

The Sierran

— A Publication of the Sierra County Historical Society —

Editor's Note

The Sierra County Historical Society has experienced the loss of several highly regarded and valued members and friends recently. We are featuring two of those folks in this issue. Our lead article is about Maren Scholberg who spent most of her life in Sierra Valley and was an invaluable asset to the Historical Society and the communities of Sierra County. Carleton Hansen was a great friend and mentor to the Historical Society and especially the Kentucky Mine and Museum. Whether you knew these folks or not, we think you will find their life stories both interesting and historically informative.

Maren Christiansen Scholberg - A Life Well Lived - 1917-2015

Maren Scholberg was involved with our Sierra County Historical Society since 1969 when the Society was started. She was an active member since that time serving many positions including our membership chairperson and secretary for many years. For a fund raiser, Maren published "Barns of Sierra Valley in Sierra County". Her husband Carl helped take all the photographs (he raised the barbed wire fences while she crawled under!) She also produced "Historic Houses of Sierra County in Sierra Valley" in 2000 for the Historical Society. Vernon M. Hawthorne was photographer for this publication which is still available for purchase at the Kentucky Mine.

When fellow Board Member, Milton Gottardi suggested we do a book on the "History of the Schools of the Sierra Valley" Maren stepped up to research and write the history of four of the seventeen schools. (Again, this publication is available for purchase at the Kentucky Museum.) Many articles were written by Maren for our newsletter. She loved research and genealogy and responded to most inquires for

researchers. She spent many hours putting together an index of "The Sierran" and previous newsletters of the Society.

Maren's family was from North Dakota. Her father was a minister of the small Congregational Church in Crary. She had a brother, Dean, and sisters LaVerne (Joan Dee) and Janet. The family moved often and



Maren, on the left, with sister Janet.

Maren had memories of the family living in Ione, Arizona, New Mexico, Wisconsin, and Seattle, WA. Maren and her siblings enjoyed seeing free movies since the minister's family attending a movie sent a message that it was OK for others to attend, good publicity, thus free movies. The movies were silent with a hired piano player to provide appropriate music for each scene. School was a happy adventure for Maren; she already knew how to read when she started school, so was skipped a grade. She loved playing the piano, and was a violinist with the orchestras all through high school and college. During the Depression they lived in Wisconsin, and for a year each child lived

Maren Christiansen Scholberg - (Cont. on Page 3) —

— THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY —



The Sierra County Historical Society is an organization of people interested in preserving and promoting an appreciation of Sierra County's rich history. The Society operates a museum at the Kentucky Mine in Sierra City, holds an annual meeting, publishes a newsletter and conducts historical research. Members are sent notices of Society activities, receive THE SIERRAN, and are admitted free of charge to the museum and stamp mill tour. If you would like to become involved in these activities or would just like to give your support, please join us!

Officers and Executive Board of The Sierra County Historical Society

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
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| Judy Lawrence, Virginia Lutes, Co-Editors of The Sierran | Cindy Ellsmore, Webmaster |
| | Dianne Bruns, Museum Curator |

If you have any suggestions or comments, feel free to contact any board member or email at info@sierracountyhistory.org

Become a Member!

Membership in the Sierra County Historical Society is open to any interested person, business or organization. Members need not be residents of Sierra County. Dues are due and payable each January for the calendar year.

Membership categories are as follows:

- INDIVIDUAL \$20.00
- FAMILY & INSTITUTION..... \$25.00
- BUSINESS & SUPPORTING..... \$35.00
- SUSTAINING..... \$50.00
- LIFE (per person/couple) \$300.00

In addition, Museum Renovation Project donations are gratefully accepted.

Please send dues and donations to:
 S.C.H.S.
 c/o Don Yegge, Membership Chair
 PO Box 336, Loyalton, CA 96118

Maren Scholberg's Books Available at the Kentucky Mine Museum

Barns of Sierra County in Sierra Valley

Sierra County Historical Society

History of the Schools of the Sierra Valley

Historic Houses of Sierra County in Sierra Valley

Sierra County Historical Society 2000

We are fortunate to have this collection of historical publications that Maren worked on to document the unique barns and houses of Sierra County, and the history of the schools of Sierra County. Unfortunately, the barns book is no longer available, but you can visit the Kentucky Mine Museum to purchase the Schools of Sierra County or Historic Houses of Sierra County publications.

Maren Christiansen Scholberg - (Cont. from Page 1) —

with a different family member. Hitchhiking was a common method of travel during the Depression, and members of Maren's family used that means of travel. Following the first year in Wisconsin the family was able to be together again, and Maren graduated from high school in Rice Lake. Maren's family moved on to Seattle, camping along the way, and found that out-of-state tuition was too expensive, so they detoured to Yakima for a year, living with a North Dakota friend and teacher. Maren and her mother worked in the Del Monte canning factory, Dean in the hop fields during the fruit season. Mother found a large house where she could keep several boarders to help with money. Seattle was again the place to go; in the first year in Seattle, they made three moves until Mother was again able to find a house large enough for boarders. Maren, sister Janet and brother Dean all graduated from the University of Washington, and within a few years all had married.



