

Friends of the Siskiyou County Museum

Swan and LeMay Wagon Renovated by HS Senior

Looking almost as good as new, a recently refurbished buck wagon built by turn-of-the-century Yreka blacksmiths Swan and LeMay is on display in the blacksmith shop in the Outdoor Museum. Native-built California carriages are something of a rarity. The artifact has belonged to the museum for many years and was suffering from age and exposure (as are many of us!). Lucky for us that an energetic and talented Yreka High School senior by the name of Marco Luquin, Jr. came along!

Encouraged by recently departed Museum Director Lisa Gioia and mentored by Lucky Hall, Marcus took on the task of rebuilding the wagon as his Senior Project. He began by dismantling the entire wagon. Although some of the wooden parts were cracked and dry they were intact; no parts were replaced as keeping the wagon as original as possible was a goal.

A buck, or “buckboard” wagon, is a wagon of fairly simple construction where the front of the wagon projects over the front axle, serving as a footrest and driver protection. But Swan and LeMay did not limit



Swan and LeMay Blacksmith Shop in Yreka circa 1890.

themselves to this style of wagon. They built farm and delivery wagons and many of the light stages, or “mudwagons,” used on stage routes throughout Siskiyou County. Their shop opened in 1884 and was situated about where the Miner’s Inn is today. They also fabricated farm implements. At the 1888 county fair, which at that time included Siskiyou, Trinity and Shasta Counties (the Tenth District Agricultural Association), Swan and LeMay won two awards of \$8 for “Best Top Buggy” and “Best Farm Wagon.”

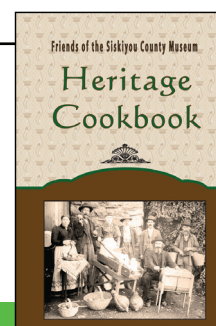
As for Marco, he has big plans that are in stark contrast to working on horse drawn buggies. His ultimate goal is to be a pilot for a major airline, and to begin that quest he will soon be heading to San Diego to attend the California Flight Academy.

(See Marco’s picture on P. 6.)



The restored Swan and LeMay buck wagon in the Outdoor Museum.

Did you buy your
cookbook yet?





Goodbye from Lisa



Goodbye is not forever.

As many of you may know, I am leaving my position as the Siskiyou County Museum Director and by the time you read this I will be on to a new adventure. I have loved every single minute of my work and although at times it was challenging, it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I am proud of so many things and the work we have accomplished in five years: bringing the museum back into the public eye with visitors locally and from all over the country and world; field trips by many school groups as well as organizations coming to see our exhibits; the installation of new exhibits; the great programs we have instituted; the volunteers who dedicate so much of their precious time to preserving our history, and to the donors who so generously give of their hard-earned dollars to support us.

Please continue to support your Siskiyou County Museum in these lean times. Donate your time and money, keep coming to see what is new at the museum, and attend the programs. Bring family and friends so they can see what a rich history the County has to share. Support the Friends of the Siskiyou County Museum (only \$10.00 a year to be a member!). Most of all, let your County Supervisors know how important the preservation and sharing of its cultural history is to its citizens.

Thank you to all who welcomed me back in 2014 and for all of your kindness. See you soon, as for me "goodbye is not forever." I keep my friendships close to my heart and will visit as often as I can. *Lisa*

Museum Notes

The museum is proud to announce that we have received a beautiful rendition of the glorious Mt. Shasta, painted by noted artist Mabel Lemos (1861-1921). Lemos was well-known for her still-life paintings and this piece is her tribute to our Siskiyou County natural masterpiece. Mounted in the Museum's Research Library and Conference Room, we hope you will come and see it in person.

Once again, Twyla Morford has taken on the task of creating a Fair exhibit for the Siskiyou Golden Fair. Since this year's fair theme is "160 Years of Family Fun," Twyla has been searching for artifacts related to the fair throughout its many years of existence. Thanks to Twyla for all of her hard work!

