

Golden Berries

I'm sitting at a table next to the old Forbestown saloon and museum. Today is Forbestown Daze, and I'm watching Sheriff for a Day, Lee Beldon (President of the Yuba Feather Historical Association). The real Butte County Sheriff, Perry Reniff, provided deputies as well. As I'm sitting here it strikes me how deep and rich the roots are in the gold mining heritage of Forbestown and the outlying areas in Butte County. This amazing replica of Forbestown from the 1800's has truly been a labor of love by the local folks to capture the flavor of days gone by but with their hard volunteer work to replicate the town those days are not forgotten. The days of the 1800's transcend to today, and I feel comfortable pretending that I'm in a bustling gold rush atmosphere. The District is proud and feels fortunate to be a part of the Forbestown Daze experience.

As I'm sitting here I'm reminded that another similar but different rural event is coming up this Saturday, August 9. It's the 10th annual Berry Creek Festival at the Berry Creek Grange. According to the Berry Creek website (www.berrycreekca.org), "Berry Creek is in the Western foothills of the Northern Sierra Range 20 miles or so northeast of Oroville, California. We have tall pines, clean air, no stop lights and really nice people live here. So come by and visit us." The Berry Festival is held on the Grange grounds with many vendors participating. The top item is the homemade blackberry pies.

I love the idea that local rural communities sponsor and foster our rich heritage of the gold rush era. I smell the pines and feel the wind blowing through them, and it's great. What a place to live. But what also strikes me during my moments here at the table eating a hotdog with chili is the sense of community that is engrained deep down in us – to break bread, to share fellowship and thanks together. Today is one of those days where the locals share their communal instincts to all for a welcome.

In Butte County there are many little towns and hamlets such as Forbestown, Feather Falls, Berry Creek, Concow, Yankee Hill, Bangor, and others. It is fun to see them let their lights shine on a special day. This Saturday, Berry Creek will share its special light on those who come. What a day to enjoy good food, good music, good fellowship, and if you'd like you can dance on top of a big bald rock and enjoy the pines and cedars. You might even see a bear. But if you come late, you may miss getting a berry pie.

Quote

"Don't gain the world and lose your soul, wisdom is better than silver or gold..." ~ Bob Marley

"When it comes to pie, some like apple, some like cherry. But not me, I like berry." ~ Bob Sharkey

Fun Facts

Forbestown Museum. The museum is dedicated to the preservation of the lumber and gold mining eras in the Oroville area. Pioneer snowshoes for humans and horses, mining implements, antique clothing and furniture, and a working print shop are housed in the main building. Outdoor mining displays, a miner's cabin, blacksmith shop, general store, and a replica of an old schoolhouse are all of interest. Admission to the Museum is always free. The Museum is open from 12- 4 p.m. every weekend from Memorial Day in May through Labor Day in September. Donations are gladly accepted.

Bald Rock in Berry Creek. Once home to the local Maidu Indians, Bald Rock is filled with many unique formations, including grinding holes used by the Native Americans for grains and acorns. Easy hikes to the peak of Bald Rock offer spectacular views of the Sacramento Valley and coastal mountain ranges. Bald Rock is one of Butte County's spectacular natural sites. Native Americans' legend of a monster called "UINO" began here. It is told this monster protected the middle fork of the Feather River from atop the huge formation. Take a short stroll through the forest to these impressive rock formations. The trail is an easy walk with a scramble over rocks near the top. Children of all ages will have fun searching for the "snail rock" or sitting inside the shelter, complete with a stove. If you are a night owl, come sit in the light of the full moon or count the stars in the wane of the moon.

Upcoming Events

Aug. 7 –Thursday Night Concert. The concert moves to Forbestown this week, for the sounds of **Revelee Country**. Forbestown Park, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Aug. 9 – 10th Annual Berry Creek Berry Festival at the Berry Creek Grange. Directions: Take Oro Dam Blvd. exit off Hwy. 70. Go through town, turn right on Olive Hwy. Follow Festival signs to Berry Creek. Turn right on Bald Rock Road. Go about 4 miles to 1477 Bald Rock Road.

See you in the parks!