

NORTH STAR HISTORIC CONSERVANCY

THE STAR

NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2017

A Fond Farewell to Bo Kleger

On August 23, the North Star Historic Conservancy Board held a farewell party for long time property manager, Bo Kleger. Bo is moving to the east coast to be closer to his daughter and grandchildren. For the past thirteen years, Bo has been North Star's ever-present caretaker. He has provided oversight for numerous events: weddings, family reunions, children's theater groups, and business retreats. Bo has also been responsible for maintaining the grounds--pruning, trimming, mowing, water systems, and parking areas--whatever needed to be done.



Bo's expertise and passion lay in finished carpentry, and many deteriorating windows were in need of replacement. As funds became available, Bo was able to build Craftsman style windows for many of the ground floor rooms; the library, living room and dining room were all recently completed. The NSHC thanks Bo for his time and dedication to the ongoing work of restoring The North Star House, and wishes him well.

Volunteer Steve Mosley thanking Bo for his years of service to NSHC

A Whopping Good Time at the Country Hoedown

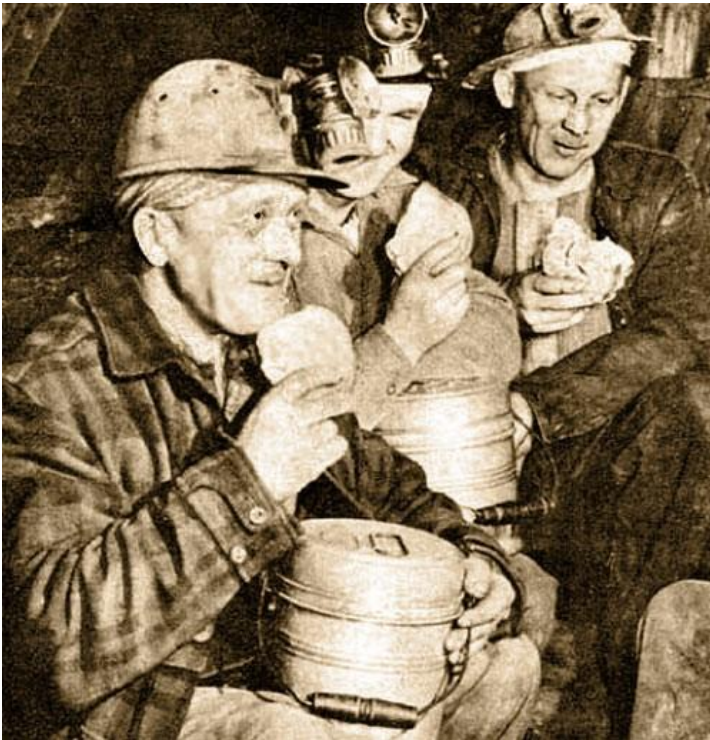
On July 30, the North Star Historic Conservancy held the Annual Party at the North Star. This year, the theme was A Country Hoedown. Jamie Hogan, of Nevada County Dancing with the Stars fame, led the enthusiastic dancers in line dancing and various other dance moves. Chris Crockett opened the evening by serenading attendees during dinner. A delicious dinner was provided by Caramelized Catering, Paulette's Country Kitchen and Bent Metal Winery.



Gary Noy Talks Cousin Jacks

by Maria Hetheron

North Star's spring history events concluded with Gary Noy's lecture explaining the contributions of a Cornish workforce during mining's heyday in Nevada County.



Of Cornish ancestry himself, Noy's forebears worked the local mines, including the North Star. It was wonderful to see photos of his family members within the context of mining labor. We learned that the generations of mining in Cornwall, England, created an almost genetic tolerance for cramped spaces as well as enormous skill and pride-in-craft that made the Cornish miners highly desirable employees. The latter fact spurred a certain level of resentment within the mining community—there was always a “Cousin Jack” Cornish relative ready, willing and able to immigrate and enjoy gainful employment by mine managers happy to have them.

Noy included aspects of Cornish culture that informed life in our mining communities—listening for the warning sounds of the Tommy knockers inside the mines, the cylindrical pail with a pasty (with a short ‘a’ sound, not the long, please), the tradition of song.

Noy's lively, engaging presentation added dimension to the history of the North Star as well as our local community.

So Cal Classic Car Club Visits NSHC

More than 30 members of the Southern California Classic Car Club enjoyed an extended tour of The North Star House, followed by lunch on the veranda.



Mary Hallock Foote Revealed

By Carole Miller

North Star Docent Visit to Dept. of Special Collections,
Stanford Library, Stanford CA, August 28, 29,30, 2017

Recently, North Star House Docents Carole Miller, Carol Stuart and Laurie Harrison-Dayton spent three days in the Stanford Library reading Mary Hallock Foote's letters, and viewing drawings and photos archived by Stanford in the Mary Hallock Foote Papers.

The 18 box collection contains correspondence with Helena Gilder, other friends, family and business associates, a typed copy of "Reminiscences", Mary's pencil drawings, and family photos dating from 1863 to 1924. The papers were gifted to the library in 1968 by Rosamond Gilder and Janet Micoleau, with some materials purchased in 1977.