We currently (July 12) have no Museum Director. The position has been altered by the county to Museum Coordinator, not a full time position. By the time the next newsletter comes out we hopefully will have welcomed a new "boss." With the change in leadership and shortened hours the support of the Friends will be even more important. Let's continue to keep the museum vibrant and welcoming. Visit often, support our activities and maybe even become a regular volunteer.

Tom Eller, his sister Sally Britzman, and Tom's wife Ellen came for a visit. Tom and Sally are Denny descendants and come yearly to see the museum (especially the Denny Bar exhibit and store!), offer their support, and share more stories about their famous relatives who settled here.



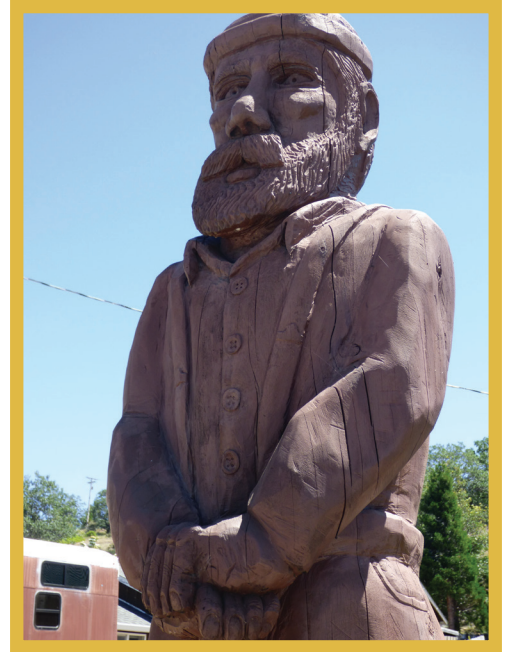
Museum(s) Spotlight

by Jill Livingston

Weed Museum



Time to start filling your Passport books with stamps! This carved logger will greet you at the entrance to the Weed Museum. The museum is filled with a plethora of Weed memorabilia, lots of old logging equipment and has an extensive collection of vintage photos. There is a room dedicated to law enforcement with jail cells and a booking room, and rooms decorated to resemble a typical early 1900s home. The docents are knowledgeable and helpful should you have questions or research requests. The building has been extensively renovated but was built in 1939 to house the Office of Price Administration, the entity that distributed Ration Stamps during WWII. They are open six days a week (closed Tuesdays) through the end of September. You won't want to miss this small friendly museum!



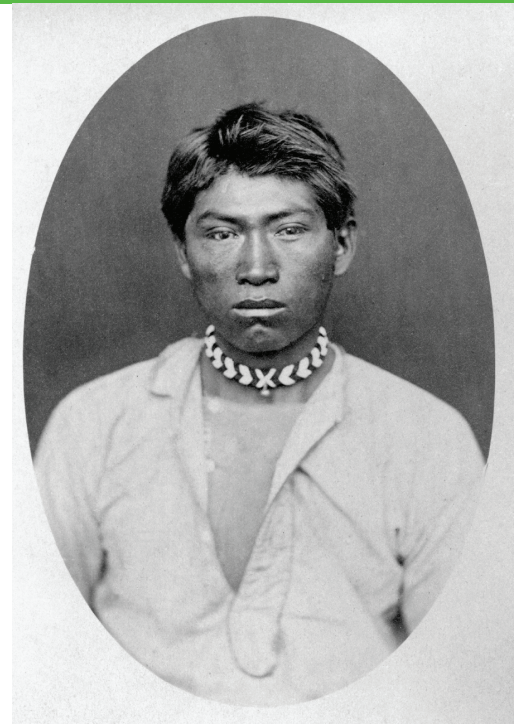
People's Center, Happy Camp

If you need an excuse to take a pretty summer drive down the Klamath River, here's one for you: You need to visit the People's Center, the Karuk Tribe's exquisite museum located at the tribal headquarters in Happy Camp. The 5000 square foot facility includes the museum, a library, a basket weaving classroom, the Karuk Language Program office and a gift shop. The gift shop sells a great selection of Karuk regalia, basketry and drums and Native American books and blankets among other things (including tobacco). The photo shows a dug out canoe, baskets and regalia displayed in wooden cases and a painting by Lyn Risling (Karuk/Yurok/Hupa) on the wall. There is also an herbarium of native plants. The museum is open six days a week (Mon. - Sat.) all year, 9:30 to 5 (closed 1 – 1:30).

