

# NORTH STAR HISTORIC CONSERVANCY

# THE STAR

## NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2018

## **The Yanks are Coming”: the Local Role in World War I**

**On Sunday, November 4, author Gage McKinney will speak on  
“The Yanks Are Coming’: William Hague, Engineers & The North Star House in World War I”**

McKinney will tell the story of William Hague, the young manager of the North Star gold mine who took American know-how to Europe and died in a field hospital in France.

The presentation will be given at The North Star House, 12075 Auburn Road, Grass Valley, at 2 pm, and will last about one hour. Coffee, tea and snacks will follow the presentation, and McKinney will answer questions and sign books.

After the war began in August 1914, William Hague represented interventionist sentiment at a time when many Americans wanted to stay clear of European conflicts. He was the product of an international mining culture which urged America to join the fight and exercise global influence.

After the U. S. entered the war in 1916, and men like Hague shipped to France, American engineers changed the course of the brutal conflict. The talk will explain how mining men served and describe one North Star miner whose exploits were recounted in a Hollywood movie.

McKinney’s books include *The 1930s: No Depression Here* and *MacBoyle’s Gold*. He descends from Cornish miners and lives in Grass Valley. His presentation is sponsored by the North Star Historic Conservancy, which manages the historic house as a cultural center and preserves the history of the North Star mine.

---

## **Growers Market – Saturdays 8:00 – 12:30 pm**

The Growers Market takes place every Saturday from 8 – 12:30 pm, on the grounds of The North Star House. There is an abundance of produce to choose from; specialty meats, flowers, plant seedlings – in addition to food and beverage vendors. There is also live music every Saturday.

If you are inclined to enjoy a cup of coffee or a snack, there are café tables and chairs on the veranda of The North Star House.

The North Star House is open to the public from 9 am to noon. Docents are on hand for tours or to answer questions.

# Volunteer Spotlight



## **Barbara Friedlander:** “I Love This Place”

Although Barbara Friedlander has volunteered at the North Star House—serving on the rose team—for three years, her association with the House spans closer to

the time she first moved to Nevada County from Redwood City fifteen years ago. She met Carole Miller and Peggy Levine through a women’s group sponsored by the Center for the Arts, and also knew Carole through her husband’s affiliation with the Cal Alumni group. When Carole

mentioned the rose team she expertly steers, Barbara thought she’d like to join.

“We’re the weeders,” she laughs, recognizing nevertheless the value of her work in helping to preserve the roses and fruit trees Carole has so painstakingly identified and maintained over the years. Members of the rose team also water when the weather turns warm and, as for rainy days, that is nature’s way of necessitating a coffee date among a group of volunteers who enjoy one another socially.

Barbara has met “wonderful people” through her volunteering, and loves the North Star House, feeling grateful the Conservancy intervened to rescue a home “with such a history.”

---

## **Sherri Anderson:** a Passion for Roses

When Sherri Anderson came to Grass Valley five years ago, her roses came with her. Especially now that she is retired, Sherri nurtures a love of gardening, and finds a welcome outlet volunteering as part of the North Star House rose team. Originally from Santa Rosa, Sherri comes to us via Bakersfield, a great place for gardening.

The North Star House had not been on her radar when she wandered through the Growers Market one Saturday morning. Still, she stopped by the House’s outreach table where David Wright encouraged her to take a look inside. There, Cheryl Belcher provided a tour, and Sherri was hooked. Training initially to be a House docent, Sherri realized she’d be happier working outside on the House’s beautiful grounds, and happily took up Carole Miller’s invitation to join the rose team.

Sherri reminisces that for the first few years, rose team members were busy with heavy weeding and

shrub trimming, and that it paid off: “Now things are manageable and nice.” She enjoys working in the vicinity of the Hague House, which has a special appeal to her.



Rose team members are custodians of the heritage roses that, among an array of plantings that include fruit trees, date to the first generations of the Foote family. The roses will be moved to the Heritage Garden and, at that time, Sherri hopes to be involved in Heritage Garden projects.

