

STCHS and Library News



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK - Harriet Codeglia

It's Fall 2025 for STCHS. Since the last newsletter, some things have stayed the same, while others have changed. In many areas we can be proud of our accomplishments, while in others we continue to face challenges.

- First, STCHS remains strong financially with continuing successes in our major fundraising activities. This year's Wine Tasting Cruise was another triumph in terms of both finances and community participation. It was another beautiful day on the Lake! Our sincere thanks to the shore-side volunteers, the boat drivers, the homeowners who generously offered their homes, the food providers and our sponsors and generous wineries.

Likewise, thanks to splendid weather, the Labor Day Country Barbecue enjoyed record turnout at the PML Stables and outstanding financial results. Special appreciation is due to Patricia Gibson who chaired the event and Supervisor Steve Griefer who contributed his grilling skills. And kudos to the many volunteers who baked the goodies, dished out the food, organized the kids, and ran around doing all the things that need doing during such an occasion.

- Second, STCHS is building its Speakers Program for a second year after a years-long lapse for Covid. The first Friday evening (7 p.m.) of each month at the Resilience Center, STCHS sponsors a presentation of local interest, touching historical and other topics. Since the Program was revived in 2024, subjects have spanned Yosemite nature, the Donner Party, the Hetch Hetchy Railroad, roadside geology along Highway 120, and, most recently, the history of PML and its airport. So far, the Center venue has been well attended – often to overflowing – and audience engagement has been excellent (judging by the enthusiastic Q&A sessions afterward). And to the relief of all, our AV and technical volunteers are getting to be expert in making sure that everyone is comfortable and can hear and see the presentations!

- We are also continuing our efforts to build greater awareness of the STCHS properties in Big Oak Flat: the Cobden House and the Wells Fargo Gamble building. After investing time and money in the building roof and a privacy arbor in the yard, we held a super-successful "Open House" in June 2025 to re-introduce the structures to the community. Attendance was outstanding as visitors filed through the improved buildings for hours. Many said that they "always wondered" about what was in the buildings. We hope to continue that kind of event in the future.

- STCHS continues to be the "go to organization" for any issue relating the area history. Our contributions to the historical signage in the newly renovated Lavaroni Park are now complete and easy to see. We hope to continue a similar collaboration with GCSD on a potential project for a hiking trail behind the Park. We are also working with the Highway 120 Chamber of Commerce on Groveland beautification (new trash receptacles, new signage for the former Baird Hotel site on Main Street).

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK - *continued*

- We obviously continue to open the Museum for visitors local and world-wide each weekend. Moreover, in 2025 we expanded docent services to Thursday to complement our three-day (Friday – Sunday) previous operations. In addition, we offer additional open hours to folks who cannot come in during the normal open hours. Just call us!
- The Board of Directors for STCHS continues to meet monthly, and all existing directors continued to serve in 2025. They are Harriet Codeglia (President), Scott Belser (Vice President), Patricia Gibson (Secretary), Catherine Santa Maria (Treasurer). Other board members continuing their roles are Kathy Brown (Displays and Docent Coordinator), and Lindsey Lorent. However, STCHS is always on the lookout for community members who would be willing to serve and contribute as Board Members. Any volunteers are encouraged and welcome!

FOGL NEWS

The Friends of the Groveland Library continue to support literacy in our community. The group holds a book sale each Saturday from 10 until 1, selling gently used books, DVDs, puzzles and music CDs. We use the proceeds to purchase books for local children through the Toys for Tots program, and most recently presented \$4,000 to Tenaya Elementary School for the purchase of classroom books. We also fund the purchase of books for the Tuolumne County Library system. Our volunteers work in the elementary school in a variety of ways.

We thank Karen Hopkins and Michele Roberts for having managed the Book Nook so wonderfully and thank Tami Keller for taking over that task.

Join FOGL to help support our library and literacy. Membership forms are available in the library and at the book nook.

STAYING IN TOUCH

If you are receiving this newsletter via regular mail and would prefer to receive it via email, please let us know. Send your info to thegrovelandmuseum@gmail.com.

If your address or phone number or email address has changed, let us know!

SAVE THE DATE

What could be more fun than riding in a pontoon boat around Pine Mountain Lake to various homes, sipping local wines and snacking on a cracker or two? Mark your calendars for the 20th annual WINE TASTING CRUISE. The date will be May 16, 2026. Announcements of ticket sales will be made in March. This event usually sells out, so watch our Facebook page or website for ticket information. Or send and email with your interest to winetastingcruise@gmail.com.