Maren married Carl Scholberg in 1940. Carl had graduated from University of Minnesota, with a degree in Forestry. No forestry jobs were available so Carl worked for a plumbing company and then was hired at Boeing. Thanks to a letter from his college friend, Frank Tucker, who was working on the Plumas National Forest out of Quincy, CA, Carl got on as a scaler with

the Forest Service. That began a 30-year career with the USFS spent on the Plumas and Tahoe National Forest. Maren and Carl adopted three infants: Kristine, Eric and Kurt.

The Scholbergs moved to Sierraville where Carl served as District Ranger. Carl was the last F.S. employee on the Tahoe Forest to use a horse and sometimes Maren went with him on his field trips. Maren remembered those years with fondness.

The family traveled and camped. Maren enjoyed revisiting some of the areas that she had lived in as a child. Maren and Carl also traveled overseas, the first a tour to Switzerland with four cousins. Another trip was to New Zealand and Australia; there they visited a Rotary Exchange student who had lived with them. On a Scandinavian trip which included Norway where both Carl's and Maren's fathers were born, they both located where their family had lived. They also took a three-day tour to Leningrad. It was still a Communist country at that time. They had a number of unforgettable experiences.

Maren and Carl were active members of the Portola United Methodist Church for over 40 years. Maren at times played piano there.

She taught school, piano, played Bridge, square danced, was a member of the sewing club and was a mentor and friend to many.

Maren was always willing to help at the museum in Sierra City, and worked hard for events at the Kentucky Mine. When our photos needed to be organized and accessioned, Maren spent many hours undertaking this project.

When she decided to step back from the Board of Directors of the Historical Society, we were not willing to let her go. We celebrated her 80th and 90th birthdays and asked that she be a Director Emeritus. She is remembered for being a person who was always willing to take on a task that needed to be done. She quietly proceeded to accomplish things; she never asked nor expected recognition.

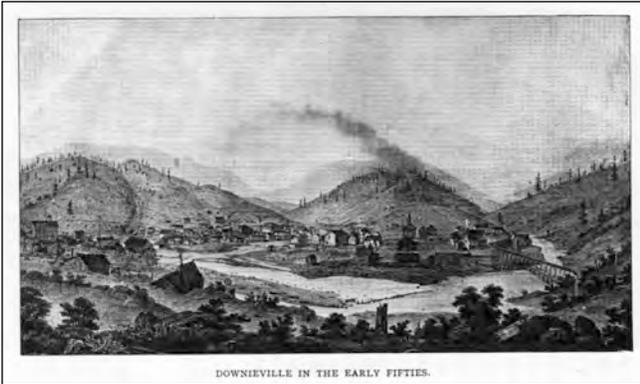
The Scholbergs loved living in Sierraville and the Sierra Valley, and it is fair to say, we loved having them as part of our county.



Downieville Nearly Destroyed By Fire

Virginia Lutes

Shouts of "FIRE" and urgent peals of the town bell disturbed the quiet of the first day of the new year of 1858. At 6PM a fire broke out in the St. Charles Hotel on Main Street, and in an hour and a half the flames had consumed almost all of Downieville business houses and homes. Children, women and the elderly gathered above the town and watched as the Jersey Bridge burned then collapsed.



The fire reduced to ashes the structures on Main Street to the upper plaza, as well as buildings on Bridge and Commercial Streets as far as the Methodist Church. That Church was saved by tearing down two of the nearest buildings. The new Congregational Church was destroyed; the Catholic Church on the lower plaza caught fire and was doused numerous times, but was saved. The Fraternity Hall owned jointly by the Odd Fellows and Masons was destroyed; it had housed the armory of the National and Sierra Guards in the basement, and the *Sierra Citizen* newspaper. The *Sierra Democrat* newspaper lost all equipment, except for a few cases of type.

The dwelling of S.A. (W.) Langton of Langton's Express, was saved even though it was within 100 yards of one hundred kegs of powder, belonging to Eastman & Co., which exploded. Mr. Dexter had his arm broken and several others sustained injuries from this cause, they were taken to where the children were located in an abandoned cabin for treatment. The explosion was heard as far away as Forest City. Citizens from that community quickly departed to assist Downieville, carrying supplies and blankets. They arrived in time to help contain the raging fire.



The Court House, dwelling houses on Durgan Flat, and houses on the upper part of Main Street were saved by what was termed as heroic efforts.

