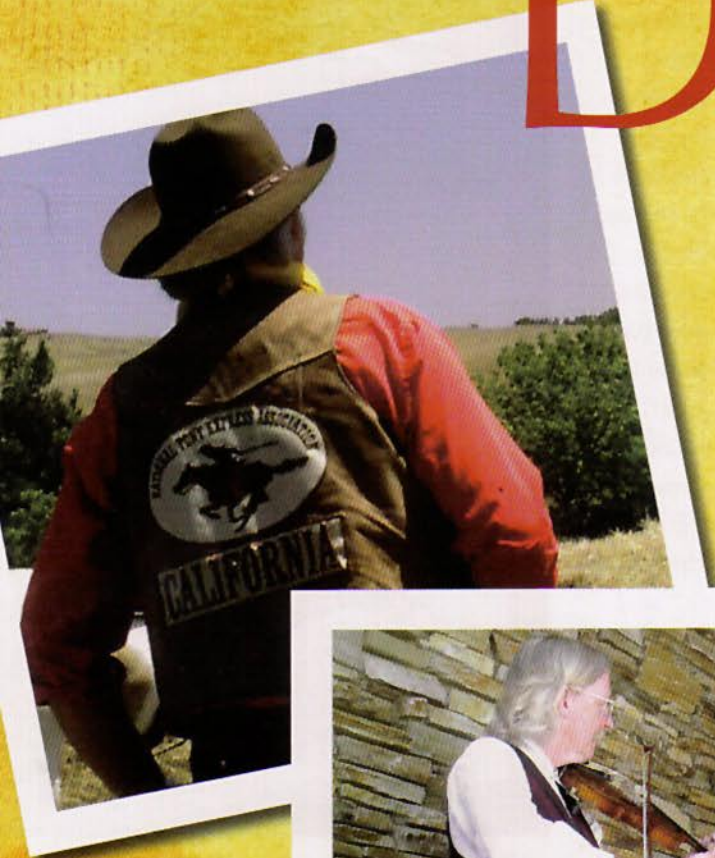


Clarksville Day

El Dorado Hills
celebrates its rich
history.



By Haley Myers



Betty January and Hal Erpenbeck want to unearth the past.

And this past May, they took a big step toward doing so by launching the first Clarksville Day, an event created to bring alive the days when the southern portion of El Dorado Hills was, in fact, Clarksville.

January and Erpenbeck—vice-president and president, respectively, of the Clarksville Region Historical Society—organized the free event, which was held Saturday, May 12 at the El Dorado Hills Branch Library adjacent to the Serrano Visitors Center.

Historic Clarksville, a town that prospered from around 1848 to the 1960s, has largely been forgotten, says January. She and Erpenbeck believe it is the historical society's duty to raise awareness of Clarksville's significance to El Dorado Hills' history. "The region is so rich in history, we should pass that information along so people know the importance of where they live," says January.

History came to life on Clarksville Day, when guests arrived to enjoy the festivities.

Activities began at 10 a.m. with an information exhibit hall set up inside the library. Guests were greeted by hosts in

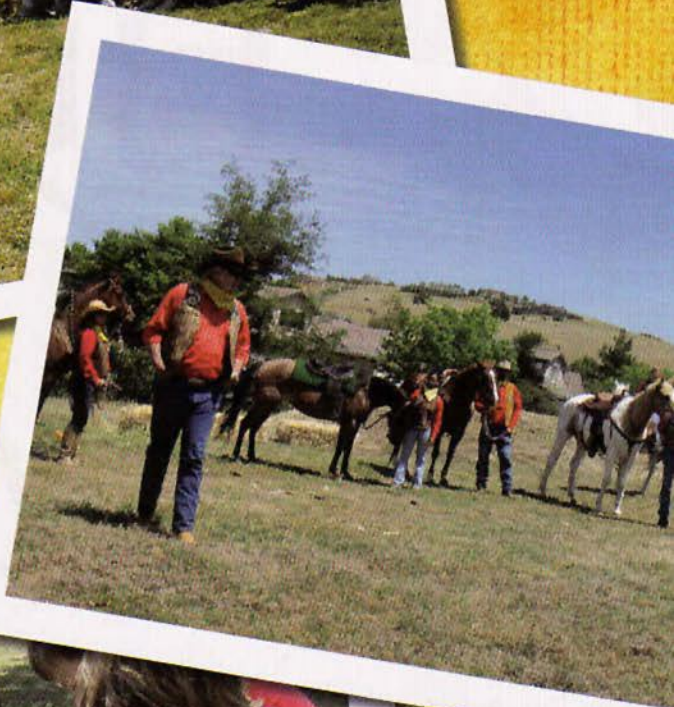
pioneer costume from the mid-19th century, including the 2006 El Dorado Rose (the official hostess of El Dorado County) Carol Burnley, and Erpenbeck. Indoor booths provided information from organizations including the Lincoln Highway Association, the Sierra Nevada Mormon Pioneers, the El Dorado Hills Genealogy Society, El Dorado Gem & Mineral Society and the El Dorado County Pioneer Cemeteries Commission.

Outdoor activities and entertainment included a Mormon re-enactment of life in the 1850s—a bit too light on pioneer volunteers to stage a full-scale re-enactment—with a working cannon from 1792 and a history lesson on the Sierra Nevada Mormon pioneers, as told by Bob Blair in costume as Mormon pioneer William Sydney Smith Willes. Children enjoyed gold panning and re-enactments of the Pony Express reminded everyone how far the U.S. Mail service has come. Live music from the duet Old Soles graced the entrance to the event, as invigorated guests enjoyed tap dancing, singing and the music of Clarksville's day.

Next year, organizers hope Clarksville Day will be held on the site where Clarksville once thrived, just south of Town Center.

Jim Brunello and Ken Wilkinson own the land and the ruins that remain of old Clarksville. Brunello, Clarksville Region Historical Society board member, and Wilkinson, a sponsor of Clarksville Day, never miss a society meeting. "They are both very interested in preserving what's there," says January.

Both January and Mary Cory, another member of the Clarksville Region Historical Society, have even loftier goals: They hope to gather all El Dorado County historical societies together to share the rich history of the area, which has been, as January puts it, quiet. The Clarksville Region Historical Society simply wants to promote this history and allow it a chance to speak up.



How Clarksville Became El Dorado Hills

The last Clarksville resident left in 1952, and the remaining "Clarksville" property was sold in the 1960s. Allan Lindsey, an area developer, then bought 11,000 acres (including some the Clarksville property), and re-named the area El Dorado Hills.