

THE ORANGE COUNTY FORTY-NINERS

GOLDEN AURA

March 2011

Volume: XXIX Number: III



**DON'T FORGET OUR NEXT MEETING IS
March 15th, 2011**

**THIS MONTHS OUTING IS AT
Puppy Feet • March 26-27, 2011**

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

When: 3rd Tuesday of each month

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Where: Garden Grove Woman's Club
9501 Chapman Avenue
Garden Grove, California 92841
(Corner of Chapman and Gilbert)

**Check us out on the Internet
at
www.oc49ers.com**



CLUB OUTINGS

Regular scheduled outings take place the last full weekend of the month. "Regular" Club outings in November, December and January are scheduled around the Holidays and/or inclement weather.

The PRESIDENT'S MINUTE

One could say it is still wintertime here in Southern California. For those of you who did not go to the February Outing you missed some very pretty scenery. I arrived mid morning Friday, and it was cold and windy, but not unbearable. I spent the rest of the day swinging a metal detector and found the usual, rusted wire, a variety of shell casings and bullets, bullets, bullets and more bullets. I left the gold for you more experienced MD'ers. As I was staying at Skipper's Holiday Inn (aka as his storage trailer) and Skipper had to leave Friday evening I went to bed early and listened to the sound of a few raindrops hitting the trailer roof. Having gone to bed early, nature called early, around 4:30. So, to my surprise, when I stepped outside it was light. It was not light because of the morning sun, but from the reflection from the ground, as the entire area was covered with a couple of inches of snow. You can see the pictures at our Web Site under Past Outings for February 2011. Needless to say, it wasn't the ideal conditions to metal detect or dry-wash, so after a little driving around I headed home. Lets hope our March Outing is more cooperative weather-wise.

March Outing: Our next Outing is scheduled for Puppy Feet on the 26th and 27th.

Membership Renewal: If anyone asks, Members who did not pay their annual dues by March 1st have been dropped from the Membership list and will not be receiving the March issue of the Aura.

Annual May Outing: The location for the May Outing has been finalized. We will camp/occupy just off RM26, which is the road to LDMA. After leaving Highway 395 and heading towards Duisenberg, at about 8/10th of a mile, turn right and travel several hundred feet South and this is where we will hold our Outing. This location was chosen for several reasons. One, it is easier to get trailers and large RV's into the area than hauling them to Puppy Feet or one of our other nearby claims. Second, there are still a number of Members who have trailers at Duisenberg and this will make it easier for them, whether they choose to move their trailers or just drive over for the festivities. The club will supply portipotties and we will utilize Perry's cargo trailer for the Potluck. Do remember to bring your own chairs.

Also, bring your metal detectors, as we will be having a Club sponsored coin hunt on Sunday morning.

You should have received your raffle tickets in the mail by now, and it would be appreciated if you send the stubs and money to the post office box (PO Box 1491, Orange, CA 92856-1491).

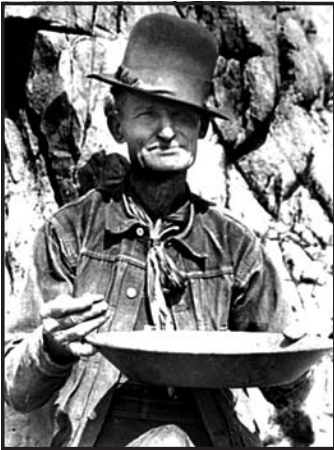
Silver Rounds: If you are interested in selling your silver rounds, the Club is interested in buying them at 80% of spot. Please contact a Board Member.

Speaker for March: Walt Lombado of Nevada Mineral & Book Company will educate us about Meteorites. This is a subject we hear about, but most of us have very little knowledge about. Hopefully Walt will open our eyes, as one never knows what they will stumble across as we ramble around the hills and gullies of the magnificent Southern California desert.

Speaker for April: Our speaker will be Bob Hirsch. Bob will talk to us about privy digging. Based on the subject matter he could be full of it, or it could be very fascinating and entertaining. Plan to attend the meeting and make up you own mind.

Day Outing: By the time you read this, the Club will have held their Day Outing at Bluff Park in Long Beach. We hope it proves popular with the Membership as we are holding another Day Outing in April. This will be held at Huntington State Beach (Magnolia entrance) on Sunday, April 3rd. We will meet at 9:00AM at Lifeguard Station #7.

