

# Mineral King Chronicle



Photo by John Uhler



## Letter From the Director

LISA MONTEIRO

The seasons have shifted and Fall is in full swing! I have enjoyed putting this newsletter together and reflecting on the incredible year we have had. The opening of the new Native Voices exhibit was a wonderful celebration. I hope you are able to stop by and experience this exhibit that stands as a testament to our commitment to preserving and honoring history as well as our dedication to collaboration with our local tribal members and the Three Rivers Historical Museum.

In addition to this accomplishment, we have embarked on the formulation of our next five-year strategic plan, a blueprint that will guide our endeavors toward even greater heights. This planning process has been a collaborative effort, fueled by the passion and dedication of our entire community. Thank you to those that completed surveys and shared your vision with us.

This past year we have been honored with the receipt of seven grants, each a nod to the impactful initiatives we champion. These grants serve to reinforce the relevance and importance of our mission. They allow us to work on projects that range from collection preservation, exhibits, programs, and more.

As we embrace the spirit of gratitude during this season of thanks, let us also look ahead with anticipation. The promise of 2024 holds the potential for even greater achievements and milestones.

Wishing you all a joyous holiday season and a prosperous New Year!

*Lisa Monteiro*  
Executive Director



# It's a Sesquicentennial!

## Marking the Establishment of the Mineral King Mining District 150 Years Ago

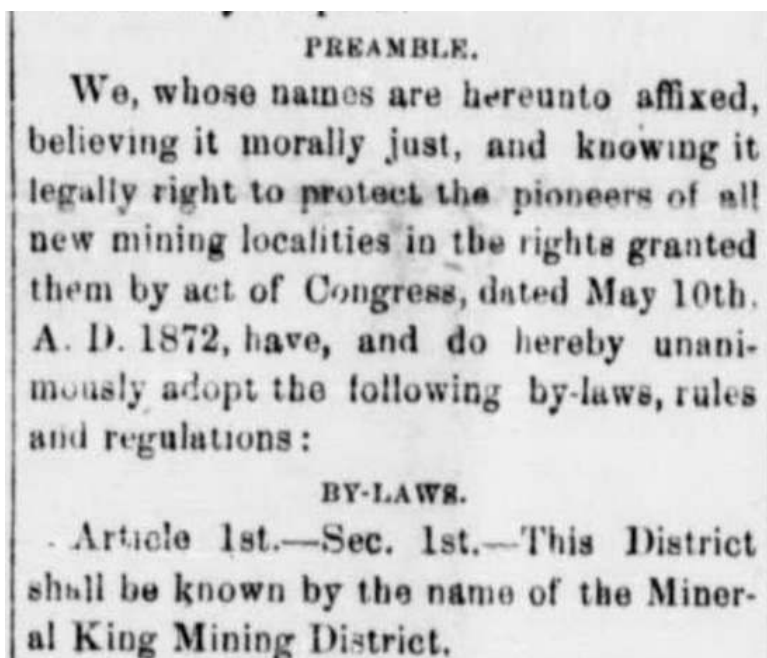
By Laile Di Silvestro

One hundred and fifty years ago, several mostly middle-aged men piled rocks in a canyon lined with gleaming white marble. They labored only a few miles away from Tahpaw'ishee, where people had camped for perhaps thousands of years on the banks of a mountain stream.[i] In July of 1873, however, the place was known as Lovelace Valley, and the men could probably hear the lows of the Lovelace family's cattle as they worked.[ii]

The men piled their rocks into mounds about 1500 feet away from each other to mark the north and south ends of mine claims that straddled a mineralized zone with silver-bearing ore. The first mine claim was dubbed the White Chief Discovery Claim. Salmon Belden owned the claim with his partner James Abraham Crabtree.[iii] It was Belden who helped the other men lay out their adjacent claims.[iv] When they were done, they had five twenty-acre mine claims—the Discovery, three to the north, and one to the south, which was Johnson Parks Ford's claim.[v]

The men couldn't record their claims until they created a mining district.[vi] With Ford assuming the leadership role,[vii] they drafted the "Mineral King Mining District Resolutions and Bylaws" and unanimously adopted them on September 4, 1873.[viii] Thus, with the flourish of a pen, six laborers and ranchers from the Tule River[ix] area gave us the name Mineral King and set off a series of events that had a profound influence on the area.

