



Porterville Historical Museum

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January 2024 Newsletter

Happy New Year Friends and Sponsors of the Porterville Historical Museum!

We want to thank you for helping us make 2023 a hugely successful year at the museum. Before we fill you in on recent happenings, here are a couple of upcoming events at the museum you won't want to miss:

***"Native American Pictographs and Petroglyphs" - Lecture presented by Bill Horst
Sunday, February 11, 2024 - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.***

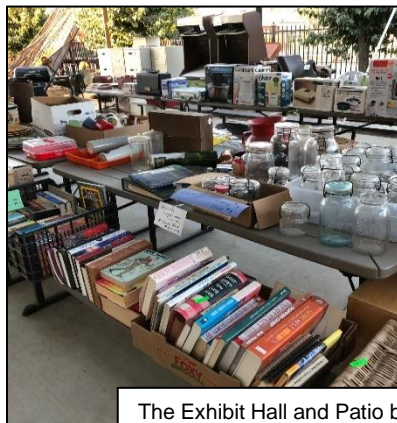
***"Museum Masterpieces" - Children's art exhibit by the Tulare County Office of Education
Fridays and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. – Starts March 1st, ends March 30th, 2024***

Both events are Free, but donations are always appreciated!

Also, it's Membership Renewal Time! Just a reminder that February is our annual membership drive month, and we hope YOU will be a part of the Porterville Historical Museum in 2024. We encourage new or existing members to place their membership payment in the enclosed envelope and return it to us by mail or in person by the end of February. Memberships are active for the calendar year in which they are received. Benefits include free admission to the museum and historical lectures, as well as 10% off items from our gift shop!

Due to your continued support of our efforts to renovate our facilities and host special exhibits, lectures, and community events, the final three months of 2023 brought a whirlwind of activity and many visitors to our museum. Here are a few highlights:

Museum Yard Sale - The first weekend in October found our exhibit hall and patio area bulging with donated items of every size shape and variety and made our two-day Museum Yard Sale a huge success. We especially want to thank our museum Volunteers for the



The Exhibit Hall and Patio bulged with yard sale items

outstanding job they did getting sale items cleaned, sorted, organized, and displayed and sold!

Annual Holiday Train Show – Following the yard sale In early October, our talented train crew, - Frank Spina, Dr. Don Stover, Rich Stover, and Don Wheeler - began the marathon task of setting up the 38th annual Holiday Train Show. Working nearly every day for six weeks, and with the assistance of museum volunteers and members of the Central California Model Railroad and Historical Society, they had the show ready to open to the public the day after Thanksgiving.

Special features of this year’s train show included an exhibit of wooden train toys provided by Joanne Albers and an eclectic collection of handmade vehicles crafted from jewelry and other small items by Joe Sanchez. Frank Spina’s mockup of the old Porterville Drive-In Theatre, running the movie “Wizard of Oz”, also brought back many fond memories for long-time local residents. The response to this year’s show was truly overwhelming. By the time the show closed on New Year’s Eve, nearly 1,500 adults and children had passed through the museum’s doors to see the trains and tour the rest of the museum. The train show received rave reviews from attendees and introduced the museum to many first-time visitors. We want to express a special thanks to Rob Taylor and his staff at Stafford’s Chocolates for promoting the show by purchasing and giving away show passes to their customers. Rob’s support is greatly appreciated!



Crowds enjoyed the 38th annual train show.



A firefighter rescues a “victim”.

Fire Department Rescue Training – On November 16 the museum’s big palm tree took center stage in a special “Arborist Rescue” class conducted for the Porterville and Lindsay Fire Departments. Using a fire department ladder truck, ropes, rope launcher, and special climbing equipment, firefighters practiced a variety of methods for rescuing tree trimmers who become injured or trapped high in trees. It was our pleasure to host the training and we want to thank our volunteers for firing up the grill to provide lunch for the 40 or so firefighters who participated.

Roof Repairs – As mentioned in our last newsletter, the museum experienced some significant roof leaks during last winter’s storms. The Porterville Rotary Club graciously funded professional repairs to the roof this summer, and their members also spent a day caulking cracks in walls and around windows to help seal the exterior of our great 110-year-old building. . We sincerely thank Rotary President Jake Villard and his crew for their dedication and assistance with this much needed project.



Jake Villard and Steve Scarbrough help seal the museum.

Handicap Access Improved – We're pleased to announce that just prior to the train show four new concrete parking spaces were installed in the parking area at the back of the museum. This includes two handicap spaces, one of which is van accessible. Additionally, a new sidewalk was poured along the entire front of the car barn, and a connecting walkway to it from the front of the museum. Ramirez Custom Concrete did the cement work under contract, but also graciously donated and spread several tons of crushed rock in our parking lot, and decomposed granite in some areas at the front of the museum. Many thanks to them!



New Handicap Parking Spaces behind the museum.

Melton Family Donation – Following the recent passing of our friend Bill Melton, his family gifted the museum two single-horse buggies, a two-horse surrey, and a fire department hose cart. These vehicles were all restored by Bill and are stunning. They are now on display in our car barn, and we encourage everyone to drop by and see them. We are truly grateful to Bill's family for making them available to us in Bill's honor.



One of three buggies donated by the Melton family.

New Board Member – We are pleased to welcome Jim Koontz as the newest member of our Board of Directors. We know that Jim's background in both education and agriculture will prove valuable to us as we continue our efforts to revitalize our facility and exhibits!

Expanded Days/Help Wanted – We've seen much growth in general museum interest and attendance this past year, and we are also hosting a growing number of school tours. So, we are pleased to announce that effective January 1, 2024, the museum is now open on both Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. But, to accommodate this growth, **we need help!**

If you are interested in becoming a museum Volunteer or Docent, PLEASE contact us via email: portervillemuseum@gmail.com or by phone at 559-784-2053. Because we have no full-time staff it may be a few days before we respond to your emails or phone messages.

Get Information via Email and/or Website and help us reduce costs - Our costs to physically print and mail newsletters (and other announcements) to members and sponsors multiple times each year are skyrocketing. As such, you can help us reduce our mailing costs by electing to receive future museum related news and notices by email. In the near future, newsletters, event flyers, and so forth, will also be available to view or download on our website.

To sign up for emails from the museum, simply email us at **portervillemuseum@gmail.com** and indicate that you would like to receive information from us via email. NOTE! - If you have multiple email addresses, please email us from the address you would like us to use.

While we hope to substantially reduce our mailing costs, we do recognize that not everyone uses email or the internet. So, unless you request that we add you to our email list, we will continue to send you printed materials via regular mail.

In closing - There are a lot of great things happening at the museum these days and we encourage you to drop by to see first-hand what the generosity of our friends and sponsors is allowing us to accomplish.

Again, we thank you for your continued support, and wish you a Happy New Year!

Porterville Historical Museum Board of Directors

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Museum Curator: David Hawley