

The Yankee Hill Historical Society

Volunteers Make It Work!

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About US: In 2002, a group of concerned citizens joined together to save the 1856 Messilla Valley School in Pentz, Ca. The school was relocated and restored on Concow Rd in Yankee Hill, Ca. Ever since then, volunteers have been giving freely of their time helping collect and organize the history of the area and the stories of its people. In the end, it really is the story of the people in Yankee Hill, Cherokee, Pentz and other areas nearby along the Highway 70 Corridor that bring the area's history to life.

Volunteering: It is the people like you who donate their time to the Yankee Hill Historical Society that allows us to collect and tell these stories. We tell these stories to young and old alike through presentations and our web page and newsletters. Each year the hours donated by our members make this all happen.

It is important your experience with us is a pleasant one. We realize your time with us is a gift and we appreciate it. Whether you can donate one hour per month or forty, it is all appreciated and we want you to feel it was worthwhile!

As a volunteer, you probably have some questions. Below we have tried to anticipate a few of these and provide answers.

Do I need to know all about the area's history before I volunteer?

No, very few of us knew the history when we first volunteered. During your time as a volunteer you will learn as we all continue to learn about our history. We have extensive research capabilities in our digital archives on line, and we will train you on their use. A large portion of the digital Archives are also available at the old school house on Concow Road in binders.

Do I need to know how to operate a computer?

The maintenance and event-oriented projects described below require no computer skills. If you are interested in the digital archives, it helps to have a basic knowledge of computers, though some materials are available only in printed form. About 50% of our archives are available on line. It is faster to use the computer when appropriate because of the ability to search many sources in a matter of minutes. Photos and newspapers as well as other documents will always be an important part of our archives and you can do research at home. If you would like to learn to use the computer aids, we are happy to teach you.

How much time do I need to volunteer per month to be of help to the organization?

Whatever works for you. Volunteer schedules tend to range from a few hours per month during certain times of the year to a few dozen hours per month if you are working on a short term, active, busy project. Many activities are seasonal. For instance, you might work 16 hours in April and May as a volunteer on our summer maintenance programs, but less than 2 hours a month, or perhaps no hours at all the rest of the year. Some duties require specific hours, such as working with the digital archives database on our computer at the old school house; others can be very

flexible. Depending on the hours and times you are available, some volunteer opportunities may be more appropriate than others; we will be happy to discuss that with you.

What kind of work will I be doing?

That's largely up to you - if you have a skill or an interest, we probably have a place to apply it.!

Yearly Events: Events we host or where we maintain a booth need support: Spring Fling in May, Yearly Annual General Meeting in October and other smaller events require several hours of volunteer help by three or more people for a short period of time.

Facilities Maintenance: Moving and restoring the 1856 school house was the first project taken on by the Yankee Hill Historical Society in 2002. It serves as a community center for the Concow/Yankee Hill/Big Bend area as well as our headquarters. Each year we identify one or more maintenance projects to maintain the building. These projects require manual labor and organization.

The Digital Archives: The recording and digitizing of these archives is an ongoing labor of love. As the archives are digitized, we update the web page periodically with the new material. These archives support the publication of our newsletter and offer a unique look into our history for the general public. We need to scan documents, capture material from old newspaper files and occasionally visit the Butte County Archives in the new County Clerk's Office in Oroville for additional information. We can train you on working with the archives and even operating a computer if needed. We have a computer and scanner available at the old school house.

Newsletter: Think you might like to write an article about the area's history? The on-line archives hold a vast amount of material that lends itself to a short article about the area's history. Interested in gold mining, logging, ranching or railroad history? There is information in the archives for your article. What about fires and other natural events, notable people from the area? It's in the archives. Articles, if approved for content, may be included in our newsletters. We encourage you to take the time to explore the information already available on line for your research. Have a family history you would like to share in an article? We would like to see it, include it in our archives and possibly use it in a newsletter.

How do I coordinate availability?

The chairperson for each project generally tracks the who and when of volunteer availability. We're pretty flexible, so let's talk and we will work it out.

Can I change the type of volunteer work I do after I sign up?

Absolutely, we have many projects going on at once and you can switch around or do more than one. We will be happy to discuss this with you.

Volunteer work should be fun and rewarding. We appreciate the efforts of everyone and want you to know your contribution is important to us.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact us by e-mail at Information@yankeehillhistory.com. Leave your name, state your interests and leave the contact information for you by phone and/or email. We will contact you!