

# THE AMADORIAN

A Publication of the Amador County Historical Society

*"Preserving the past and present for tomorrow"*

Spring 2020 – Vol. 13, No. 2

## President's Corner

Dear Fellow ACHS Members:

Here's hoping that all our members are staying safe and in good health in these difficult times. Unfortunately, we have had to close the museum for the time being, and work on the new livery building has pretty much come to a standstill for a while. But that is not to say that our fundraising efforts have stalled. Our team on the Board is still hard at work from home, working on our fundraising efforts and planning for our events in the future when we can all get back to living again.



Leonard Williams explains the plans for the Livery Building Project to guests at the National Hotel event hosted by Stan Lukowicz on February 20.

Our fundraising event in February, sponsored by Stan Lukowicz and held at the National Hotel, brought us \$15,500 closer to our goal for the Livery Building. We have received a promise of \$100,000 from the Amador County Board of Supervisors and are applying for a couple of grants. We are moving along and making some headway.

Stay tuned for details of our upcoming BBQ Steak Sandwich at the Museum event on Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>. I'm hoping that we will still be able to have this event. We will keep you informed about this.

Enjoy the *Amadorian*. And thank you for your continuing support of the Amador County Historical Society.

Best regards,

**Cathy McGowen**, President

### **Facts to Know about The New Livery Stable Project**

- Building measures 36 ft. X 100 ft. = 3,600 sq. ft.
- Exhibits will change periodically
- Educational programs provided for school children
- Plaques will identify donors
- Location is behind Amador County History Museum
- \$90k already raised, and the county has promised \$100k
- Storage building is almost completed, just waiting for the doors
- Old building tear-down is next.



*Your generous donation will help build the New Livery Building which will replicate the California-style of rural agricultural buildings. Learn more at [www.amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.amadorcountyhistoricalsociety.org)*

## **A Look Back: The Spanish Flu of 1918**

The following article by **Larry Cenotto** was printed in the *Amador Ledger* on January 19, 1998.

Though "Spanish influenza," the mis-named flu pandemic probably originated in 1917 in central Asia, it did not break out in Amador until mid-October 1918. Fortunately, as one will learn there were war-activated Red Cross units in the county, and they assumed most of the nursing and caregiving.

On October 24 Jackson and Sutter Creek were attending to less than 10 cases, housed in county hospital, the sanatorium in Sutter Creek, or at the afflicted's home. But less than a week later, county, city officials and Red Cross volunteers reported a soaring caseload!

City boards of health and county officers met in emergency session to plot strategy or formulate "a policy of prevention" to contain the disease, armed with the experience and lessons learned earlier by much of the country.

Those boards quickly closed schools, churches, Ratto's moving picture and other theaters. Moreover, they prohibited club, fraternal, social and entertainment gatherings of all kinds. As importantly, Red Cross volunteers labored overtime to sew "regulation" masks to stop or stifle microbes from leaving or entering nose or mouth.

Moreover, the state board ordered that local health officers, doctors, family members, clerks in department stores, and virtually everybody close to anyone should wear the 5-inch-by-8-inch multi-ply,

gauze masks to prevent communication of germs. Parents were urged to stay home and keep their kids off the streets, too.

Suddenly the normal tides of society ceased, though, later, papers implied that maverick Jackson seemed to ignore some of the edicts.

Apparently, Plymouth and Amador City didn't need them, but Sutter Creek and Jackson—maybe Ione, too, but we don't have its newspapers readily available—realized they needed emergency hospitals even with a special room set aside at the county hospital in Jackson.

In Sutter Creek, Mrs. Mary Warrington and that Red Cross unit reached agreement with the Native Sons, owner, and M.D. Nixon, lessee, of the Sutter Hotel – today's NSGW hall—to transform its rooms into an emergency hospital.

In Jackson, on October 28, Emil Marcucci offered his empty Broadway Hotel. About as soon as Red Cross volunteers thoroughly cleaned and set up 28 beds there, they were filled. For 12 more rooms, Mrs. NS Kelsey, Red Cross vice chair, immediately commandeered the Massa house next door! Those who couldn't be admitted there and the county hospital went to Sutter Creek or stayed at home.