Parking is \$15 at the beach lot.



Hope to see you at the March Outing at Puppy Feet.

Happy Prospecting,

Steve

The TREASURE'S REPORT

FEBRUARY 2011

INCOME:

50-50 Income.....	\$ 32.00
Club Merchandise.....	0.00
Membership Renewal.....	1,280.00
New Membership.....	330.00
Raffle Income.....	440.00
Refreshments Income.....	6.00
TOTAL INCOME.....	\$ 2,088.00

EXPENSES:

May Outing.....	\$ 667.94
Newsletters.....	573.71
Porta Potties.....	105.73
Postage.....	56.00
Raffle Prizes.....	611.00
Referrals.....	0.00
Refreshments.....	19.80
Rent.....	100.00
Supplies.....	0.00
Misc.....	9.00
TOTAL EXPENSES.....	\$ 2,153.18

CHECKING ACCOUNT

2/01/2011, Beginning Balance.....	12,769.44	
2/31/2011, Ending Balance.....	12,915.99	
3 Outstanding Checks.....	816.73	
CHECK BOOK BALANCE.....	12,099.23	\$ 12,099.23

CERT DEP

00/00 CD Balance.....	2,344.23	\$ 2,344.23
CD Statements are sent Quarterly		

TOTAL CLUB ASSETS..... \$ 14,443.46

TOTAL INCOME YEAR TO DATE..... \$5,548.00

TOTAL EXPENSE YEAR TO DATE..... \$\$ 0

GENERAL MEETING

February 15, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 7:40pm, by our President, Steve Reid, followed by the flag salute. We had numerous visitors attending.

Steve read the Treasurer's report, as Kathi was not present, it was approved as written.

Our wagon master, Bryan DeGhetto, welcomed the visitors and gave them information about our club, and our outings.

Paul Toepel told us about the June 16th raffle for PLP. He has plenty of tickets for anyone wishing to purchase them.

We did not have a speaker, so Bryan showed a video of Gold Fever.

The following were the winners of our drawings: BA Skipper-Gold Nugget, Bryan DeGhetto, Paul Toepel, George Rusznak, Clint DeFields, Ken O'Brien, Keith Reed, Bryan DeGhetto, and Stan Gilman all won silver rounds. Our 50/50 winner was Dale Dollar. The Gold Nugget Door Prize was won by George Rusznak.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Secretary,

Sandy Hunt



The WAGON MASTER'S REPORT



Nothing to say this month!

MEMBER INFORMATION

NEW MEMBER

Muller Frank
604 Stable Ave.
Bakersfield, CA 93307

NEW MEMBER

Kahn Russ
101 Mesa Verde Ln.
Nipomo, CA 93444

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Jon Kishi 310-741-1158, **\$3800.00**

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Jerry Mitchell 619-417-6590, **\$350.00**

Early Train Connections Remembered

You've never heard of it; it doesn't exist. Illinoistown briefly became a supply hub for the Gold Rush mining camps, sending food and supplies to the miners. It sprang up in the first days of 1849 as young men from across the country and around the world headed for California, calling themselves "Forty-niners."

A force as powerful as the huge migration of gold seekers was afoot and it would soon wipe out the place named by some homesick Illinois expatriates. That force was the railroad.

In 1865 planners of the Transcontinental Railroad bypassed Illinoistown and a railroad construction site named simply "Camp 20" became a major switching and maintenance station for the Central Pacific and Southern Pacific railroads. In 1876 Camp 20 became the link to the world for the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad, carrying fruit from Nevada County orchards.

Today Camp 20 is known as Colfax, a charming little town a half hour drive down Highway 174 from Grass Valley and Nevada City. And the trains still roar through.

One of the most astonishing construction feats of the rail route through the Sierras is roadbed carved out of the cliffs by Chinese workers at a place called Cape Horn, outside Colfax. Early trains would stop to let passengers enjoy the view that reached for miles from the cliffside tracks.

Now the town of Colfax is paying tribute to its early railroad history. The Colfax Heritage Museum at 99 Railroad Street occupies the site of the town's railroad depot. The building has been restored by volunteer labor and a ribbon cutting ceremony ushered in a new era of railroad recognition for Colfax.

