mining tour van. In June SCRFI received a grant in the amount of \$2,000 from the Historic Preservation Foundation of the Native Sons of the Golden West to help with our exterior door restoration. And we received a generous gift of \$1,000 from the Friends for the Preservation of Yuba County History. They held their monthly meeting inside the church, becoming the third group to visit us since Pioneer Day. As we continue our restoration work, we're grateful for all additional funding to combine with the large grant received last year from Ned and Carol Spieker.



Friends for the Preservation of Yuba County History at their June meeting



Old photo of Fr. Andrew Twomey courtesy of Kathy Smith



Buggy art gifted by FPYCH newsletter editor Vickie Tudor

PEWS: One of the original pews – pew #31 with a Timothy Linehan nameplate – was restored and returned to us by Jay and Crystal Saldana of J. Saldana's Handyman Services. Surprising to us was that Crystal uncovered and revealed the original wood – redwood -- and also reported the presence of graffiti which had long ago been painted over. Our Board has yet to decide how we want the wood to be finished. Jay was able to make it a free-standing pew, to be placed either in rows, or put against the wall to leave the floor open for other uses. The original gate opens and closes. We hope to have enough pews to place four in a row, with one, two or three rows.



Pew #31



1871 photo. Notice the chandelier we're hoping to replace soon.

RESTORATION PROJECTS: Our oak sanctuary floor was finished by Alan Cartwright in time for Pioneer Day. The exterior door restoration awaits John Wright to begin. We found a specialty milling company, Blue Ox Millworks, to replace a missing baluster from the sanctuary rail. Before installation the entire rail needs cleaning, some repair and paint.



The new and old balusters



Handyman David Mitchell with Kit checking the railing in 2023

MORE RESTORATION: When Fr. Dan visited us a few months ago he noted that our exterior hand rail was hard for him to grasp and offered to pay for something easier and safer to use. After seeking contractors, we found Walker Marshall of Marshall Metal Art and are confident that Fr. Dan and many others will be happy with the result.

