

The Plaques of E Clampus Vitus:

Humbug Mining District

The Plaques of E Clampus Vitus--
Humbug Chapter No. 73

The 20th in a continuing series of
articles prepared by Bill Wensrich.

“If you ain’t plaque’n, then you ain’t
Clampin’”

My good friend Jim Ragsdale was Noble Grand Humbug of the Yreka Chapter of E Clampus Vitus in 1988. At that time, having lived on Humbug Creek for over 15 years, he was familiar with both its history and its remaining gold waiting to be found. This was Jim’s plaque idea. He made it happen with help from neighbor and Chapter member Don

Ferguson, Dan Weimers and others. Dorothy Hettema, president of the Siskiyou County Historical Society, was also involved in the placement of this historical monument. Jim and Don pulled the rock out of Humbug Creek below the monument site; Ray Feleta from the Mt. Shasta cemetery had the plaque made and Dorothy and Jim lined up speakers for the dedication ceremony. A couple of old timers who were born on the creek told stories they had heard long ago about what life was like along the creek in the 1880s and 1890s. They themselves had lived on the creek during the Great Depression, and shared those stories as well. It was quite an affair for the 25 or so people attending the dedication ceremony. As early as May, 1851, gold was

discovered in Humbug Creek, a tributary joining the Klamath River below the mouth of the Shasta River. A different group of disillusioned miners named the place “Humbug” when they failed to find any of the precious metal; the name stuck. However, the name didn’t stop other prospectors from looking. A few years later when another group hit pay dirt, hundreds of miners flooded into what would be called the Humbug Mining District. Soon mining camps were formed along the banks of Humbug Creek, about 10 miles northwest of Yreka. By 1853 a thousand men lived on the creek. This was followed by a great deal of mining excitement during the year of 1855 which drew even larger crowds to the district.

The primary mining camp just above the confluence of Humbug Creek’s south and middle fork became known as Humbug City. Often referred to as “the forks,” one could find several stores, saloons, and shops, but few residences. The miners lived up and down the creek, maybe as many as 600 at the forks. Frenchtown, 2 miles below the forks, may have been the largest settlement at the time with a population of nearly 1,000 residents. Obviously a number of Frenchmen had claims on this part of the creek; hence the original town name of Mowrey’s Flat was changed.

SEE HUMBUG ON A-9

Today in History:

Today is Wednesday, July 18, the 199th day of 2018. There are 166 days left in the year.
Today’s Highlight in History:
On July 18, 1940, the Democratic National Convention at Chicago Stadium nominated President Franklin D. Roosevelt (who was monitoring the proceedings at the White House) for an unprecedented third term in office; earlier in the day, Eleanor Roosevelt spoke to the convention, becoming the first presidential spouse to address such a gathering.

On this date:
In A.D. 64, the Great Fire of Rome began, consuming most of the city for about a week. (Some blamed the fire on Emperor Nero, who in turn blamed Christians.)
In 1536, the English Parliament passed an act declaring the authority of the pope void in England.
In 1817, English novelist Jane Austen died in Winchester at age 41.
In 1863, during the Civil War, Union troops spearheaded by the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, made up of black soldiers, charged Confederate-held Fort Wagner on Morris Island, S.C. The Confederates were able to repel the Northerners, who suffered heavy losses; the 54th’s commander, Col. Robert Gould Shaw, was among those who were killed.

In 1918, South African anti-apartheid leader and president Nelson Mandela was born in the village of Mvezo.
In 1932, the United States and Canada signed a treaty to develop the St. Lawrence Seaway.
In 1944, Hideki Tojo was removed as Japanese premier and war minister because of setbacks suffered by his country in World War II. American forces in France captured the Normandy town of St. Lo.
In 1947, President Harry S. Truman signed a Presidential Succession Act which placed the speaker of the House and the Senate president pro tempore next in the line of succession after the vice president.
In 1955, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Soviet Premier Nikolai Bulganin, British Prime Minister Anthony Eden and French Premier Edgar Faure held a summit in Geneva.
In 1969, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., left a party on Chappaquiddick Island near Martha’s Vineyard with Mary Jo Kopechne (koh-PEHK’-nee), 28; some time later, Kennedy’s car went off a bridge into the water. Kennedy was able to escape, but Kopechne drowned.
In 1984, gunman James