A combination gift shop and museum features historical exhibits and provides a place for modern day rail travelers to wait for the next Amtrak train passing through. Built in 1905 as the Southern Pacific Passenger Depot, the facility closed in 1971, leaving railroad travelers to stand alongside the tracks as they waited for trains to Reno or Sacramento.

Nearby fruit sheds received the pears, peaches, grapes, and apples shipped from Nevada County growers via the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad. The Southern Pacific moved these perishables east from Colfax. The fruit sheds shut down in the 1950s as truck transportation emerged to haul the fruit.

South of the fruit sheds the Colfax Engine House and Rail Yard was a one-time home to steam engines.

Colfax has managed to retain its small town flavor and offers a pleasant walking tour of Gold Rush railroad history, starting with the town's new pride and joy, the Heritage railroad museum. All aboard!

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California Gets a Constitution

Not much more than a year after the discovery of gold, California sent delegates to Monterey to approve a state constitution. As is sometimes the case in politics, work mixed freely with pleasure.

In the days of gold Monterey was one of California's major cities, having served as headquarters for the Mexican government in California until 1846. It was there the constitutional convention was convened.

The mining season was drawing to a close for the year and it was time to tend to political business. The rainy season was expected momentarily and miners were heading toward towns, thinning the populations of the mining camps as winter approached.

Fears were voiced for the safety of wagon trains still enroute from the East. Oxen and mules were beginning to suffer from a lack of grass on the trail. Memories of the Donner Party's tragedy in 1846 prompted the discussion of plans to rescue unfortunate travelers headed for the Gold Rush but ensnared by winter weather.

As the cold and rain approached, delegates headed for sunny Monterey, California's constitutional convention, and several weeks of word wrangling.

A story in a newspaper of the time, datelined October 14, 1849, reported "A gala ball last night celebrated the close of the convention which wrote a constitution for California. The affair was given by the delegates for the citizens of Monterey who have entertained them so hospitably for the past six weeks."

The convention hall was cleared to make a dance floor for the gentlemen ladies in their finest attire to waltz and dance the quadrille. Two violins and two guitars kept feet moving until past 2 a.m., with only a brief break for midnight supper.

Then the bill came.

"Expenses of the constitutional convention have run high," one paper reported. The 48 delegates started by voting themselves a wage of \$16 a day, plus \$16 a mile for travel to the convention and back. They hired a secretary and an interpreter, paying them each \$28 a day.

Before they left town the delegates created a state seal featuring the Greek motto "Eureka" meaning "I have found it." Shown on the seal along with the motto were to be the Greek goddess Minerva, a bear, and a miner at work.

The state's central guiding document prohibited slavery and set the eastern boundary to follow the Sierra Nevada mountains, despite the efforts of some delegates to draw that line beyond the Salt Lake.

The constitution was approved by the delegates and signed on October 13, 1849. As signatures were affixed the American flag was hoisted and guns began booming a salute. At the 31st shot a cry arose from the delegates, "That's for California!"

Voters approved the document a month later. By September of the next year Congress had approved statehood for the very new, very rich 31st state in the Union, California.

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The Lost Diamond Mine of the McCullough Mountains

THE TALE

The year was 1872. It was the year of the Great Diamond Hoax and the beginning of the end for one of the most powerful men in California. William C. Ralston, financial wizard and head of the prestigious Bank of California would see his empire collapse around him as a result of the Great Diamond Hoax. Ralston was only one of several prominent men duped by the two con artists, John Slack and Philip Arnold. By the time it was over, a number of fortunes had been lost, the reputations of a geologist and famous jeweler had been compromised, and William C. Ralston would be dead of an apparent suicide.

It all started when two prospectors named Philip Arnold and John Slack showed up at Ralston's bank with a sack full diamonds and rubies. The stones seemed to be real enough. They were appraised by the famous Charles Lewis Tiffany at \$150,000! Arnold and Slack told the banker they had discovered a fabulous gem deposit near a small mountain along the Colorado/Wyoming border. Ralston's interest was piqued, but his suspicions were aroused when the two miners offered to sell him their mine. Ralston hired a geologist named Henry Janin to investigate the deposit and he pronounced it both rich and genuine. As a result of Tiffany's appraisal and Janin's geologic assessment, Arnold and Slack collected \$660,000 from various investors. They then promptly disappeared. Meanwhile, it was soon discovered that the stones were actually inferior-grade and nearly worthless. Worse still, the deposit itself was suspect. It turned out that Arnold and Slack had salted the mountainside with cheap, industrial-grade African diamonds and flawed Burmese rubies. When the bubble finally burst, Ralston's bank closed down and he apparently committed suicide.