*Need Gift Ideas for the Holidays?
Come to the Museum Book/Gift Shop
Many new items for children and adults.
Support the Historical Society and community by shopping locally!*

MEET OUR MUSEUM DOCENTS - By Kathy Brown - STCHS Docent Coordinator

The Groveland Yosemite Gateway Museum welcomes three new volunteers to its docent ranks this fall. They join thirteen other docents who donate their time to keep STCHS museum open from 10 -2, Thursday through Sunday. The docents who have just completed training are Patricia Eshagh, Mike Smithwick and Tami Keller.

Patricia Eshagh and her husband Edvard have two sons. They divide their time between homes in PML and Turlock. Before retiring in 2022 Patricia was a lecturer at CSU Stanislaus in art history and on the California missions. She maintains a professional interest in Coptic Studies, Patricia enjoys being out-doors, playing golf and pickleball and swimming with the PML Noodlers. When asked why she volunteered to be a docent Patricia answered, "The first time I visited the Groveland Yosemite Gateway Museum, I was impressed by the facility and the quality of the museum's collection of artifacts. I was also quite taken by the enthusiasm of the museum's staff. I could tell that these were people who understood the value of cultural history and I knew immediately that I wanted to join in their efforts to preserve the history of southern Tuolumne County by teaching museum visitors about the rich history of the Groveland area."

Mike Smithwick was born and raised and lived in the Bay Area, where he was an engineer, before relocating to Groveland a few years ago. He is married and spends most of his time caring for his ranch land on the edge of Groveland. Mike originally got to know the museum when his keen interest history prompted him to seek information about this area's gold mining past and the history of his own property. Mike is very knowledgeable about historic fire arms. Besides donating his time at the museum, Mike is also a volunteer Tuolumne County Planning Commissioner. About his museum volunteer work Mike comments, "I believe in volunteering in the community and always try to convince people if they have a special interest that there is probably an organization in the community that can use their help. It is among all other things just a fun thing to do. The other volunteers are also great and fun to work with."

Tami Keller, a PML resident, recently began volunteering as a museum docent because of her interest in history and her belief in preserving the history of the Tuolumne County where she has been a life-long resident. It is fun and informative to reminisce with Tami about what the area and growing up in the Sonora was like during her childhood years. She loves spending time with friends and especially with her parents and siblings, all of whom live in Tuolumne County, and spoiling her 8 nieces and nephews. Tami retired from the US Probation Office in 2015 and spent eight years working for Ventura County Probation Department and two years with the Tuolumne County Probation Department. She is an active member of AAUW. Tami is also a volunteer with Friends of the Groveland Library where she currently manages FOGL's Saturday Book Nook sales. Her love of children extends to Groveland's Tenaya Elementary students as she volunteers with the Brainy Groveland program. When not actively volunteering she loves scrapbooking, reading and baking.

STCHS is delighted to have the unique interests and talents of its three newest museum docents who are now enjoying greeting and sharing local history with visitors from all over the world.

Thank you for sharing your time with STCHS, Patricia, Mike and Tami! And many, many thanks to ALL of our dedicated docents, some of whom have been STCHS volunteers for over twenty years.

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**The museum is currently open
Thursday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday from 10am - 2pm**

METAL DOORS GIFTED TO SONORA

After STCHS took ownership of the Gamble Block (the so-called Wells Fargo Building and the Cobden house in Big Oak Flat, many items were left inside that were not part of the buildings or the local history. Among them was a pair of metal doors that did not fit the building.

In 2016, STCHS offered the doors to the Tuolumne County Historical Society for their museum in Sonora. The County facilities department stored the doors and finally in 2022 installed them in the courtyard of the museum.

The doors were originally hauled up Old Priest Grade by a mule team around 1850. They were installed on a building that was located across the street from the Gamble Block.



