

# *Sutter Creek Community Benefit Foundation*

February Newsletter, 2022

## **A Look Back to the late 1800's early 1900's**

### *Three Interesting Alumni of the Sutter Creek Grammar School*

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There is no doubt that there are hundreds of graduates who went on to very interesting and successful careers. This edition focuses on life in Sutter Creek in the late 1800's to early 1900's. We highlight the careers of one early graduate of the school and one early teacher, both of whom went on to become major forces in the regional educational and political arenas. Also included, in its entirety, is a poem titled "A Sutter Creek Boy".

*If you have interesting stories or chronicles of members of your family, please contact us at [info@sccbf.org](mailto:info@sccbf.org).*

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## **Sabra Greenhaigh**

Ms. Greehaigh was born Sabra Rickey in Shenandoah Valley in 1877. After teaching at various local schools including the Sutter Creek Grammar School, she married Amador County Superintendent of Schools, William H. Greehaigh. Following his death in 1916, Ms. Greehaigh became Superintendent of Schools for Amador County, serving until 1931.

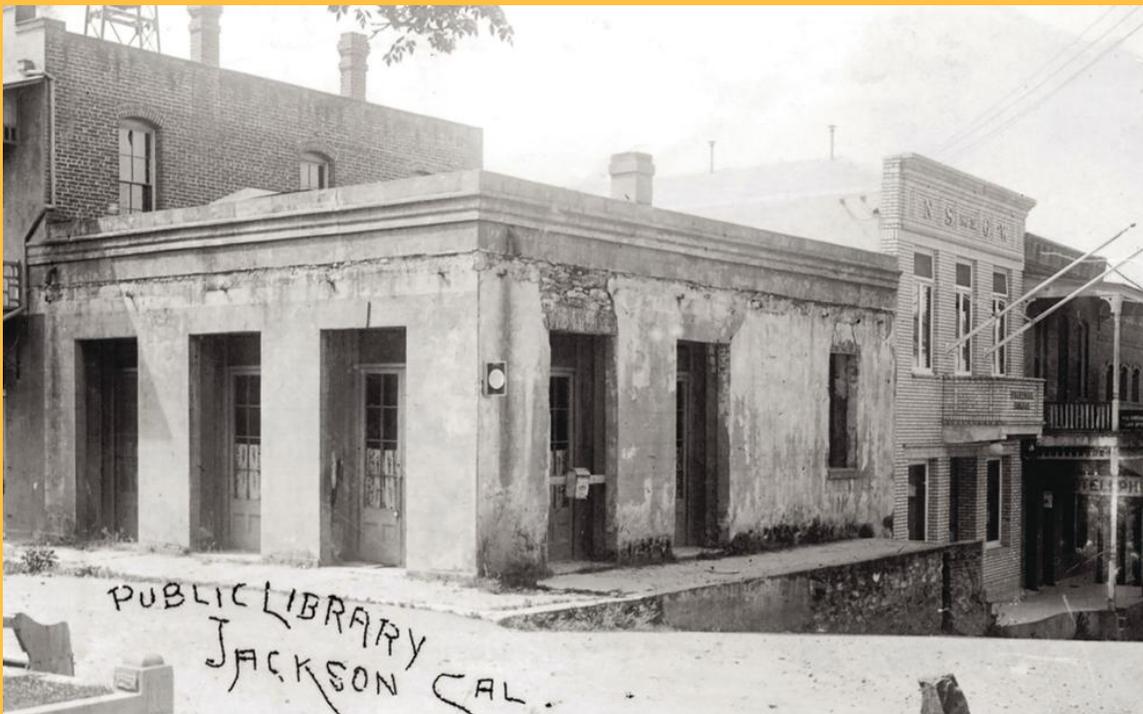
During her early tenure, all of the Amador County High Schools obtained full academic accreditation, rare accomplishment for rural schools. She was recognized throughout the State as a very effective advocate for rural education. She was especially committed to promoting the need for school nurses in the smaller rural schools as well as recognizing the important role local libraries play in the local education system. She was, in fact, the primary force behind the construction of the Amador