The docents chose the boxes covering the dates of Mary's North Star residency, 1895 to 1924. We viewed about 300 handwritten letters and almost all of the graphic material. Although we gathered many facts about Mary's life at North Star that will add to our understanding of North Star life, it was getting to know Mary as a person that struck us as invaluable information.

Her letters to Helena deKay Gilder, her best friend, were conversational in style covering daily happenings; motherly concerns, weddings, babies, illnesses, servants and social friends, gossip, vegetables and flowers, furniture rearranging, and house guests. Mary could be factual, dramatic, romantic and loving all in the same paragraph.

Her letters to Richard Gilder covered politics and world events; the 1906 earthquake, the Alsace-Lorraine conflict and coming war, social justice, California State legislation -- particularly the passage of the eight hour work day law. In one six page letter she described the San Francisco earthquake in great detail.

Mary's letters portray a woman with a keen sense of humor, a good sense of business, and perceptive character analysis of household staff and social acquaintances. And, perhaps most importantly, they show the importance to her of family and close friendships. In reading Mary's letters, we felt her warmth and humanness.



A. D. Foote and the Road to Alleghany

A. D. Foote and the Road to Alleghany

By Maria Hetherton

If you are local to Nevada County or a devoted visitor, you know the route that takes you to North Bloomfield and Malakoff Diggins includes Tyler-Foote Road. The fifteen-mile section connecting Columbia Hill to Alleghany in Sierra County is on the National Register of Historic Places, and was initiated, designed and supervised (at least on the Nevada County side) by North Star's A. D. Foote-- and was originally called Foote's Crossing Road.

Foote owned an interest in the Tightner Mine at Alleghany, a five-day round-trip from Nevada City under the best of circumstances. In winter, the mine relied on skied runners for the transport of supplies and gold at a considerably greater expense of time. In 1911, Foote met with the Nevada County Board of Supervisors to pitch a road project that would reduce the round trip to only three days, and allow travel on an almost all-year basis.



Foote's Crossing Road Workers, 1913

The section of Foote's Crossing Road that winds along the Middle Yuba River canyon was once deemed "America's most spectacular mile of mountain road," and ranks among the white-knuckled rides listed on dangerousroads.org. This extreme engineering challenge did not faze Foote, whose elegant design maintained a consistent seven percent grade as the road descended into the canyon. For

this mile-long section, hugging a cliff side almost perpendicular to the canyon floor and hundreds of feet above the riverbed, Foote designed a stone retaining wall.

Horse-drawn dragline scrapers provided the leveling technology. Expert European stonemasons, hanging sometimes from stagings a good 1500 feet above the riverbed, blasted rock from the mountain face and skillfully dry-laid the rock into the retaining shelf. The rock wall, bolstered by steel eyelets, holds firm to this day.

Like many engineering projects, the road's construction exceeded its projected cost of \$7,000.00 to the tune of \$85,000.00. Foote raised \$28,000.00 toward that sum, and also contributed \$50,000.00 of his own money to see the project to completion. While Foote's Crossing Road benefited mining operations in the area, its use never required a toll, thus benefiting citizens traveling to the train station in Nevada City. It's exceptional to note the reach of Foote's engineering prowess in Nevada County, and impressive to understand his role in providing expedient travel through precipitous terrain as a visionary, engineer and even financial backer.

"Foote's Crossing Road," 1980. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Online at <https://npgallery.nps.gov>



Looking for Volunteers

Volunteer Coordinator The Volunteer Coordinator works with the Board and Event Chairs to determine volunteer job needs. The coordinator would interview prospective volunteers and provide orientation. If you have great listening skills and a love of people, this position is for you! Knowledge of social media and/or our local forms of public outreach extremely helpful.

Publicity / Public Relations Coordinator The Publicity / Public Relations Coordinator volunteer would work with the Board, Program and Event Chairs, along with various Committees of NSHC, to develop an annual publicity / outreach calendar to advertise and promote events, activities and the mission of the NSHC. The Publicity / Public Relations Coordinator would prepare the annual budget for promotion and advertising costs and present them to the Board. The position would also include writing, or facilitating, press releases on projects, activities, accomplishments and special events for all media outlets including radio, newspapers, and social media as outreach sources.

North Star History and Educational Program Development The North Star Educational Program Development volunteer position involves developing, planning and implementing educational programs that will

We Need Your Help with a Priority Project

The Construction Crew has been working on completing a couple of ground floor projects that include refinishing another section of wood paneling in the dining room, and installing the custom Craftsman windows that Bo Kleger built. The next priority is being able to purchase Douglas fir boards to create wood panels for the library ceiling and walls.

Please consider making a donation or becoming a member of the North Star Historic Conservancy. Our goal is to completely restore and refurbish this community treasure for all to enjoy.

Construction Update

The “new” workshop, on the second floor, had its plaster ceiling removed for safety reasons.

This week, Bob, Chuck & Marco moved 1.4 tons of Julia Morgans Plaster and associated materials. Doug shoveled buckets for a while and then was re-directed to an electrical circuit that was running HOT so he is in the process of splitting the load to lessen the fire hazard.

Sorry about what we did to the Mayor’s truck. Thanks for the loan Mr. Mayor.

NOTE

This contains the primary articles that appeared in the Summer 2017 issue of The Star.

This was created for our historical records and does not include standard features such as upcoming events, President’s message, etc. that were in the original electronic newsletter.