Lolling near the gazebo, thoroughly entranced by the lilting harmony of Beaucoup Chapeaux’s translation of old and new songs, some French, some not, I was gently alerted from my daydream by the familiar strains of, “You Are My Sunshine”, in French, yet unmistakable to the ear. I thought of a young man singing those familiar words of promise to his lady as they frolicked in a Malakoff meadow; I wondered aloud, What would she think if she knew the “Sunshine” referred to in that song, was a horse?

Across the way, French Consul General Emmanuel Lebrun-Damiens was holding forth to a crowd of rapt listeners in the shade of the Drug Store. His words and gestures emphasized the new relevance of the historic French Connection throughout the Mother Lode, but especially in the Northern Mines and precisely here at Malakoff Diggins & N. Bloomfield.

Behind the white picket fence near the gazebo, the unmistakable “clink” of metallic balls announced the French version of Bocce Ball, punctuated by the cheers or groans from the competitors; mostly adult folks who exhibited some familiarity with the game.
Muted gaiety accompanied those at a wine stand and resounded from King’s Saloon where ribald Garcons happily sampled each bottle to personally verify the contents.

At the other end of town, the couple from the meadow stroll up to Blaine’s Pond, a former low-yield hydraulic mining pit, named after Francis Blaine, a French Canadian, who preempted 100 acres for agriculture in 1854, where-upon his name was corrupted to “Blair”, which has endured to this day, as the delightful Blair Pond. And delightful it is, as the soft tones from the gazebo echoed faintly through the pines and across the water, where the young lady politely eyed him with, “S’il vous plait what kind of horse?”

Shhhhh! Listen to the wind..... Ed.

photos by John Field
ASK NOT WHAT YOUR COUNTRY
CAN DO FOR YOU,
ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO
FOR YOUR COUNTRY.

JOHN F. KENNEDY

to VOLUNTEERS

The recent decades have been difficult for California State Parks, with budget cuts, prospective park closures, personnel & equipment shortages and the decay of deferred maintenance. Then, angels appeared in the form of state park volunteers and cooperating associations, all converged on providing funds and people to revive the gasping park system.

To all the dedicated volunteers of many stripes, who stepped up over the last 30 - 40 years, to breathe life into California State Parks; thanks from an old ranger, on behalf of many, for a job well done...... and Please....... keep up the good work!

L. Clark / editor
Noah’s Last Words When all the People and Animals Left the Ark:
“Can Someone Volunteer to Stay and Help Me Clean Up?”
Many years ago, park staff and the Malakoff Diggins Park Association kicked the can around about acquiring solar power panels to off-set the inefficient and noisy generators supplying power to the town of North Bloomfield.

Over decades of changing staff, and through the arrival of the Friends of North Bloomfield & Malakoff Diggins, the dream persisted, At long last the dream is becoming a reality. The new solar array is in place and a control room has been constructed. Next, the process of getting the system on line will begin.

The switch-on ceremony is scheduled for Spring, 2020 and should precede the deafening sound of ...no sound at all, emanating from the old Generator shed that has drummed throughout the park, day and night, for close to 50 years. The sudden quiet may remind us of an old sailor, coming home from the sea and being unable to sleep without the rhythmic melody of the ship’s propeller shafts constantly turning and lulling.

Perhaps on that day, those present may gather as the switches are thrown for a, “moment of silence” to realize what a monumental step is being taken for the peace and efficiency of this place, and for recognizing the first completely solar powered California State Park.

*The installation is being done by Koch & Koch, Inc., from nearby Penn Valley and should come in around, $2.1 Million dollars courtesy of the State of California, according to: Matt Green, Sierra District Superintendent (Acting)*

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"We are like tenant farmers chopping down the fence around our house for fuel when we should be using Nature’s inexhaustible sources of energy — sun, wind and tide. ... I’d put my money on the sun and solar energy. What a source of power! I hope we don’t have to wait until oil and coal run out before we tackle that."

— Thomas Edison
(He died in 1931)

L. Clark / editor
Message from the Chair

The cool nights, and start of fall color remind us that it’s soon time to put away the summer toys, and enjoy the autumn season. It’s been another busy summer at Malakoff, and I hope you came up and shared in some of the fun.

We’ve continued our Discover Malakoff series, even though we had to cancel some events due to weather. Luckily, we had the perfect days for both Humbug Day and French Connection. It makes all the effort worthwhile when we have folks from far & wide share in our “historic” celebrations. We also have had some great partners for the French Connection, including the French Consul General from San Francisco and EFSAC (Education Francaise de Sacramento) who made it a Francophile’s delight. To them, and all of our supporters, we say Merci!!

While the summer season is winding down, there are still things to keep the Friends busy. We continue our efforts for the final consolidation of the 3 Sierra Gold Sector associations, and we’re nearing the finish line.

There are still details to work out, but we’re optimistic that the new Sierra Gold Parks Foundation will be in place by year’s end. The new association will continue and expand on the efforts of Empire Mine Park Association, South Yuba River Park Association and Friends of North Bloomfield & Malakoff Diggins.

We owe a debt of gratitude to all of the dedicated State park volunteers and those who have stepped up to make the associations work in the last 30+ years, as it’s been a road with many ups and downs. We will continue our efforts to ensure our local State Parks are vibrant and accessible, and hope you will join us in those efforts as a part of the Sierra Gold Parks Foundation.