**County Library on "Courthouse Hill" in Jackson circa 1920.**



*Shown is the "new" library next to the Courthouse at it's opening in 1933.*

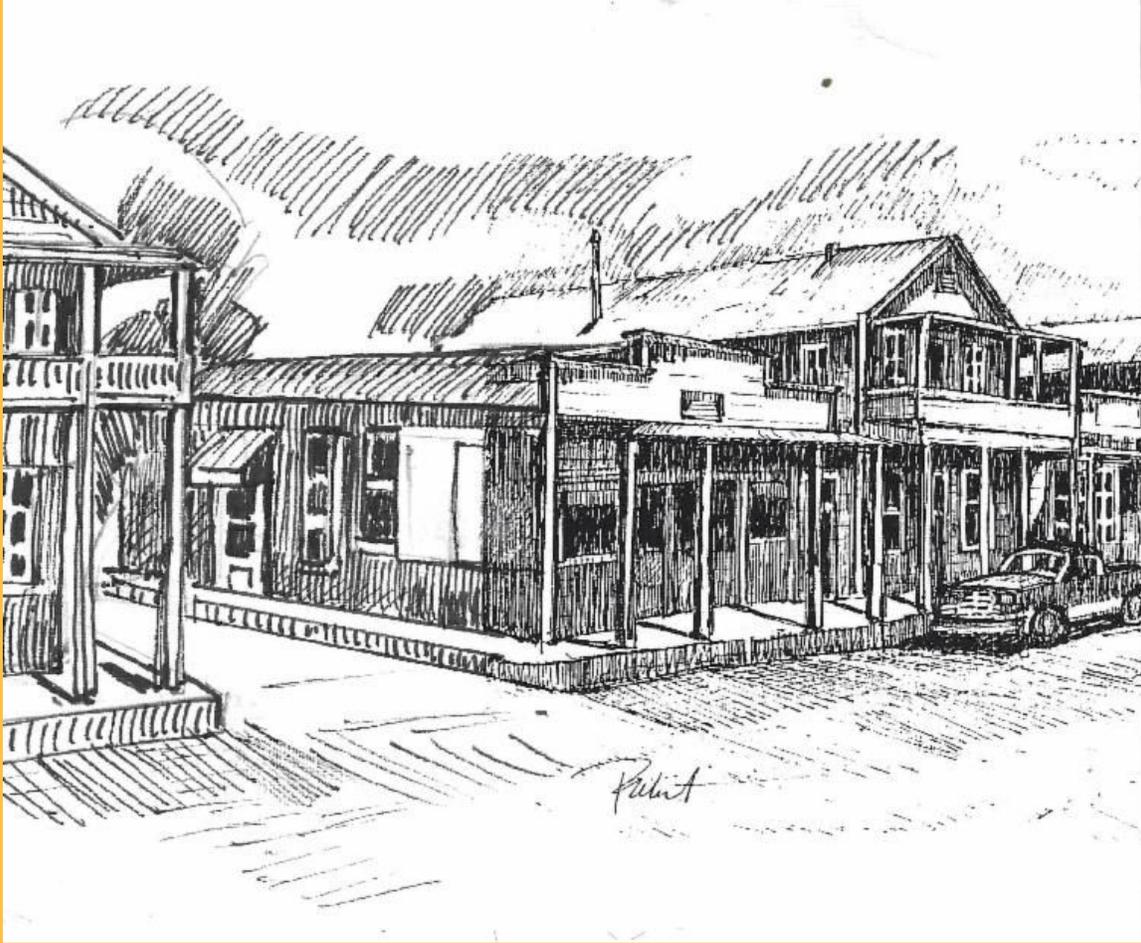
**Prior to Ms. Greenhaigh consolidating the mishmash of "libraries" into a cohesive system, they existed more as book storage facilities with no regular hours or reference system. Wherever someone had books to share or loan, a make-shift library was established.**



*Jackson library prior to 1920.*

**Sutter Creek had it's own library in what had been Dr. Goodman's**

office on the corner of Randolph and Main Streets. After the doctor's death in 1927, the building that now houses Sina's Backroads Cafe, was the Sutter Creek Library.