A number of geologists and mining men had looked on with dismay and amusement at the antics of Ralston and his cronies. They could have told him there were no diamonds in Colorado.

Everybody knew that. But then the Stateline kimberlites were discovered in the mountains near the Colorado/Wyoming border. Since its discovery in 1986, the famous Kelsey Lake kimberlite has produced many gem-quality diamonds, some of them up to 28 carats in size!

The state of Nevada has always been mining country. It is one of the world's great repositories of gold, silver, and copper. Nearly every mountain range in the state is home to some mining district. Although rich in metallic deposits, Nevada is not known as a producer of diamonds. Indeed, the general lack of deposits led mining men to conclude that there were no diamonds in Nevada. And then a man named E.L. Hews proved them wrong again. In 1905, Hews discovered a small diamond-bearing deposit a few miles southeast of Tonopah, near the Tonopah-Silver Bow road. A small diamond rush ensued and suddenly men began to recall an old story told of a lost diamond mine somewhere in the McCullough Mountains of southern Nevada.

It was 1872, the year of the great Diamond Hoax in Colorado. An unknown prospector wandering the McCullough Mountains stumbled upon a small patch of weathered, bluish-gray rock which seemed to be volcanic in origin. The prospector noticed a

number of small lustrous crystals mixed in with the decomposed blue rock. He collected a few of them and continued on with his search for precious metals. A few years later, the prospector got the shock of his lifetime when he discovered that the crystals were actually diamonds. He had nearly forgotten all about them but he was sure he could find the diamond patch again. But when the prospector returned to the McCullough Mountains, he was unable to find the deposit of blue rock. It still remains hidden today.

MINING HISTORY

The history of mining in southern Nevada extends back at least two centuries before the coming of the white man. Crescent Peak is a case in point. Located near the southern end of the McCullough Mountains, Crescent Peak was a source of turquoise for a number of Pre-Columbian Indian tribes. Their ancient workings were rediscovered by white prospectors during the 19th Century.

Spanish prospectors penetrated the southern part of Nevada sometime during the late 1770's. They were followed by Mexicans in the early 1800's and then by Americans shortly thereafter. American prospectors arrived in force during the 1850's. In 1856, a party of Mormons discovered outcrops of lead ore in the mountains near present-day Las Vegas. They later learned that the ore was rich in silver. In 1863, Mexican prospectors discovered a swarm of small gold-bearing veins near Crescent Peak. The Mexicans worked these deposits for many years, using crude arrastres to separate the gold.

The 1890's were dismal years in Nevada's mining history. Except for a small area in the south, the state was in a mining slump. The only bright spot was southern Nevada where two major strikes were made. The largest and most important discovery of the 1890's took place in the Delamar Mountains, 50 miles southwest of Pioche. The Delamar ore bodies would eventually produce

nearly \$15 million worth of precious metal. The Delamar strike was followed up by the discovery of rich gold deposits in the hills of southern Clark County. The mining town of Searchlight quickly sprang up nearby. Searchlight turned out to be the largest and most important gold-mining district in Clark County. It produced nearly 250,000 ounces of the yellow metal.

During the 1900's, Nevada's mining industry was reborn. The state's second major boom began with the discovery of the Tonopah ore bodies in the spring of 1900. A succession of incredible strikes followed including Goldfield in 1902, Manhattan in 1906, and Round Mountain later that same year. In southern Nevada, several smaller strikes occurred in the years following the Tonopah discovery. In 1904, rich silver deposits were discovered on the slopes of Crescent Peak. A small silver boom brought scores of prospectors to the mountains of southern Clark County and a mining town called Crescent sprang up near the silver veins. The town quickly faded when the ores ran out.

In 1905, the richest deposit in the Sunset District was discovered by a solitary prospector. The mine became known as the Lucy Grey. In 1908, alunite deposits similar to those at Goldfield were found on the northeastern fringe of the McCullough Mountains. Unfortunately, they contained very little gold.