The bitter cold morning of January 2, 1858, found the townspeople of Downieville surveying the destruction; broken melted glass, ash, mud, burned timbers seemed to cover the town. The buildings that remained sheltered the homeless. The estimated losses reached \$489,600.

Nearby communities responded with aid, donations of money came in from Nevada City, Monte Cristo, Alleghany, Marysville and Forest City (In April of 1858, that community lost their business area also due to a fire.)

Downieville recovered rapidly from this blow. By spring new structures were being built to replace those destroyed. The Catholic Church built a new church in 1858, above Main Street and the school. Plans were under way to build a new Congregational Church and Fraternity Hall.



Carleton Hansen

A remembrance by Virginia Lutes

Recently we received word that Carleton Hansen, a very good friend of the Sierra County Historical Society, and especially the Kentucky Mine Museum and Historic Park, passed away.



In 2013 Carleton and his wife Neva, along with their daughter Lynn and husband Steve Templeman visited the Kentucky Mine for our Oral Interview Project. We are very fortunate for this look into Carleton's history.

Carleton's family history on both his paternal and maternal sides in Sierra County ties in with the gold mining era. His father's family, the Hansens and his mother's, the Loefflers were both very well known in the Sierra City area.

Around 1928, when Carleton was about a year old, his parents Anna and Vernon returned with him to be with his mother's parents, Anna and Emil Loeffler. The house they lived in still stands on Main Street in Sierra City; it is currently the Brooks home.

The Hansen Story: Carleton's grandfather was Klaus Hansen. He married Susan Uren. They lived in Sierra City on what was called Hansen Hill, along with other Hansens.

The "Madam's House", the house that Klaus and Susan raised their family in, was built by "Billy the Tinner" for a madam. She lived in that home for many years. Her nearby house of business later burned. His father, Vernon, later owned the house, followed by Carleton and Neva who remodeled it and retained ownership for many years.

Klaus was a Mill Man. He and Susan had three boys and three girls. Two of the boys died when they were young. Klaus had a hobby of making woodwork projects out of cigar boxes. He used a coping saw to do very fine detail work, all scroll work. Grandmother Susan had

a hearing horn, but that did not stop her from singing. She loved to sing.

Their son Vernon chose not to be a hard rock miner, although he did prospect on the river. He worked all kinds of jobs until he hired on with the California State Road Department. Vernon's decision not to mine underground may have been determined by his bad experience with carbide light. The carbide and water became mixed prematurely and, "it about blew his head off". He was badly burned; the treatment at the time was peeling raw potatoes and putting them on the burn area.

Vernon married Anna Loeffler, daughter of Emil and Annie Seitz Loeffler. The Loeffler's were in Loganville for a time prior to moving to Sierra City. Both the Seitz and Loeffler surnames were well known in the area. Around 1907 Emil Loeffler, Anna's father, bought the Kentucky Mine claim with other family members; he later owned the mine with his son Adolph, known as Dutch.



Emil and son Adolph unloading beef at their butcher shop/residence in Sierra City.

Carleton lived in Sierra City with his parents and grandparents, the Loefflers, and it was there that he attended school. He started a year early because they needed more students for first grade. His teachers were Forbes, Claremore and Sidney Strand. Carleton was in the last graduating class in the Sierra City School. There were three graduates: Carleton and the Smith sisters, Fae and Bea.

