



# *Sutter Creek Community Benefit Foundation*

March Newsletter, 2020

*When Irish eyes are smiling; Sure, 'tis like the morn in Spring  
In the lilt of Irish laughter; You can hear the angels sing  
When Irish hearts are happy; All the world seems bright and gay  
And when Irish eyes are smiling; Sure, they steal your heart away*

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St. Patrick's Day is celebrated annually on March 17, the anniversary of his death in the fifth century. The Irish have observed this day as a religious holiday for over 1,000 years. On St. Patrick's Day, which falls during the Christian season of Lent, Irish families would traditionally attend church in the morning and celebrate in the afternoon. Lenten prohibitions against the consumption of meat were waived and people would dance, drink and feast on the traditional meal of Irish bacon and cabbage.

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## Who Was St. Patrick?

Saint Patrick, who lived during the fifth century, is the patron saint of Ireland and its national apostle. Born in Roman Britain, he was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave at the age of 16. He later escaped, but returned to Ireland and was credited with bringing Christianity to its people.

In the centuries following Patrick's death (believed to have been on March 17, 461), the mythology surrounding his life became ever more ingrained in the Irish culture. Perhaps the most well-known legend of

St. Patrick is that he explained the Holy Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) using the three leaves of a native Irish clover, the shamrock. More than 100 St. Patrick's Day parades are held across the United States. New York City and Boston are home to the largest celebrations.

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## When Was the First St. Patrick's Day Celebrated?

Since around the 9th or 10th century, people in Ireland have been observing the Roman Catholic feast day of St. Patrick on March 17. The first St. Patrick's Day parade took place, not in Ireland, but in the United States. On March 17, 1762, Irish soldiers serving in the English military marched through New York City. Along with their music, the parade helped the soldiers reconnect with their Irish roots, as well as with fellow Irishmen serving in the English army.

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**Irish Influence in Amador County**

**California Historical Landmark 38 - Irishtown, State Route 88 at Irishtown Road, Pine Grove** -This was an important stopping place for emigrants on their way to the southern mines. The first white settlers on this spot found it a 'city of wigwams,' and hundreds of mortars in the rocks testify that this was a favorite Indian camping ground.

**Irish Hill Pit** is a cultural feature (mine) in Amador County.

**Irish Ancestry** as reported in Amador County: 14.6%, 5,408

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## Irish Hill, Amador County Ghost Town

The Irish Hill district is in northwestern Amador County about five miles north of Ione. It includes the Muletown and Forest Home areas. The town site is an irregular acreage of cobbled mounds. Buildings are nonexistent. This is the oft-repeated pattern of a town destroyed when riches were discovered beneath it. The remains include evidence of the usual set-up of sluices operated at the arrival of a ditch, in this case the Plymouth Ditch bringing water from the Cosumnes. With water available at high pressures, the changes wrought in the scenery are exceeded nowhere in Amador and have few doubles anywhere in the Mother Lode.



Irish Hill Clay Pit, 1905

The long hogback behind the town was attacked with monitors, cut clear around, and turned into a colossal, red-sided, green-topped Noah's Ark. The red of the sides is due to the iron oxide-

loaded clay; the top is a cover of dense chemise. Hydraulic mining at Irish Hill continued to a much later date than at the neighboring diggings. This was made practicable by dams built below the scene of operations, which impounded the debris and therefore drew no fire from the anti-silt regulations.

Several small houses or rather semi-cabins, remained near the original town site until a relatively recent date. These were occupied by the crews engaged in the final cleanup of the area.

At roadside an Irish saloon outlasted them all. This was a welcome oasis to those engaged in a cow drive from Forest Home to lone or vice versa and a port of call for all having business in those parts in that horse-drawn era. Every nationality had its own saloons, each as distinct as the ethnic group that produced it, though the entire population patronized all of them with no resentment or discrimination whatsoever and entire friendliness all around.

This saloon was a thing of board-and-batten of fair dimensions fronted not by a road shed but what might be termed a sort of porte cochere. There were many Irish saloons in the Mother Lode. This was a fair example of one that might be termed in the middle range of affluence and decor, and so, fairly typical.



The two outer corners of the polished walnut bar sported quarter-round shields, one proclaiming the virtues of Guinness Stout, the other of Dublin Stout. Enamelled medallions above the respective racks of the product of John Jamieson and Son and Jamieson Ltd. testified to their excellence.

The pictures on the walls included photos of John L. Sullivan and Paddy Ryan in ring stance, bare knuckled, in black tights

and spiked shoes; many other pictures showed racehorses. There may have been an old-time Irishman who was not a passionate lover of horses and an avid follower of the sport of kings.



*Gold rush saloon typical of the time and area.*

*Out of an abundance of caution, the SCCBF is postponing the May 9 Shrimp Feed. The 2020 Shrimp Feed will be rescheduled, so please stay tuned.*

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