

Porterville Historical Museum

257 North "D" Street
Porterville, California 93257
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May 2023 Newsletter

Greetings Friends and Sponsors,

The community support we've received in the first few months of 2023 has been exceptional. Coupled with the dedication of our volunteers, this has allowed us to host a variety of events and make many recent improvements to our facilities and exhibits. However, before we give you an update on things we've done, we want to call your attention to three items:

- **Model Railroad Show - Saturday, May 13, 2023, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** We will host the event in concert with a local model railroad club. There will be operating model railroad displays, vendors, and model railroad construction demonstrations. Admission is free.
- **Native American History Lecture – Sunday, May 21, 2023, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.** Local historian Bill Horst will discuss Yokut traditions and the way they lived. If you have a Native American artifact that you would like Bill to identify, bring it. Admission is free.
- **2023 Membership Drive –** Thank you to everyone who joined us during our annual membership drive! We cannot do what we do without YOU! If you've not yet joined, but would like to, we would certainly appreciate your support.

Read on for an update on what's been happening at your Porterville Historical Museum!

On April 1, the Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting ceremony at "Collective 288", a new beauty salon/barber shop now open in the old Brey House across the street from the museum. We hosted a museum display over there and a related outdoor event here on the museum grounds. It was "all-hands-on-deck" as nearly 300 people came through the front door to tour the museum that day!

Our annual "Wine and Dine" and silent auction fundraiser event was held on April 22. About 150 of our sponsors and supporters gathered in perfect weather to enjoy an evening of good food and drink, classical music, and the opportunity to see an outstanding display of old west clothing, jewelry, and cookware provided by board member Jerry Kirby. The silent auction featured a wide variety of items, including some wonderful, handcrafted wood products and knives. Of particular interest was a beautiful railroad themed quilt sewn and donated to the auction by Lynette Stover, wife of board member Rich Stover.

The "Museum Masterpieces" children's art exhibit, conducted in partnership with the Tulare County Office of Education, was also very successful and allowed us to introduce the museum to numerous local children and their families. The lifting of Covid restrictions has also allowed us to resume hosting school tours and we've had several in recent weeks.

(Continues on reverse...)

At the time of our last newsletter, our new fire alarm system was installed, but awaiting final inspection. We're pleased to report that the system has since been tested and given final approval by the city fire marshal.

Unfortunately, just as we thought we could shift focus away from construction for a while, the recent rains revealed that we have some roof leaks. And we've also identified some other age-related repairs that need to be done, some very soon, to maintain our beautiful 110-year-old former railroad-depot-turned-museum. We're now assessing our needs, estimated costs, and potential for funding repairs through grants, fund raisers or other sources. Moving forward, the continued support of local individuals and businesses will be essential to our success.

Regarding our museum grounds and exhibits, our volunteers and board members have been very busy of late freshening things up. Thanks to a generous donation of rough sawn lumber by Witt Hardwoods, the plywood front of the museum tool shed has been given a vintage looking board and batten facelift which blends beautifully with the adjacent old barn and Blacksmith shop. Board member Rich Stover has also created several great new redwood signs directing visitors to museum parking areas and entrances. We've also developed a display of small farm implements along the walkway at the rear entrance to the museum.

The vintage map area in the Wilcox room is now home to a wonderful old 1887 surveyor's transit, donated to the museum by the family of the late Ken Kenoyer. There is also a new railroad related display in the baggage room along with a new barber shop display featuring a great old barber pole recently repaired by board president Jay Faure. But our most outstanding new addition is the large two-sided porcelain Coca Cola sign that has also been hung in the baggage room. Made in 1934, this magnificent sign hung in front of a local business on Main Street for many years and is still in mint condition.

And finally, we want to express our gratitude to board member Susan Uptain and husband Mike for making a new storage area available to us. Dubbed the "Carriage House", it is located across the street behind the old Brey house and will greatly improve our storage capability.

There is a lot going on at the museum these days, and we invite and encourage you to drop by to see the things that the generosity of our friends and sponsors allows us to accomplish. There is still much that needs to be done, and we truly appreciate your continued support.

Porterville Historical Museum

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