Photographer Louis Heller, from Studio Gallery to the Lava Beds and Back

When Louis Heller came out to Yreka in 1864 to set up his photography studio he never imagined he would be cast in the role of “war photographer” a few years later. Heller was born in Germany, immigrated to the US and trained under a photographer in New York before he made his way west. California was a bustling place what with gold mining, developing agriculture and industry and growing cities. During this expansive period countless traveling photographers roamed the byways, taking photos in makeshift studios for transplants to send to the folks back home, and sometimes documenting the towns, countryside or natural wonders along the way.

Heller set up his studio on Miner Street and began posing local families in the formal somewhat stiff style that was the norm, always striving to present his patrons as attractively as possible. Most popular were *cartes de visite*, or “calling card” photographs, 2.5” x 4” in size and mounted on cardboard. These could be pre-



*Hooker Jim, one of the most aggressive Modocs,
as photographed by Heller after his capture.*

Positions and Dresses for Photographs (an excerpt from the *Yreka Journal*, June 22, 1864)

Nothing comes out better than a black silk, made long, full and graceful.If the lady’s figure is not good, she may wear a black lace shawl, elegantly arranged, or, if of a nervous disposition, she had perhaps better be seated, as a timid or frightened [person] looks ill in a standing figure....With regard to position, it must depend entirely on herself which attitude gives the most agreeable view of her features, whether full face, threequarters, or profile. She should get some friend who has good taste to accompany her to the artist’s to arrange her dress and attitude and to amuse and make her smile at the right moment. ...

For over 30 years Louis Heller was primarily a portrait photographer, working out of his galleries first in Yreka and later in Ft. Jones. It is not known whether the above advice to prospective customers came directly from Heller.

sented to friends and family and were often mounted in albums designed just for them. In 1869 Heller sold the Yreka studio to his assistant, Jacob Hansen and moved to a Ft. Jones location where he worked for the next 31 years. The majority of surviving portraits taken in north and western Siskiyou County during this era seem to be labeled either “Heller” or “Hansen.”

But Heller wasn’t strictly confined to his gallery. In the summer he was an itinerate photographer, traveling a circuit around the county setting up temporary studios in small towns and mining camps to serve people who could not travel to his studio. When out and about he liked to photograph landscapes and mining operations and seemed to especially enjoy the Salmon River area. In fact, the confirmed bachelor eventually (in 1889 at the age of 61) married Alice Daggett, sister of John Daggett, former California Lt. Governor and owner of Salmon River’s Black Bear Mine.

Three years after Heller moved to Ft. Jones the Modoc War erupted in eastern Siskiyou County. Although a day or two away on horseback Yreka was something of a war “headquarters” by virtue of being both a trade center and the nearest place with a telegraph office. Thanks to newspaper reporters and the telegraph, the war was followed in newspapers and magazines all

Save the Dates!

Siskiyou Stories - See schedule P. 6

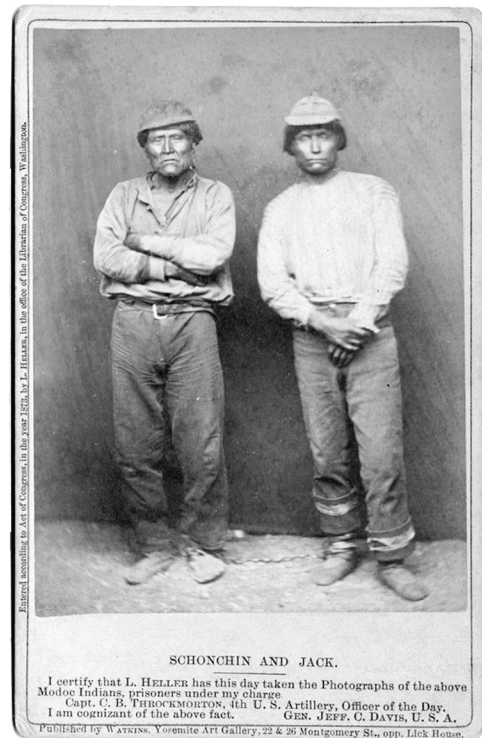
Walk Through History - Oct. 5

around the country. The fact that a small band of Modocs was able to hold off 1,000 army troops for several months during the winter of 1872-3 was a curiosity, and interest was piqued even more after “peace negotiations” resulted in an ambush where General Canby and one of the peace commissioners died.