Here’s wishing you the joys of the fall season, with an invitation to come up to Malakoff Diggins with your camera and your curiosity to discover this hidden gem.

We look forward to seeing you!

Holly Mitten
Chair, Friends of North Bloomfield & Malakoff Diggins
Gall wasp, (subfamily Cynipinae), any of a group of wasps in the family Cynipidae (order Hymenoptera) that are notable for their ability to stimulate the growth of galls (tissue swellings) on plants. Some gall wasp species are gall inquilines, meaning they do not cause the formation of galls but inhabit those made by other insects. The overgrowth of tissue, or gall, presumably is caused by a substance secreted by the immature insect living within it.

Adults of most of the approximately 600 species of gall wasps that occur in North America are about 6 to 8 mm (about 0.25 to 0.30 inch) long and black. The shiny abdomen is oval, and the thorax has a sculptured appearance. Most do not bite or sting humans but with 600 species, who do you trust?

A given species of gall wasp will cause a characteristic type of gall to form on a certain part of a particular species of plant. Many of these wasps attack oak trees or rose plants.

Male gall wasps are rare, and reproduction usually occurs by parthenogenesis (i.e., larvae develop from unfertilized eggs). The egg passes through the long ovipositor of the female and into the plant tissue. After the egg hatches into a larva, it begins to secrete materials that cause the plant tissues around it to begin to grow faster than normal. The gall increases in size as the larva grows. The larva feeds on the plant tissue within the gall and pupates and transforms into an adult within the gall.

The so-called oak apple, a round, spongy, fruitlike object about 2.5 to 5 cm (1 to 2 inches) in diameter, is caused by the larvae of the gall wasp Biorhiza pallida. About 30 such larvae may develop in a single “apple,” or gall.

Most gall wasps are not economically important. However, the galls of some species have been used as a source of tannic acid or in the manufacture of inks or dyes.
A Few Highlights from:

**Humbug Day 2019**

Well! I Never.....

Well! Ya Shoulda!

On Behalf of FNBMD, Holly Presented Ric Moorhouse with a well Deserved Award for Decades of Blacksmithing Education for Thousands of School Children

ECV 10 on Parade

Chris Crockett Concurred

Ranger Gilbertson and Miro

Sniff ..... Burgers!

Photos by John Field
Malakoff Diggins SHP
2019 FALL EVENTS

Subject to change, or weather conditions
Details for each event will be forthcoming.
Some events may require pre-registration and additional fees for participation. 530-265-2740

November 9, 2019  Campfire Program
December 14, 2019  Holiday Decorations Crafts/workshop

Summer’s Gone........

Autumn was officially welcomed Sunday, September 22, with the transition from summer high-lighted by Volunteer Recognition ceremonies. Enlistees, staff and a few pets enjoyed BBQ by the Gazebo. Malakoff volunteers Joel & Sue Tracy received Certificates of Appreciation for their tireless service to the park. Superintendent Matt Green expressed State Park’s appreciation for the valuable and noble services volunteers provide to Malakoff Diggins SHP.

Ed.

Park Supervisor

Mary Moyer is the new Supervising Ranger for Malakoff Diggins and Empire Mine State Historic Parks. Mary has been working with us for the past few weeks and has hit the ground running.

She has a background in county park management with Orange County Parks and Rec, over five years as a Ranger at Lake Perris and two years at Mount San Jacinto State Park.

Mary will supervise a future Malakoff Ranger, Michele Green at Empire, K9 Handler Martin Gilbertson and act as a Lead/Supervisor for Sierra Gold Sector Interpreter Jenna Randar. She will also be in charge of park operations and interpretive support for Malakoff Diggins and Empire Mine.
Letter from Sacramento

August 29, 1850
by Mr. A. Steck
Formerly of Watertown, Wisconsin

I have abandoned mining, and am now living in the city, doing very well, much better than mining. I advise all who have a decent living in their States to stay there. They will see nothing in this city that differs from cities in any western States, except the absence of females. A western man can more readily appreciate the state of society here, than residents of a city in the States. All the excess, seen daily, be the result of the absence of intelligent and virtuous young women. Men who would be foremost in denouncing the numerous “Public Hells,” in this country, had they their families here, would quietly “pursue the even tenor of their way.” Gambling saloons are the most costly and extravagant affairs to be seen, — Drinks of every kind, cooled with fresh Boston ice, are always at hand — sweetmeats, pies, fruits, and all the delicacies of this sunny clime, are dealt out by the hands of familiar and voluptuous young females. Marvelously excessive quantities of strong drinks are consumed nightly. Chandeliers, which cost extravagant prices in the cheapest markets of the world, sheds all in a dazzling light. — ‘Music soft as brooklet’s flow,’ is ‘floating, warbling, here below.’ — Bands of minstrels are pouring out melodies to seduce the passer-by to stop and drink, and venture for his fortune. — Crowds throng around the tables, some risking their little all — others gazing with excitement upon the hazard of the game - many elbowing their way through the crowd, — while the rush at the bar, the eternal jingle of money from a dozen “monte banks,” the occasional cry of “Eagle bird by chance,” draws the pic of a California gaming saloon.

I have gazed upon the throng which nightly gather to these resorts, and wondered at the folly of the multitude. What monuments of magnificence built on the ruins of others! Men are nearly all of one rank, wicked and good stand equal. We need the softly chiding and restraint of women, to give rank to honorable and virtuous men, and break up these places that fatten upon sin.