News of the mining district spread throughout the nation and overseas,[x] attracting hopeful miners and helping to burgeon a county population that would grow 150% by 1880.[xi] The construction of a road into the mining district made the foothills more accessible and enabled the establishment of businesses catering to the needs of the miners and subsequently the needs of people escaping the dust, disease, and heat of the San Joaquin Valley. In the 1890s, the road played a crucial role in the early management of Sequoia National Park.[xii]



[Excerpt of the "Mineral King Mining District Resolutions and Bylaws" as published on the front page of the September 18, 1873 edition of the *Visalia Weekly Delta*. Courtesy of the Tulare County Library Annie Mitchell History Room]

Continued from previous page:

## Marking the Establishment of the Mineral King Mining District 150 Years Ago

Imagine Mineral King in a different timeline in which the men hadn't created the mining district. Without the early investment in a road, would people still have found a way to summer in the valley in the 1800s? Would a resort have been established? Would there be summer cabins? Would the couples who fell in love in Mineral King have fallen in love elsewhere? How would the story of Sequoia National Park be different if the cavalry had not been able to establish their headquarters in Mineral King? Might Mineral King have been made a part of the park in 1926?<sup>[xiii]</sup> Perhaps it would still be known as Lovelace Valley and reachable only by trail.

We arguably owe recognition, if not gratitude, to the founders of the Mineral King Mining District on this 150th anniversary, our sesquicentennial. In that spirit, we offer short biographies of the men who founded the mining district, listed in the order in which they signed the document that established the Mineral King Mining District. You can learn more about them by visiting our website: <https://mineralking.org/mining-district-founders/> or scan the QR code. Click on the links below to meet the men who made history.

Johnson Parks Ford (1825-1904)

James Abraham Crabtree (1829-1913)

Salmon Belden (1832-1884)

Asahel Loop (1821-1892)

Sewell Langdon Goodhue (1839-1912)

Marcus Dietrich Sinn (1846-1928)



Article citations available upon request, Email Lisa at [lisa@mineralking.org](mailto:lisa@mineralking.org)

## It's Giving Season!

As we wrap up a fantastic year, we're excited to launch our annual year-end giving campaign. Your unwavering support is what makes our successes possible.

This is your chance to make a lasting impact! Your generosity fuels our mission, and we're grateful for every contribution, big or small.

Together, let's make this year's campaign our most impactful yet. Thank you for your support!

### Ways to donate:

Visit our website by scanning the QR code:  
Or visit [www.mineralking.org/donate](http://www.mineralking.org/donate)



Mail a check to PO Box 86 Three Rivers, CA 93271.

Scan the Venmo code:



**Current projects in need of funding include new exhibit upgrades, Honeymoon Cabin repairs, and the ongoing video series.**



# NATIVE VOICES



I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone that made the Native Voices exhibit opening on October 28th an overwhelming success. The event, held at the Three Rivers Historical Museum, brought together a wonderful crowd to celebrate the opening of this new exhibit.

Attendees were treated to a welcome blessing and beautiful song by Johnny Sartuche. TRHS board president, Nancy Brunson thanked attendees and those that worked on the exhibit. I was happy to speak to the group and give some background information on the project, thank everyone involved, and to also introduce one of our cultural advisors, Jennifer Malone, who spoke about the impact of this exhibit.

The crowd then split as some headed to stations set up with local tribal members teaching visitors about basketry, language, a dice game, weaving tule mats, and more. Others went straight into the Mineral King Room to experience the new exhibit and then head for some delicious refreshments from Taylor Made Catering.

