

# Carson City Historical Society

1207 North Carson Street, Carson City, NV

Mailing address: 112 North Curry, Carson City, NV 89703

**April 2021**

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*Nature does not hurry  
And yet  
Everything is accomplished.  
(Leo Tsu)*

## **A Message from President Sue Ballew**

Now it is Spring and new life begins. The Carson City Historical Society is slowing emerging from the winter and the coronavirus. We currently have an exhibit on “Notable Women of Eagle Valley” opening the first Saturday of each month, beginning, May 1 from 1 to 3 pm. Highlighted in this newsletter is Therese Laxalt, page 3. It is a heartwarming story of her ventures in a new country.

Our next big event is the ZOOM LECTURE that is this Thursday, April 15, by Steven Saylor. If you would like to participate, please contact David Bugli at [dcbugli@aol.com](mailto:dcbugli@aol.com) or call him at (775) 883-4154 for the Zoom link.

Meanwhile, our Board members have been working on new meetings “in person,” David Bugli has an upcoming list of Zoom lectures and we have some new projects coming up—The unveiling of the V & T Depot watercolor and Adele’s artifacts display. I am looking forward to seeing you soon. Sue Ballew

### **2021 Officers:**

Sue Ballew, President  
Open, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Travis Legatzke, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
David Bugli, Secretary  
Kiyoshi Nishikawa, Treasurer  
Andi Fant, Membership  
Kat Long, Exhibits  
Donna McLaren, Facilities

## **EXHIBIT OPEN “Notable Women of Eagle Valley”**



The Exhibit will be open the first Saturday of each month from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. We would like to thank the artists who took the time to research, provide history in their artwork and for going above and beyond in this exhibit: Loretta Williams, Cyndy Brenneman, Matt Rose, Maggie Stillwell, Ronnie Rector, and Karen Kreyeski. Kudos to Kat Long, Exhibit Director CCHS, who loves history and wants to share it through her exhibits. Thank you to Andrea Hobbs for her artistic assistance.

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**EXHIBIT OPEN:** Saturday, May 1, 2021  
From 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

**Carriage House, 1207 North Carson,  
Carson City, Nevada**  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

*Please follow current COVID guidelines*  
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### **Donate Through Smile Amazon**

Help fund the Carson City Historical Society through your purchases on Amazon.com:

Simply type in the name: **smile.amazon.com** in the browser bar when you make an Amazon purchase.

Then search and/or select **Carson City Historical Society** as your nonprofit and you’re all set! A percentage of your purchases automatically comes back to help fund CCHS. Every little bit helps. Because of the COVID pandemic we have not been able to have fundraisers and have not had income other than dues. *I would like to thank our Treasurer Kiyoshi Nishikawa for setting up this feature.*

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**Zoom Lecture:**  
**“The Donovan Mill and the Comstock Foundation” by Steven Saylor**



The Carson City Historical Society presents a free lecture on "The Donovan Mill and the Comstock Foundation" by Steven Saylor, Executive Director of the Comstock Foundation, on Thursday, April 15, 2021, at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. The lecture is free and open to the public.

For information about attending, contact David Bugli at 775-883-4154 or send an email to [Dcbugli@aol.com](mailto:Dcbugli@aol.com) and he will provide you with a meeting link (or a meeting ID with passcode).

The Donovan Mill in Silver City is a gold and silver stamp mill that was critical in the development of the cyanide method for processing ore. The Comstock Foundation acquired the mill in 2014 to save it from being sold, dismantled, and leveled. The mill is a significant landmark of Comstock history and is the largest historic stamp mill in the United States still standing. It represents an example of historical innovation and technology.



Ultimately, the complex will serve as an interpretive center, with a fully operational blacksmith shop, operating stamp mill, and the restoration of two historic Merrill Crowe presses; only three Merrill Crowe milling machines are known to still exist in the nation.

The interpretive center will provide the public access to these significant environs, and the demonstration of historic methods and practices, through visitation and educational programming, and through collaborations to maintain the informational link to past knowledge and practices. The restoration

of the Donovan Mill will provide the Comstock Foundation with the first significant living historic environ and complete the preservation of one of the links in our historic landscape.

The foundation has also engaged in restoration of the Upper Yellow Jacket Hoist, St. Mary's Art Center, Gold Hill Depot, the Fourth Ward School, the Dayton Consolidated Mine and Mill, Piper's Opera House, Comstock Fireman's Museum, the Crown Point Mill, and Sutro Tunnel Town site.