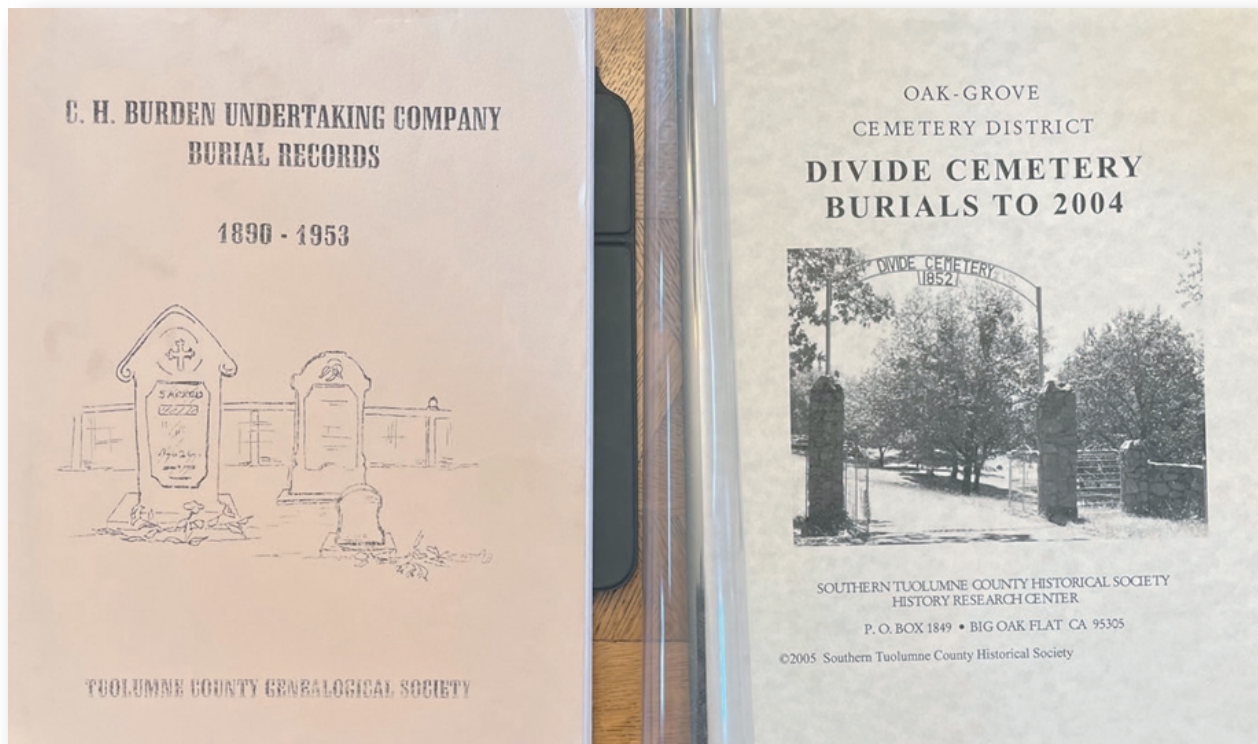
OAK GROVE CEMETERY DISTRICT – THE DIVIDE

– By Patricia Gibson

The History Resource Center, a division of Southern Tuolumne County Historical Society (STCHS) is focused on updating the record of burials in the Divide Cemetery. In 2004 STCHS published a book with the burials through that date. As a member of the Oak Grove Cemetery District Board, I have acquired the current burial information. Present work includes updating FindAGrave.com to reflect the burials in this century with an emphasis on including parents of those interred and the maiden names of wives. This helps people who are looking for their loved ones who came to Gold Rush country and then were lost to their family histories. Concurrently, that information is researched from and added to Ancestry.com and the STCHS Family Tree.

Projects will include:

- Work to update that book's information to carry the burials into the present.
- Publish a new book to include burials through 2025 with photographs and anecdotes
- Creating and modifying Find-A-Grave entries for burials of the past 20+ years.
<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2140579/divide-cemetery>
- Updating the STCHS tree on Ancestry.com.
- A Project to photograph 100% of the headstones.
- A Military Veteran's project... to identify all veterans, their branch of service, any wars fought in, etc.
- Create an up-to-date map of the cemetery, to aid ancestors in locating their relatives' tombstones



COMMEMORATIVE PATIO BRICKS

These personally engraved bricks are a lasting way to remember a birthday, anniversary, a special occasion, or a loved one, while showing support for the ongoing programs of STCHS and the Museum. They are set in the Memorial Patio to the right of Museum entrance. The patio is never closed!

Contact the museum at gygmstchs@gmail.com to purchase a commemorative brick, or come into the museum Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday from 10 until 2.



STCHS

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