In a week's time, the numbers of stricken had exploded from four to 115 in Jackson and from seven to a lot more outside. Proportionate numbers probably applied to other communities.

Perhaps the first influenza deaths occurred in late October – the earliest date in county death records – when Maria Dotta, and son Rinaldo, 8, who with husband Gustavo and children, lived east of Jackson, expired. The attending physician certified they died of bronchial pneumonia midwifed by influenza.

Though county records list but 12 persons dead from flu between October 25, 1918, and January 23, 1919, many more succumbed. Newspapers printed the death notices of those and other victims. Surely, others died without death notice or obituary. Until someone makes a definitive study, the writer estimates about 30 deaths in Amador from influenza.

At the height of the epidemic Methodist Episcopal minister J.W. Reideman in Sutter Creek, like Jeremiahs of yore, preached on the question, "Is Influenza an Instrument of Providence?". Former Sutter Creek, Trinity Episcopal minister, Charles A. Verleger, now of Lodi, would preach no more. He died of the disease.

Taking sick in Sutter Creek were Mr. and Mrs. J.A. Doney, he the proprietor of the city's newspaper, the Amador Record. Without Doney, no Record would be published. That's when the Amador Ledger sent its Bill Copeman to sub for Doney and get the weekly out. By the by, Doney's son, Jack, and wife, are the writer's neighbors in Meeksville.

Meanwhile, officials here were prohibiting everything they imagined might help spread the germs, including spitting. Said one wag: "If any city in the state needs an anti-expectoraqting (sic) ordinance, it's Jackson!" Gambling, prostitution, yes, but spitting? Woe, unto Jackson. Even public funerals were stopped, with only private, i.e. family funerals allowed.

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As October became November town papers continued to report influenza deaths: Nick Vlaovich, Griffith Pritchard in Plymouth; 4 month old Shizuge Nishikado in Ione; Joseph J. Giusto, Francis Coval; John Robertson, 79, of Buena Vista; Gus Dinos, Carbondale; Ottetta Cilieni, Lorine Massa, 6, of Jackson; Stella M. Lombardo, 30, Drytown; Genia Garibaldi, Volcano.

Added melancholy came from dies (sic) of Amador natives from influenza elsewhere. Young Donald Jarvis, Clarence's son, the first student to ever graduate from Amador County High School, died in Hedley, British Columbia. Why in Canada? He had tried to enlist there when he failed to pass his U.S. physical!

On November 7, amid the waning epidemic in Amador, the "false" armistice was announced. Some, joyous, left sickbeds to celebrate, maybe in saloons semi-secretly opened for the occasion. From such celebration did Edgar Jones return to his hospital bed and die. Yet that death aside, the caseload of 300 was plummeting. But 11 patients remained in the Jackson Red Cross hospital or Broadway Hotel.

## **A Blast from the Past: An Interview with Allan Garbarini**

The following is from a transcription of the taped interview done May 10, 1997 with **Allan Garbarini** about his grandfather, **Vergilio S. Garbarini**. **Allan Garbarini** 's parents were both born in Jackson, so when Allan retired, he and his wife, **Charlotte Garbarini**, relocated to his beloved Jackson. Allen spent his years in Jackson writing novels and researching gold mines. His daughter, **Jeannette Garbarini-Walters**, sits on the ACHS board as Vice President.

**Allan Garbarini:** My grandfather, V. S. Garbarini, worked at the Kennedy Mine for a number of years. He was the Master Mechanic at the Kennedy. That's a term that is no longer used, but a Master Mechanic was someone who could design and build whatever. This is a pretty good book. I'm sure it's available in the library. It's by **Jack R. Wagner** and it's called **The Gold Mines of California**. It was written in the 1960's. It has a lot of information on the Kennedy Mine, and I'm sure the Kennedy Foundation has it. There's a picture in here of the head frame that my grandfather designed and built around 1900. It was used until about 1926 when it burned down because it was a timber and head frame. The present one was a steel one which replaced it. He sort of supervised the construction of that one too, but he was sort of like a consultant for the Kennedy. He was pretty old by then.