The exhibit includes a display of artifacts, video and audio recordings, opportunities to touch basket making materials, and more! The strong turnout underscored the community's collective interest in fostering a deeper understanding of Indigenous traditions and reinforcing the statement that they are still here. We are immensely thankful for the support and enthusiasm that surrounded this event, reinforcing our commitment to promoting cultural diversity and dialogue.

- Lisa Monteiro



## Native Voices Committee

Cultural Advisors:

Jennifer Malone, Sheila Lopez, Katie Icho

Project Lead: Lisa Monteiro

TRHM: Nancy Brunson & Tom Mall

MKPS Curator: Sandi Stryd

Historical Archeologist: Laile Di Silvestro

### Exhibit Design:

Designer: Emma Thorne-Christy at ETC Designs

Graphic Designer: Kai Ebens

Woodworker: Adam Wall

Muralist: Jana Botkin

Additional thank you to the following that helped make the exhibit and the unveiling event a great success!

Zach Green Films

Three Rivers Historical Society Board

Mineral King Preservation Society Board

Tyson Baker

Joe Christianson

Gino Rieping

Fred Reimer

Antoinette Cloutier

Sheila Lopez

Evelyn Malone

Jennifer Malone

Johnny Sartuche Sr.

Destiny Treglown

Amy King-Sunderson

Jessika Huerta

Frank Soares

Scott Reinhardt

Greg Gray

Julie Gray





# Curator's Corner

SANDRA STRYD

## Restoring the Past: A Journey of Preservation in Mineral King

We are delighted to share with you the exciting news about the ongoing Honeymoon Cabin repair project located in East Mineral King. As stewards of our local heritage, we take great pride in preserving the rich history that connects us to the roots of our community.

### A Glimpse into History

The cabin's historic name is "Cabin on the Point" or "Point Cabin". It is nestled at the trailhead to White Chief, Eagle Lake and Mosquito Lakes. It is the last remaining cabin from the old resort of the Mineral King Store and Post Office era and was built in 1914. With its weathered façade and time worn charm, the cabin stands as a silent witness to the passage of time in Mineral King. It has survived the seasons and witnessed the changing landscapes of this picturesque region. Its significance lies not only in its architecture but also in the stories it holds within its walls. In 1932 there was a "slow" snow slide that came off the hill above, which very gently moved several cabins in the area. The "Honeymoon Cabin" was impacted; however there was little structural damage because it only moved several feet (8-10 feet). In 1989 the Mineral King Preservation Society restored the cabin.



**Thank you to Visalia County Center Rotary for helping to fund these repairs!**

# Curator's Corner Continued

## Preservation Mission

This year our small team at MKPS took on the challenge of re-roofing one side of this historic gem ensuring that its legacy continues for generations to come. The project was a labor of love, requiring meticulous attention to detail and an understanding of historical building techniques. The cabin is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The steep roof proved to be a challenge and at times, a bit scary! We rebuilt the stairs to the entrance and replaced some of the batten.

## Community Involvement

We are immensely grateful for the support we received from the local community, with a special shout out to Dan Vassar, Marc Mertz, Melissa Mertz, Fred Reimer, Joe Evaro, and Mike and Jana Botkin as well as Gabriel Vasquez and his staff at Gabe's Roofing. This project has been paid for by a grant from Visalia County Center Rotary and donations received from many of you in our year-end campaigns. It truly highlights the spirit of collaboration that defines our community.

## What's Next

We invite you to remember the "Point Cabin/Honeymoon Cabin" when you donate. We have more repairs to do on this historical cabin, including painting, fixing holes, window repair, more batten repair, moving and fixing the old stove to a better location in the cabin and the list goes on. If you want to join the work team, please send me an email at: [sandra@mineralking.org](mailto:sandra@mineralking.org). Please help us to keep this gem open to the public as we share the story of Mineral King with all of its visitors.