*A rendering of the building on the corner of Randolph and Main St.*

Though spending her career locally she was responsible for major improvements to quality and accessibility of education throughout the State.

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## Belle Coledge

Belle Colledge was born in Sutter Creek in 1884. She attended the Sutter Creek Grammar School.



**She went to high schools in lone and Sacramento, going on the graduate from UC Berkley in 1904 at the age of 20.**

**She returned to teach high school in lone, Sacramento, and Lodi until she enlisted in the Army School of Nursing in 1918.**

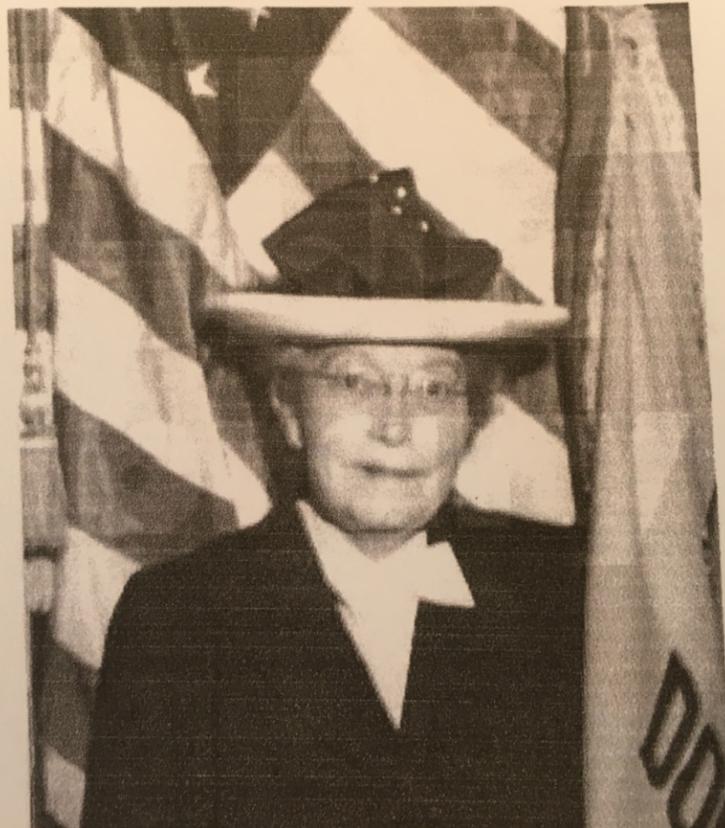


*Picture of typical nurses serving in World War 1.*

**Following the war she taught at Sacramento Junior College, where she also served as Dean, Dean of Women, and Vice President until 1947.**



Belle Coolidge



Along the way she was awarded an Honorary Degree of Law from McGeorge College of Law and elected to the Sacramento City Council until 1948 when she was appointed to be the first female mayor of Sacramento.

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**“A SUTTER CREEK BOY”**  
**BY J. H. CUSANOVICH**

Joseph Cusanovich, author of the poem, was born in Sutter Creek in 1878 and died in San Francisco in 1950 at the age of 71. He is buried in the Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Colma, Ca. His father, John, was born in Croatia in 1827 and died in Sutter Creek around 1897. He is buried in Sutter Creek's Catholic Cemetery.

Though undated, the poem describes events which occurred in the late 1800's, providing a rare look back to the everyday events of growing up in the early days of Sutter Creek.

Sit back, make yourself comfortable, and enjoy this look back. You may recognize several familiar names and locations.

#### A SUTTER CREEK BOY

Free cherries at Downs', if we didn't break the twigs,  
We climbed like clowns and ate like pigs.  
Memories like these can't escape one's mind,  
For kids always remember those who are kind.

Father Maloney, a kindly priest,  
Took us to Sanderson's for a picnic feast;  
For puses of a dime, races we'd run;  
By the collar he'd start us--like a shot from a gun.

