

MARY WELCH

Recorded: February 1979

Here in Sutter Creek we still call this area Skunk Hollow. But it was changed. At that time no one wanted to live in a place called skunk hollow, but you would live on Eureka Terrace! Just tell old timers that you live in Skunk Hollow, and they know where you are. Badger Street is still the original, too. And there's Stringbean Alley. That was the original highway 49. That was the way you went from Sutter Creek to Amador City. Across from the Episcopalian Church a road goes off to the right. It goes up over the hill, and by what used to be an old reservoir. It winds down a little gully and into Amador City. Now, Gopher Flat Road is still there. And you lived in Gopher Flat, or you lived in Skunk Hollow. Having names for streets was really silly, because you lived in an area and people knew where you were.

Off French Bar Road...do you know where that is?

(No.)

You know where Mother Load Plaza is out off 49?

(Yes.)

I think it's just before the plaza. It goes off at an angle to the south and west. It ends up at Placy's Ranch. But as you go along there and wind through the hills you'll find the foundations of a real old town. I have been told that. I think Josephine Carpenter would know. Josephine was born on the Cuneo Ranch, just beyond the v'ing of Butte Mountain Road and Clinton Road.

2.

That's where she grew up. And she talks about walking over the hills going to the CATHOLIC Church. This was a church in Butte City. It was a thriving city! And that's in her lifetime. There's nothing there now but that old ruined building.

I hope you can interview Jane Boitano. ~~xxxxxxx~~ She was married for 65 years which few people can state today. She can tell you about every building along Main Street.

And then the Borgs. Mr. Borg is the owner of Knights Foundry. They live right across the street from the foundry, and I believe Mrs. Borg does the bookkeeping. She would be a wonderful one to talk to. And her uncle was the man who built all of these fine, stone buildings here. The ones along Main Street. Her uncles were the Lavaggi(?) brothers. They built the old opera house. And they built the building across the street that has the nostalgia shop and the little thrift shop there now. And some of the Lavaggi's owned the ~~Belburn~~ Colburn house in Plymouth. Mrs. Colburn would be delighted if you would call her. She knows so much about the Plymouth area, because they lived there so long.

Ghost towns would be a good thing to cover. There are a whole bunch of them down around Ione. Nina Winter can help you on that. Her family homesteaded here. They had a lot of property...you know where Inspiration Lodge is?

(Yes.)

All of that was homesteaded, and it was all part of their family property. I think it was a cattle ranch.

(What about Christina de Paoli?)

She grew up in Jackson. Up on the hill by the Court House.

She can tell you a lot about when the PG&E came in. PG&E has been profoundly influential in this county. They did amazing things. They put in the water system, and they made water available to Ione and Drytown, Amador City, Sutter Creek and Jackson. All of these people could have had rates at the same rate that Sutter Creek has. Jackson's bills are ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ terrific; they could have had it, but they were hard-nosed and wanted their own system. Then their company got bought up by a Connecticut company. This company didn't care at all about the people of Jackson, and, as a result, their system is in terrible shape.

And there is an interesting thing that happened in Jackson. But here in Sutter Creek there is an old Wier down here about a quarter of a mile. They would back up the Sutter Creek water every day and this man...I should tell you that all the sewage came into Sutter Creek... would open up the Wier every night and flush the whole works down to Ione. Ione was 11 miles away and I imagine the water would purify itself by the time it got there. But that was the sewage system.