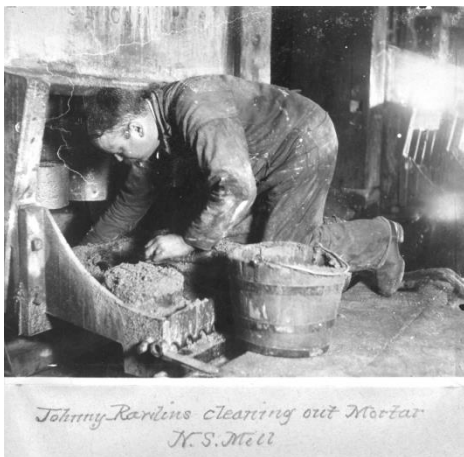
Sherri also brought her mother-in-law’s roses to her Grass Valley home property, creating a heritage garden of her own. Rose lovers see more than beautiful blooms. They see the legacy of years of care—weeding, watering, deadheading, pruning—lovingly rendered. We honor the hands that tended roses when we work to preserve them.

# Men at Work

The Searls Historical Library in Nevada City houses a telling collection of photographs by A. D. Foote. A majority of the photos document the mechanical “guts” of the North Star Mill, Central Shaft and Incline Shaft: transformers, cables, aerial tramway buckets, and busted up—the usual suspects—pipes and drums.

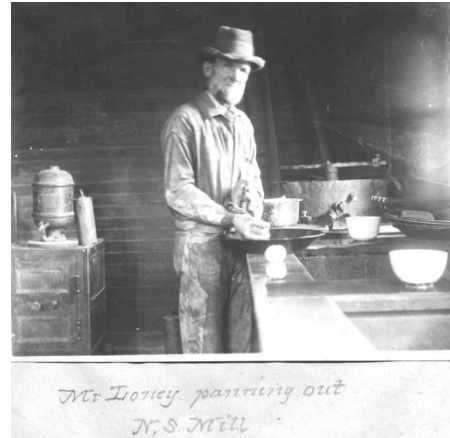
In one picture engineer and mine superintendent Foote has captioned “Drum of hoist, Central Shaft, broken by pressure of winding rope,” we can also see a sign on the wall: “Don’t Talk to the Engineer.”

Perhaps that sign is about the engineer’s need to concentrate uninterrupted on abstract calculation, or a caution to employees who might take advantage of the engineer for some on-the-job breeze shooting. The sign might imply a differential between the status of the engineer and all other mine employees. All things considered, though, A. D. Foote’s photos don’t solely document the workings of the North Star Mine; they also reveal admiration and respect for the men who worked there.



Integrated into the images typical of an engineer who sees an elegant coherence between the form and function of industrial machines and instruments, are Foote’s scenes of men working.

Two portraits from the North Star Mill pictured here seem particularly stately and humanistic: “Johnny Rawlins cleaning out Mortar,” and “Mr. Irony [?] panning out.”



Each man appears in a well-composed visual setting; each is at work, serious in countenance; each is mentioned by his name. We imagine A. D. Foote in relationship to the workers at North Star Mine—an authority figure—but one who valued each worker’s role in the mine’s success; one who likely knew at least a little of these men’s family and life outside work; one who saw the honor in all mine labor. All good thoughts as we mark off another Labor Day from our calendars.

As a side note, Foote’s photos depicting industrial machinery, mechanisms and mine workers seem better composed and clearer than family photos he took, too many of which are a bit unfocused.

Maybe you are more inclined to stand still for a picture when the photographer is your boss, and not your dad.

*Photos courtesy of Searls Historical Library; used with permission and not for reproduction.*

## Remembering Elvis

For more than ten years, The North Star House was home to Elvis, an easy-going orange tabby. He was very popular with visitors. In fact, many stopped by frequently to visit Elvis, and spend time with him. Elvis would often greet people in the courtyard with a bossy meow, and lead them into the house.



Last October, it became necessary for Elvis to be in an environment where he could receive regular care for an ear infection, and monitoring for some other medical issues. We contacted Animal Save, and Elvis was able to move into a room there with other senior cats. He adjusted to his new environment, and received many visitors on a regular basis.

In June, Elvis passed away in his sleep. We brought him home to North Star House for burial near the Heritage Garden. We miss him.

Farewell, Elvis, you were a guardian, a mascot and a friend!

---

## Construction Shots



Courtyard Shingles



Laundry room – getting ready for staircase



Pump Pad Prepped



New Tanks, Pumps

NOTE

This contains the primary articles that appeared in the Autumn 2018 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.