Mr. Saylor's lecture will include visuals of the Donovan Mill - both historical and before-and-after restoration work - and a nine-minute video tour of the Donovan Mill covering the process of ore processing from beginning to end.

Steven Saylor holds a B.F.A. & M.A. from Kent State University. He worked for advertising agencies in Akron, New York, and Reno, holding positions as Art Director and Television Director from 1968 to 1974. He has instructed illustration, design, oil painting, watercolor, and photography at Kent State University and for UNR at Western Nevada College (WNC). His work in academia includes the development of art and photography classes at WNC in 1974. In 1986, Steven was awarded instructor of the year at WNC (then called Western Nevada Community College). In 2017, Steven was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from Kent State University. Currently he is an adjunct Professor teaching art at WNC.

Mr. Saylor has been Executive Director of the Comstock Foundation since January 2018, and has been successful in improving community outreach, membership, lecture series, special event production, volunteer engagement, donations, supporters, and more. Under his guidance the Comstock Foundation won the Northern Nevada Development Authority's Pioneer/Boundary Peak Award as best nonprofit in 2018. He is Second Vice President of the Nevada Museums Association, and was awarded Virginia City Businessperson of the Year 2020-2021 by national organization Alignable.

Please contact David Bugli at [dcbugli@aol.com](mailto:dcbugli@aol.com) or call him at (775) 883-4154 for the Zoom link.

**Upcoming lectures:**

5/20/21 – Bruce Roter “The Museum of Political Corruption”

6/17/21 - to be determined

7/15/21 - Chris Bayer - "The Strychnine Banjo"

9/16/21 - Samantha Szesciorcka - "Long Riding"

## ***Notable Women of Eagle Valley— Therese Laxalt***



Therese Alpetche Laxalt was born in 1891 in French Basque Country, France and died May 11, 1978. (Therese is in the middle of the first row surrounded by her children.) She married Dominique Laxalt in 1921, and they had six children, two daughters and four sons. John was an attorney in Las Vegas; Marie Bini, a former school teacher; Suzanne, a retired nun; Peter, an attorney in Reno; Paul, former Nevada Governor and U.S. Senator and Robert, author and former director of the University of Nevada Press.

She was a graduate of the Le Cordon Bleu in Paris, and came to the United States after World War I to take her brother, Michel, home. He was a soldier in the French Army and was dying from a poison gas attack. After he died, she chose to remain in the United States.

In 1921 she married Dominique Laxalt, and they eventually moved to Carson City where they operated the French Hotel and owned the original Ormsby House. Dominique Laxalt went back to the sheep business, and Therese tended to their joint business interests and raised their six children.

Therese wanted to give all their children a college education so they could earn their livelihoods with their minds rather than their hands.

In his book, “Sweet Promised Land,” Robert wrote, “It took courage all right for a women to live in the sheep camps. And it took courage not to keep on living that way, to make her own opportunity and come to Carson City as she did, out of an old brown board cabin in the desert, with four children and a hundred dollars, to start another life in the little hotel, doing all the cooking for the workingmen boarders, on her feet from four o’clock in the morning until midnight, and with only half enough sleep at night. And it took courage for a pretty woman to watch her slender legs become purple veins forever from standing on her feet until the last day of the ninth

month, and then deliver her child and go back to work...”

The artwork on display in the Carriage House depicts a woman of many talents—someone to admire, someone with tenacity, a mother who loved her family.

This information and photo is from the Nevada Womens’ History Project. I encourage you to read “Sweet Promised Land” and “The Basque Hotel” written by Robert Laxalt, her son, to discover for yourself what a wonderful women, and mother she was.

### **Past Zoom LECTURES**

Past Zoom lectures are on the Carson City Historical Society YouTube channel. If you missed a lecture, they can be watched again. The link is listed below each lecture.



February 18, 2021 lecture by Garrett Barmore, “The Cocktail & Alcohol Culture of Virginia City”<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewPEwcNVr5E> or at CCHistorical.org.



January 18 lecture by Jonah Blustain “More than a Ghost Town; Cultural Resource Management in the Phantom City of Rhyolite, Nevada”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dc-PIL41ep4>

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The Carson City Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based at the Foreman-Roberts House, 1207 North Carson, Carson City, NV 89703. Mailing address is Carson City Historical Society, 211 N. Curry, Carson City, NV 89703.

Website: [cchistorical.org](http://cchistorical.org).  
Email: [carsoncityhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:carsoncityhistoricalsociety@gmail.com) Dues are due: \$25 one member, \$35 for family, etc. and can be mailed to the mailing address above.  
Donations are also accepted.

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