Carleton Hansen - Part 2 - (Continued on Page 6) ➤

Carleton Hansen - (Continued from Page 5) —

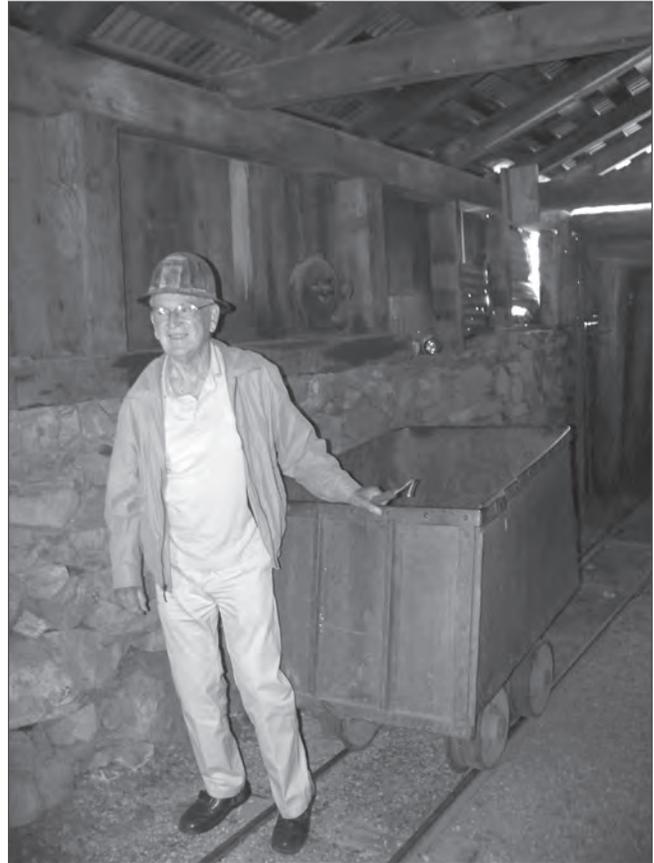
Carleton was sixteen when tragedy struck the Loeffler family: his uncle Adolph died in the Kentucky Mine. Carleton had been sent to the Kentucky Mine to get his uncle for dinner. He noticed Dutch's glasses on the windowsill when he entered the mine and called out for him. He then took a light and went into the mine, still calling. When he got to the blast area, he figured Dutch must be under the rubble pile, so he rushed home for help. He met his father, Vernon, along the way, and told him what he had found in the mine. Vernon and many other men rushed to the mine to dig Dutch out. Carleton later said that Dutch should not have been working alone in the mine and usually another man, Albin Limval, who lived with the family, worked with Dutch. Dutch thought he was on to something good, a strike of some type. No one knows what happened, but Dutch died in the Kentucky Mine that day; perhaps a victim of a pre-mature explosion or some believe a heart attack. Dutch was 44 years old.



Carleton and Neva Hansen at Kentucky Mine May 2013

Carleton went to work for PG&E in Auburn after graduation, attending Placer College (Sierra College) for about a semester before going into the service. He returned to finish college after his military service. When he was twenty-three he married Neva Hansen. They worked on the Hansen family home in Sierra City and spent many enjoyable, but work-filled times there.

Carleton and Neva donated numerous objects to the museum, and they always made time to answer questions about the Kentucky. He will be dearly missed!



SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S ANNUAL PICNIC

September 13th at 1:00 pm

*Tin Cup Diggin's Park
in Downieville*

Public is invited.

Lunch is free to members.

*There will be a \$15 charge
for lunch for non-members.*

*Please make reservations by calling
(530) 862-1123 or email to
mnourse46@gmail.com
by Monday, September 7th.*

A Night at the Museum . . . A Night to Remember!

A beautiful setting, lovely music, fine wine and craftsman beer, and delicious food. Add to this list of good things the company of old and new friends and neighbors and you have the makings of a wonderful Night at the Kentucky Mine and Museum! The gala gathering was a celebration of the recently completed museum improvement projects including new wood laminate flooring, a fresh coat of paint, and a rearrangement of the office area and some of the exhibits.



The picnic area at the Kentucky Mine was the perfect setting for the festivities.

The gala event was held to share the improvements with the community and to thank the many historical society volunteers who worked countless hours to complete these projects. Honored guests were Sierra County Road Department employees who did the “heavy lifting” that was necessary to move cases, artifacts, and exhibits including our prized one-ton-plus safe which came to us from the Downieville courthouse.



Jeanne Clark of 49 Wines of Downieville serves appetizers to Historical Society Vice President Joleene Torri.

A gourmet collection of appetizers was provided by Jade’s Catering in Downieville and the Parady Family Winery folks poured their unique Ore Cart label and 49 Wines of Downieville, and provided a variety of other wines. Local band, the Stringalongs, played throughout the evening adding their unique musical sound to the festivities.

The Kentucky Mine Museum is a unique and invaluable homage to the rich history of Sierra County. The Night at the Museum event was the perfect way to celebrate the new-and-improved museum “home”.



Beautiful melodies and harmonies filled the air as The Stringalongs entertained throughout the evening.

The Sierran

Sierra County Historical Society

P.O. Box 260

Sierra City, California 96125

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Double Fun at The Kentucky Mine Amphitheater

This evening at the beautiful Kentucky Mine amphitheater offers something for everyone! For history buffs and those who just enjoy learning more about the wild, wild West, Lee Dummel will present his exciting reenactment of the colorful characters involved in the Great Verdi Train Robbery!

Then you can tap your feet and maybe do a few twirls around the dance floor to the melodious sounds of the Stringalongs! This versatile, local musical group entertains with ballads you'll want to sing along to, and western swing selections that will have you off your seat and dancing the night away!

Don't Miss the Fun!

See you at the Kentucky Mine for a great send-off-to-summer event!

**SATURDAY,
AUGUST 29th**

7 pm

\$10.00 per person

***Pre-Concert Mexican Dinner
by Los Dos Hermanos***

\$14.00 per person

***Big Jack Davis and
The Great Verdi Train Robbery
With History Reenactor Lee Dummel***

AND

***Music by the
Stringalongs!***