# Happy Cabin Centennials

By Laile Di Silvestro

**According to our records, four cabins in Mineral King turned a venerable one hundred years old in 2023!**

Compiling this list of centennial celebrants has been challenging. The people who lovingly built these cabins are now our ancestors, and most of the Forest Service records have been lost. We have access to journals and letters that recount the comings and goings in East Mineral King, but we have scant records of West Mineral King during this time period. Many of the published cabin construction dates have been estimates based on distant recollections. Fortunately, newspapers kept track of locals who spent time in Mineral King and also indicated when some cabins were completed. Based on this information, we were able to hone this year's list of centennial cabins down to a fascinating four.

Even after talking with descendants and pouring through historic newspapers, letters, and journals, we aren't 100% positive that these cabins were completed in 1923, nor can we be certain that cabins aren't missing from our list. It is remarkable, however, that any cabins were built in Mineral King that year. The old wooden bridge at Oak Grove was terrifyingly rickety, and the county had to make some temporary repairs for any vehicles to pass over it safely.[i] When Bob Barton drove a two-ton Nash truck across, he would "set the hand throttle, get out of the truck, and walk alongside it holding on to the wheel, so he could try running if he heard cracking timbers." [ii]

Travelers had to contend with construction activity, as well. Workers were blasting into the rock at Oak Grove, [iii] and on October 13th, construction workers poured the first concrete for the bridge we still pass over today. [iv] Nevertheless, according to newspaper accounts neither the rickety wooden bridge nor the dynamite blasts seemed to deter locals from heading to Mineral King.[v] The county had done some work to improve the road that spring, and there was a large increase in sojourners eager to enjoy a spectacular flower show and ranger Henry Alles's hot cakes and elderberry jelly at the Atwell Mill Ranger Station.[vi]

As campers, backpackers, day hikers, and cabin denizens alike look forward to celebrating a return to Mineral King after a hiatus of over a year, let's take a brief look back at the centennial cabins and the people who built them.

**WMK 9** — Mineral King has long been home to native bees. In 1923, Mineral King became summer home to a beekeeper, as well.

Indeed, Frank Robert Buchanan (1867-1949) may have inadvertently introduced some honey bees to the valley. An avid apiarist, Frank was president of the Fraternal Honey Producers, and his work was highlighted in industry journals. According to local lore, his essay about beekeeping in Mineral King even lured CalTech professors to Mineral King, where they built their own cabin. The riverside Buchanan Cabin was constructed on what had been the five-acre mineral mill site established by the Carrington family in 1880. [x]

The cabin was distinguished by its significant interior and meticulous construction. [xi] Frank, his wife Eva (1875-1954), and their two children summered in it with their bees for several years, and their descendants enjoy it to this day.



WMK - 9



**WMK 12** – In 1918, Charles Jasper Wilson (1875–1952) “retired” from his job as an electrical engineer in Alameda. [xii] Charles and his wife Caroline (1877–1970) purchased a citrus ranch in the Lemon Cove-Woodlake area, where they raised their two children. [xiii] The mountains beckoned, however, and in 1923, Charles built a rustic cabin on the uphill side of the road on a historic mineral mill site first established in 1879.[xv] The family evidently enjoyed it until the accidental death of their 34-year old son in 1941. [xvi] Shortly thereafter, the family purportedly sold the cabin to Daniel Walter Botkin (1885–1953) and his wife Sara (1889–1895), who lived in Exeter.[xvii] Meanwhile, Lorine Eldoretta Cady Willard (1906–2006) had purportedly visited Mineral King in 1939 and fell in love with the valley. She was able to purchase the cabin from Sara in 1958 and enjoy Mineral King into her 90s. [xviii]