Heller set off for the battleground in late April, 1873 just after the Modoc band had been driven from the Stronghold where they’d spent the winter. He captured images of the Lava Beds area, including “Jack’s cave, Scarfaced Charley’s hole ...and soldier’s camps” (as reported by the *Yreka Journal*). He also staged some battle scenes albeit using the Warm Springs Indians hired as scouts by the Army as Modoc stand-ins. Although fighting was going on during the time of Heller’s visit, taking live action photographs of actual combat was virtually impossible at that time. Photography was then a cumbersome process that involved tents, heavy equipment and delicate glass plates. Set up was a long process and in a war situation would place the photographer in a precarious position as an easy target. So photographing only the “scene of the action” was not only just acceptable, it was praiseworthy. Using a double lens camera, Heller came back with 24 stereoscopic views designed to be viewed in 3D using



Army encampment as photographed by Louis Heller in 1873, one half of a stereoscopic pair.



A carte de visite of Caption Jack and Schonchin in leg chains after their capture.

the popular stereoscope.

A week after Heller went to the Lava Beds a photographer hired by the US government, San Francisco-based Eadweard Muybridge (famous for his photographic studies of animal movements) showed up. He took photos similar to Heller’s. Although he stayed only 8 days and never returned, Muybridge has received considerably more credit than Heller as a Modoc War photographer. Between the two of them, about 100 Modoc War photos are known to exist.

By June 1st the last of the renegade Modocs had been captured. Once again Heller headed east. This time he photographed all of the captives and some of their families, turning the stunning images (somewhat ironically) into *carte de visites* that he sold through and later to the Watkins Yosemite Art Gallery, helping to ensure his obscurity.

After the war was over Heller returned to his business of producing formal studio poses, including the larger format “cabinet cards,” 4.5” x 6.5” mounted photos that were the next trend. He also served as Justice of the Peace and later Postmaster of Ft. Jones, retiring to San Francisco in 1900, at which time he destroyed all of his glass negative, as they “have no value.”

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Friends of the Siskiyou County Museum

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Local history expert and presentation favorite Richard Silva regaled a full house at the June *Siskiyou Stories* when he talked (mostly) about the 1851 Yreka gold discovery, including pinpointing the exact location where the find took place. More mundane perhaps but so important in turning Thompson's Dry Diggings into the permanent town of Yreka, Richard shared information on the location of the clay pits and brick kilns that supplied building materials for the sturdy structures (many of which still stand) that went up after much of the town went up in flames a couple of times. The bricks in the photo came from a kiln location up Greenhorn Creek. There is another kiln site on the grounds of Evergreen School.

Schedule of Events

July 12

Siskiyou Stories @ noon. Steve Pestana, Two local films from 2018 film festival

FSCM General Meeting @ 1:30.

Aug 9

Siskiyou Stories @ noon. Megan Peterson, All about the Jefferson State Flix Fest

FSCM General Meeting @ 1:30

August 7-11

Siskiyou Golden Fair, including Museum display

Sept 13

Siskiyou Stories @ noon. Larry Alexander, After-glow (a successful 1970s Siskiyou Cty rock band)

FSCM General Meeting @ 1:30

Oct 5

Walk Through History

Oct 11

Siskiyou Stories @ noon. Steve Farrington, Callahan History

Become a
Siskiyou Museum Traveler

BUY YOUR

Museum Passport



Marco Luquin, Jr., the Yreka High School senior who rebuilt a Swan and LeMay wagon in the museum's collection for his senior project (see Page 1), stands proudly in front of the plane in which he recently learned to fly.