The Master Mechanic was responsible for the hoisting works and so forth. The information in **The Gold Mines of California** tells about that particular head frame and the hoisting works. They had a hoist works that would raise, at that time, from a maximum depth of about five thousand feet. He was there, I'm guessing, five to seven years. That's all I know about it.

It's interesting to note that the Kennedy Mining and Milling Company, which was a kind of modern operation, began in 1885 and a man by the name of **F. F. Thomas**, who was a mining engineer had come from the East, worked in Mexico, and then bought the Kennedy and organized the Kennedy Mining and Milling Company, which was very successful. Then he sold the Kennedy and started the Gwen Mine down here across Middle Bar bridge, which is no longer usable. It is on the Calaveras side.

It was an excellent mine, and in fact is in the process of reopening right now. So, he really was the one who put the Kennedy on the map. It was discovered before that. My grandfather was the Master Mechanic for a number of years.

**Interviewer:** Do you know approximately what time period your grandfather was the Master Mechanic?

**Allan Garbarini:** Yes, it was sometime between 1895 to 1900 because they built that head frame in 1900. I'd say 1898 to 1905. It was around 1900 and did not extend past 1905.

**Interviewer:** So, he wasn't there for very long? Or did he do other things with the Kennedy?

**Allan Garbarini:** Well, he didn't make a career out of it, but he did work there or for them at different times. It was back and forth but as Master Mechanic it was a period of a few years.



Kennedy Mine, Jackson, California

**Interviewer:** But he never went down into the mine to be a miner?

**Allan Garbarini:** No, he was never a miner.

**Interviewer:** So, he was a higher-level type?

**Allan Garbarini:** Well, he was in the design and construction end of it. He wasn't a miner. He was a builder and designer. All of the stuff he designed and built was for the mine. Various types of mines; he designed and built things for Constant Mine down in Southern California, but no, he wasn't a miner.

**Interviewer:** Did he help build any other mines around this area?

**Allan Garbarini:** Oh yeah, the Argonaut. In fact, the head frame you see today... he was the superintendent; he designed and built it. I think it was about 1910, 11, or 12, and it is still there. The mill that used to be there on top of the hill, which is gone now, he designed and built that. The hoisting works below the hill, you can still see the remains below the road; he designed that. Then he was the Superintendent of the Argonaut.

**Interviewer:** Do you know what time period he was the Superintendent of the Argonaut?

**Allan Garbarini:** Yeah it was an unfortunate time period. He was the Superintendent during the Great Fire, which was 1922, and he was Superintendent for three or four years. He was also Master Mechanic before he was Superintendent. When he designed the head frame you see now, and the hoisting works and the mill that used to be there, he was the Master Mechanic at the Argonaut. Then he became the Superintendent.

**Interviewer:** I heard that there was a big lawsuit between the two mines after the fire. Do you know what happened?

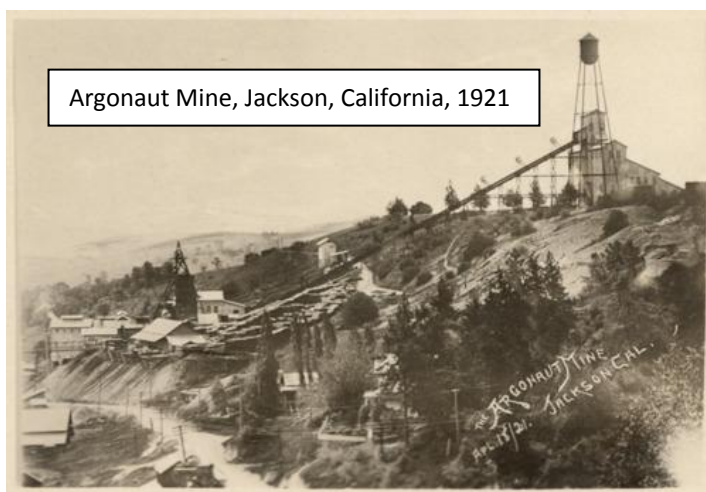
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**Allan Garbarini:** Well it had nothing to do with the fire. The Kennedy and the Argonaut had a big legal contest over who was on whose vein. The Kennedy property was patented in 1872, and by 1873 it says two promising ore chutes were being worked; the Kennedy on the north side and the Pioneer on the south end of the mine, with 170 feet of the vein lying within the Kennedy property. It was this 18-foot-wide Pioneer vein that led into the Argonaut mine and was to be the cause of years of litigation between the two mines. They had to decide where the vein originated, and there's a law in the Mining Laws called the Apex Rule that says that you can follow a vein onto other property if you can prove that the vein originates in your property. That was a big, long, drawn out lawsuit, but now I'm not sure who won it. It went on for years, they're so close together. That's the only lawsuit I know of, but there could be something else too.