WMK - 12



WMK - 29

**WMK 29** – The Norwegian Østen “Austin” Knudsen Kvien (1866–1928) and his wife Bertha (1867–1955) moved to Woodlake with their son and daughter in 1913 and took up citrus farming.[xix] The Dinkins family lived nearby, and they apparently introduced the Kviens to Mineral King in 1922.[xx] Shortly after the family built their cabin on a historic mineral mill site dating from 1874,[xxi] love pulled young Clifton Kvien (1898–1987) away. He sold his Woodlake clothing business and car and married the 16-year-old Oattie Jones without telling his parents.[iv] The death of Austin due to acute appendicitis in 1928[xxiii] apparently reunited Clifton with his mother and sister, and the family lived together on their Woodlake ranch from whence they could easily take summer vacations in Mineral King.[xxiv] Clifton sold the cabin to Van Dixon in 1965. Forest Service Ranger James W. “Bill” Deisman bought the cabin in 1970 for use when he was stationed in Mineral King and passed it to his descendants.[xxv]

**EMK 14** – Lemon Cove citrus grower James Aubrey Moffett (1881–1950) and his wife Daisy (1881–1950) built their cabin on Pogue Row near the upper end of the Nature Trail. This was appropriate because James was the grandson of James William Center Pogue (1839–1907), founder of Lemon Cove and a Mineral King miner since the 1870s,[xxvi] and the Pogue family already had two cabins on the Row.[xxvii] Pogue Row was located on a mineral mill site dating from 1874,[xxviii] and members of the Pogue family initially occupied an old mining cabin. The Moffetts built their new cabin with some modern conveniences, including a separate sleeping space for their two children. In 1940, the Moffetts added a siding of 2” x 8” planks cut into half logs. The cabin passed to one of their children, Phillis Nadine Moffett Cairns (1917–1978), who then passed it to her son.[xxix]

Do you have stories about these cabins and information about other cabins that may have been completed 1923? We look forward to hearing from you!

[Thank you to S. Hack and J. Elliott who conducted an inventory of the cabins in 1993. Their work has served as an excellent basis for ongoing research.]

Article citations available upon request, Email Lisa at [lisa@mineralking.org](mailto:lisa@mineralking.org)



EMK - 14

# MKPS Lifetime Members

Though MKPS no longer offers the Lifetime Membership level tier, we are grateful to the following couples and individuals who signed up for a Lifetime Membership through the years. Though many have passed, we would like to honor their generosity here annually.

Thank you to all of our members for your continued support!

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Aldine, Charles R.	Dungan, Vincent & Toni	Mitchell, Annie
Alltucker, Michael	Edgerton, Bradford & Louise	Newman, Robert & Betty
Alltucker, Marilyn	Elliott, John & Sarah	Off, Tracy
Andresen, Robert & Elizabeth	Gravelle, Gordon & Molly	O'Neill, James & Louise
Asay, Lyal D., M.D.	Gregg, Mignon	Peterson, Bruton
Barboni, Richard	Hack, Sherry	Peterson, Edward (Jock) & Ora Kay
Barboni, Richard C., DDS	Hamilton, Maurine Griggs	Peterson, Jay & Betsy
Bennett, Thiry Gail	Hansen, Jack & Barbara	Peterson, Michael B.
Bickett, Jill	Hansen, William & Jinx	Pinkham, Charles & Lindsay
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Britten, Sophronia A.	Hath, Kathy Tavares	Pinkham, Patrick & Mary
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Burdick, John & Elaine McCain	Hendricks, Stuart	Reid, Harold & Torri
Bungay, Robert	Hengst, Robert & Linda	Runciman Jon
Cairns, Aubrey	Hicks, Bob & Jerry	Runciman, Jere Jr.
Cairns, David & Carol	Holden, John	Saurenman, Louise B.
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Di Silvestro, Brian	Martin, William	Wollenman, LaWanda
Di Silvestro, Laurel	Matthews, Susan	Young, Pam Cosart
Dixon, Evander	Mauritson, Blake	Zurcher, Esther
Dobson, Edward Brown	Maze, Bill & Becky	

We have been working through past records to ensure that all member names have been properly recorded. If you notice any errors or discrepancies, please contact Lisa Monteiro at [Lisa@MineralKing.org](mailto:Lisa@MineralKing.org)



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