Baldo and his horse I remember well,  
Who never misses a funeral to toll the bell.  
The peddler we cal "Bunker Hill Sam"  
His song "Ham and e-Bacon, ax-andle and e-ham."

The time the butcher swore he saw a ghost,  
Dangling from the old Lincoln hoist,  
Telling ghost stories around the stove at night;  
Miners were blasting with dynamite.

Fourth of July, the day of the year,  
Anxiously waiting the horribles to appear.  
The crackling of giant powder--July eve--  
Houses would rattle and dishes would heave.

General Andre who stole the Keystone gold,  
Scales fences, swam rivers, and got away cold.  
Bandit Mitchel, now don't make a holler--  
Forgive him; he gave us kids many a dollar.

Joe Capello of tug-a-war fame,  
Went to the slaughter-house--on oxblood would train;  
Yet Slav-Tony pulled him in jig-time;  
And--they say Tony trained on foot-juice wine.

Big Nick, the clown of the town,  
Would make you laugh--just by making a frown.  
The old bachelor, we called Antone  
Gave tripe dinners at his cabin home.

Old Lady Harval, always so tidy and clean,  
 When calling for milk, gave us cheesy-poueen.  
 Poor Hee-Kee, a harmless Chinese  
 Would give us punks so we would not tease.

Good old fashioned dinners,--castradina, bacalara  
 and wine--  
 Sure made you hungry to sit down and dine.  
 How we cooled watermelons--that I must tell--  
 In the old oaken bucket we dropped in the well.

At baby christenings, folks put it on fine,  
 With barbecued cozlich-goat stuffed with garlic and  
 thyme;  
 Neighbors and strangers were welcome just the same,  
 To join the feast and drink to baby's name.

The boys were surely in for their wine and beer free.  
 With cow-bells and tin cans they'd shivaree.  
 If the groom was slow in delivering the "booze"  
 They bombarded him with old boots and shoes.

The dance music played by the two colored men,  
 Deed and Baker, with guitar and violin.  
 Sangarena was the popular dance  
 Yet alaman-left held you in a trance.  
 We knew kind-hearted blind Jim,

Strutting along, with his cane to guide him.  
 Right back of Soracco's, where they foot-raced in former year  
 Remember Aleck Dallas could run like a deer.  
 The dignified rooster with the reddish crown,  
 Followed Charley Booker all over the town.  
 Facing Main Street, sitting on the veranda,  
 Picture Old Lady Booker with her red bandana.

With stove-pipe hat and frock coat--no his name wasn't Bob  
 Maybe I have to mention I mean "Sam Cobb".  
 Two characters both harmless that I'll quote,  
 Yet we called one "Lamb" and the other "Coyote."

Hurdling hurdles down Lover's Lane,  
 "Rance" on his chestnut brown surely was game.  
 Up by Campbells, rings he would spear,  
 Just as easy as corraling a steer.

You know "Sutter" had its cave man in my day.  
 At nights we locked windows so they wouldn't take Sister away  
 Two, I remember and maybe you'll recall  
 Chinchilla-coat Johnny, and handsome Bart was tall.

Free shows at Howards, given by Pawnee,  
 But oh; how he collected, selling "too-ree";

Magician Revallo, most clever by far;  
 Yet, we all liked handsome arcobatic Dunbar.

Dear Folks, unless you were a mate,  
 You'll find it hard what I'm trying to relate.  
 The day they raised the flag on the school house dome,  
 My pants were torn and had to stay at home.

School-marm Herman, noble and true,  
 Without dear "Ida", what would the kiddies do?  
 "Blockbird", without feathers or wing,  
 Oh my! with raw-hide, how he could sting!

The dear maidens,. comely and small, pretty and tall;  
 God is kind, so there is some good in all.  
 Sophie, Kate, Flora, Lillie, Rose and Maybell--  
 Pretty names, too numerous to tell.