**Interviewer:** When they had this lawsuit going, was your grandfather involved with it?

**Allan Garbarini:** Yes, I don't know if he was with the Kennedy or the Argonaut because it went on for so long, but he made a model. A wire model that depicts the underground workings and it was used in the suit. So yes, he was involved that way. He was involved with one or the other, but I'm not sure of the dates of the lawsuit. It was before the 1920's I believe. The Kennedy was a very profitable mine. There are some other things that sometimes don't give us the exact picture of how profitable it was. Like when they talk here about the total of \$34,280,000. Well you have to take into consideration that was when gold was not more than \$35 an ounce where today it is close to \$350 an ounce. Actually, a lot of that gold taken out was under \$20 an ounce. So, to get an accurate estimate of what it was worth, they should print this in the number of ounces taken out. Which today, it would be worth close to \$350 million, not \$34 million. There's another thing that should be taken into consideration. You should look at the purchasing power of the dollar. Well let's say that in 1935, when gold was \$35 an ounce, you could buy a modest home in Amador County for \$15,000. Today a modest home is going for \$70,000. So, you have to look at the purchasing power of the dollar. You would have to multiply this by ten times to get what the price of gold is today. I think you would have to times it ten times more to get the purchasing power. So, in my opinion, the Kennedy's true worth is about \$1 billion not \$34 million. It's very misleading when they use these figures. I think they should just stick to ounces of gold. Both mines took out 1 million ounces or so. It was profitable from 1885 to 1942. It was a long, prosperous period.



Argonaut Mine, Jackson, California, 1921

**Interviewer:** When your grandfather left the Kennedy to go to the Argonaut, was there any reason?

**Allan Garbarini:** He probably got a better job. He had finished a large project at the Kennedy. In addition to the head frame, he had done a lot of design for the processing plant or the mill as they called it. So, they weren't doing that much. I suspect that the Argonaut was planning the new head frame and mill, so maybe they hired him away. I'm sure he would have liked it much better because there was a lot to be done.

Transcribed by **Victoria Gonzalez** and **Katie Heinrich**, students at Argonaut High School.

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*Board Meetings are held on the 3rd  
Wednesday of each month at 3:00 p.m.  
225 Church St., Jackson (Amador County  
Museum)*

*Members and friends are invited to attend.*

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Sutter Creek Promotions Committee ~ Volcano  
Community Services District \*Benefactor

**Welcome to our new member****John James**

## About the Amador County Historical Society

The Amador County Historical Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the research and preservation of Amador County heritage and history.

The organization brings together people from diverse backgrounds to work towards these goals. We invite all interested persons to attend our monthly meetings and encourage your suggestions and active participation in Society events and endeavors.

We also welcome guest articles for our newsletter. Unfortunately, due to limited space we can accept only those pertaining to local history. If you have any questions regarding ACHS please contact the office at (209) 257-1485.

**If you would like to become a member of the Society**, please fill in the membership form below and mail along with the appropriate dues to the Amador County Historical Society, P.O. Box 761, Jackson, Calif.

**Name**\_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check one of the following Memberships:**

**ANNUAL**    ☐ **Individual \$25.00**    ☐ **Family (2 or more) \$40.00**    ☐ **Students \$15.00**

**LIFETIME**    ☐ **Family (2 or more) \$400.00**

**SPONSOR**    ☐ **Benefactor (\$1,000 up)**  
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