Huberty opened fire at a McDonald’s fast food restaurant in San Ysidro (ee-SEE’-droh), California, killing 21 people before being shot dead by police. Walter F. Mondale won the Democratic presidential nomination in San Francisco.
In 1994, a bomb hidden in a van destroyed a Jewish cultural center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, killing 85. Tutsi rebels declared an end to Rwanda’s 14-week-old civil war.
Ten years ago: One of the world’s largest mobile cranes collapsed at a refinery in southeast Houston, killing four people and injuring seven others. Two French humanitarian aid workers were kidnapped in Afghanistan’s Day Kundi province. (They were released about two weeks later.) The epic Batman sequel “The Dark Knight,” starring Christian Bale as the caped crusader and Heath Ledger as the Joker, premiered.
Five years ago: Once the very symbol of American industrial might, Detroit became the biggest U.S. city to file for bankruptcy, its finances ravaged and its neighborhoods hollowed out by a long, slow decline in population and auto manufacturing.
One year ago: President Donald Trump declared that it

was time to “let Obamacare fail” after the latest Republican effort to repeal President Barack Obama’s health care law was blocked in the Senate. President Donald Trump announced that he would nominate former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman to be U.S. ambassador to Russia. The Trump administration slapped new sanctions on 18 Iranian individuals, groups and networks, a day after certifying to Congress that Iran was technically complying with the nuclear deal and could continue enjoying nuclear sanctions relief.
Today’s Birthdays: Skating champion and commentator Dick Button is 89. Olympic gold medal figure skater Tenley Albright is 83. Movie director Paul Verhoeven is 80. Musician Brian Auger is 79. Singer Dion DiMucci is 79. Actor James Brolin is 78. Baseball Hall of Famer Joe Torre is 78. Singer Martha Reeves is 77. Pop-rock musician Wally Bryson (The Raspberries) is 69. Country-rock singer Craig Fuller (Pure Prairie League) is 69. Business mogul Richard Branson is 68. Actress Margo Martindale is 67. Singer Ricky Skaggs is 64. Actress Audrey Landers is 62. World Golf Hall of Famer Nick Faldo is 61. Rock musician Nigel Twist (The Alarm) is 60. Actress Anne-Marie Johnson is 58. Actress Elizabeth McGovern

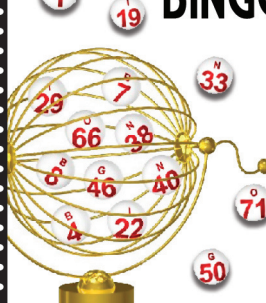
is 57. Rock musician John Hermann (Widespread Panic) is 56. Rock musician Jack Irons is 56. Talk show host-actress Wendy Williams is 54. Actor Vin Diesel is 51. Actor Grant Bowler is 50. Retired NBA All-Star Penny Hardaway is 47. Bluegrass musician Jesse Brock (The Gibson Brothers) is 46. Alt-country singer Elizabeth Cook is 46. Actor Eddie Matos is 46. MLB All-Star Torii Hunter is 43. Dance music singer-songwriter M.I.A. is 43. Rock musician Daron Malakian (System of a Down; Scars on Broadway) is 43. Actress Elsa Pataky (“The Fast and the Furious” films) is 42. Rock musician Tony Fagenson (Eve 6) is 40. Movie director Jared Hess is 39. Actor Jason Weaver is 39. Actress Kristen Bell is 38. Actor Michiel Huisman (MIHK’-heel HOWS’-man) is 37. Rock singer Ryan Cabrera is 36. Actress Priyanka Chopra is 36. Christian-rock musician Aaron Gillespie (Underoath) is 35. Actor Chace Crawford is 33. Actor James Norton is 33. Musician Paul Kowert (Punch Brothers) is 32. Actor Travis Milne is 32. Bluegrass musician Joe Dean Jr. (Dailey & Vincent) is 29.
Thought for Today: “While we read history we make history.” — George William Curtis, American author-editor (1824-1892).

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