Smearing garlic, I'll admit was an awful shame,  
 Poor teacher, kept us after school--who was to blame?  
 The tall lanky principal, with side-chops on his head  
 When vexed, how he trembled--you wished you were dead.

Pegging marbles with a spinning top,  
 To listen to her hum on the ground--we'd flop.  
 Kinky Petos--the minister's son,  
 Would grab out marbles and away he'd run.

The "B" boys surely had it on us then,  
 We never would fight for they were ten.  
 Toby, Sox, Buck, Tragedy, Dusty, Big-foot and Pie;  
 Funny hownick-names will cling till you die.

On Saturday, when there was no school,  
 Barefooted, we'd go to Posts' swimming pool,  
 But when Posts' bull snorted and pawed dirt,  
 We did no swimming;so no one was hurt.

Up to Mc<sup>K</sup>inleys for young mocking birds--  
 Such mocking whistling, you never heard.  
 For gum we chewed pitch from the old bull-pine,  
 And we smoked the leaves of the sticky-tar-vine.

When the gilrs wore frizzes on their forehead  
 Sisters kept me busy mooching ten-leads.  
 How times change when you look back!  
 Recall the old wooden boot-jack!

I'll never forget my first trip from home,  
 When I drove "roly-poly-general" to Ione.  
 Winters, frosty mornings, for me had no joy,  
 How could I forget--I was an altar boy.

I can see every street, corner and land-mark,  
The cackling of wild geese flying to another clime,  
Justlike marching soldiers,  
Each one in line.

Ten mules driven by a single line,  
Hauling logs to the old Wildman mine.  
And when they drove wild cattle through the town,  
No one could be seen with a reddish gown.

Balmy summer evenings when the air got punk  
Someone hollered "I smell skink."  
The burning of supherates would almost make you choke,  
When the wind carried that putrid sulphide smoke.

Animosity amongst nationality--there was nothing like that  
Just like one happy family, including cousin Jack.  
Italians, and Slavonians, Irish and Jew  
Of most every nation we had a few.

Waiting for the stage and "post office" never fail,  
What excitement! Though there never was any mail,  
The "letter-drums" we'd turn from A to Z,  
Hoping to find a misplaced "C".

Every evening, when the sun went down, Alas!  
We could heard the hee-hawing of Allen's "jackass".  
The clanging of mule bells, now muchly out of date,  
Still I can hear Trudgen coming in late.

That familiar noise going "ca-plunk ca-plunk".  
When pumping from the old town pump.  
The "rat-a-tat-tat" of the old town band,  
What music! We thought it was grand.

"Gum-a-gum" on his Jews harp was his game,  
Whistling his tin whistle,  
I'll mention no name,  
He could rattle the "beef-bones" justlike a coon,  
While the town cobbler fiddled his Arkansas tune.

I feel related to every hill, tree and valley,  
Even our neighbor "String Bean Alley";  
While the pounding of the forty-stamp mill  
Goes pounding through my memory still.

Such pounding. I simply can't unload,  
It's because I was born on the "Mother Lode."  
Dear "folks", my poem or rhyme, I hope you'll enjoy,  
For they're fond memories of a "Sutter Creek Boy."

J.H. Cusanovich

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The Historic Sutter Creek Grammar School is rich in Gold Rush history. This beautiful building is California's second oldest two-story brick schoolhouse. The Sutter Creek Community Benefit Foundation has restored the first and second floor making it a wonderful rental for any occasion. There are four rooms within the Historic Grammar School that can be rented.

Contact the City of Sutter Creek for information on rates and availability.  
(209) 267-5647 ext. 230 or email [info@cityofsuttercreek.org](mailto:info@cityofsuttercreek.org)

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*Whether it's a love of our heritage, a special connection to our town's diverse, deeply rooted cultures, or a desire to improve your community, every donor's passion for Sutter Creek is unique. A gift to Sutter Creek Community Benefit Foundation is the perfect way to fund your passion and watch it prosper. By connecting people who care with causes that matter, we help ensure a stronger, healthier tomorrow. We provide a simple, powerful and highly personal approach to giving.*

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