GEOLOGY OF THE AREA

The McCullough Mountains of southern Nevada are part of the vast Basin and Range

Province of North America. Like most of the mountain chains in this province, the McCulloughs are fairly long, relatively narrow, and trend roughly north-south. The range stretches some 40 miles from historic Crescent Peak in the south to Henderson and Boulder City in the north.

The McCullough Mountains are comprised of two basic rock "provinces", ancient Precambrian crystalline rock and much younger Tertiary-age volcanics. The northern half of the range consists of Tertiary andesite and basalt flows with minor andesite breccias while the southern half is comprised of a core of uplifted Precambrian metamorphic and igneous rocks. This Precambrian basement rock is mostly gneiss, schist, and older granite (1.7 billion years old), but a small, slightly younger granitic intrusion occurs in the area. This younger intrusion exhibits striking rapakivi texture and was emplaced 250 million years after the older granite.

Faulting occurs along the northeastern edge of the range and in the central portion of the range. The central cluster consists of seven faults that apparently radiate from the Hidden Valley area. All except one are 2 to 3 miles long. The longest fault runs lengthwise through the center of the range. It is nearly 13 miles long and bifurcates just north of McCullough Pass. The northeastern fringe of the range consists of a series of highly faulted wedges of volcanic rock. Faulting is particularly complex near Dutchman Pass.

Mineralization in southern Clark County is many times associated with or emplaced within ancient Precambrian basement rock. In the Searchlight District, the ore bodies are found in Precambrian gneiss near the contact with a Tertiary quartz monzonite intrusion. In the Crescent District, the precious and base-metal deposits are emplaced in Precambrian gneiss and granite. The same is true in the Sunset District.

PROSPECTING POTENTIAL

The McCullough Mountains are literally surrounded by mining districts. The Alunite District lies at the northern end of the range, about 4 miles west of Boulder City. The historic Crescent District lies at the opposite end of the range, just north of the California/Nevada state line. The rich ore bodies of the Searchlight District are located just 15 miles east of the southern end of the McCulloughs while the mines near Goodsprings are only about 16 miles west of the range.

Although the McCullough Mountains have been heavily prospected, it is entirely possible that an experienced gold-seeker would overlook a small kimberlite plug. Except for the bluish-gray color of the weathered kimberlite, the outcrop itself would be quite unremarkable and nondescript. Many times the outcrop will be nothing more than a small, eroded depression covered by decomposed and rotten fragments of kimberlite mixed with bluish clay.

Prospectors must confine their search to kimberlites as they are the only known source of diamonds in the world today. Kimberlites are vertical, carrot-shaped bodies of ultramafic rock derived from the melting of extremely deep-seated rocks. Indeed, when one looks at a kimberlite, they are looking at a sample of the lower crust and upper mantle. Kimberlites are the volcanic equivalent of a peridotite. They are composed of olivine, phlogopite, pyrope garnet, pyroxene, picotite, melilite, and ilmenite. Sometimes they contain fragments of partially melted country rock. Rarely they contain diamonds.

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SCHEDULED OUTINGS 2011

DATES AND LOCATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE!

Meetings	Outing	Claim	Access	Rest Rooms
January 18	29-30	Puppy Feet	Easy	Yes
February 15	26-27	Puppy Feet	Easy	Yes
March 15	26-27	Puppy Feet	Easy	Yes
April 19	30, May 1	TBA	Easy	Yes
May 17	28-29	RM26 Road Side	Easy	Yes
June 21	24-25	Condor or TBA	Easy	No
July 19	30-31	Condor or TBA	Easy	No
August 16	2-4	TBA	Easy	No
September 20	24-25	Hidden Gulch or TBA	Easy	No
October 18	29-30	TBA	Easy	Yes
November 15	Dec. 3	Day Outing	4-WD	No
Dec. 13 or 20	Holiday Party	Club House	Easy	Yes



Access Easy	Good access for Passenger Car, 2 Wheel Drive, RV, and Trailers.
Access Medium	Can be accessed by 2 Wheel Drive. RV's, Trailers and 5th Wheels check with other members!!!
Access Tuff	Serious 4 Wheel Drive Trail/Dirt Road.
Restrooms	Are Chemical Toilets (Porta-Potties) that we rent for specific outings.

It is highly recommended that you attend the meetings and check with other members to discuss accessibility to these claims before going.

ORANGE COUNTY 49ERS