

# The Scruffy Post

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Smartsville Church Restoration Fund, Inc.  
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## *First Event on our Newly Finished Porch!*

With Rodney Ivie at the helm of our construction projects, we've benefited from his penchant for quality woodworking. We gratefully hosted our new event, the Family History Picnic, on the porch he and Steve Winchel recently finished. With completion of this enormous project, they will be retiring from active construction on the church. The two of them have worked diligently, both on the inside and outside, for sixteen years and will now have their well-deserved rest. We don't know how to say thank you in a big enough way, but we hope you know how much you've been appreciated.

(There's a bit of weather-proof painting left to do on the porch, so please come to our next work day, as we had to cancel the last one due to rain.)



Rodney and Steve



Kit and Rodney

# *First Annual Family History Picnic*

SCRFI's vice-president, Kathleen Smith – a descendant of Smartsville Gold Rush pioneers -- envisioned a day when Pioneer Day visitors who have enjoyed our small town festival on the last Saturday of April over the past nine years could meet once again in a more intimate setting. On Pioneer Day we SCRUFFIES are super busy coordinating the event and feel like we lack time to talk and share stories with our visitors.

Our first-ever Family History Picnic took place on Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, with nice weather, nice people, good tours, and an outdoor lunch with live music. Helping make it possible was the generous contribution of Thrivent Financial who adopted SCRFI through their [Thrivent Choice Program](#). Scott Berner is the helpful Financial Associate who not only went with Kathy to buy the groceries, but came to the event, bringing the drinks and slicing the watermelon. Thanks, Scott! We look forward to working with you again.

Kathy and Kit Burton, SCRFI's president, spoke to visitors about local history and progress on the church restoration. They in turn shared their family history as it relates to Smartsville and Timbuctoo. Chris Ward, a local professional archeologist (see his new book), took us on tours of two cemeteries, discussing the lives of the folks whose final resting place is there. He had actually discovered a head stone that had fallen and had a thick layer of soil on it, from about 60 years ago, he said. Here's Chris' new book, [Cemeteries of the Western Sierra](#).

It was good to get together at our beautiful, old church and share as we did – see the photos below. We hope to continue this new tradition again next year.



**Hilda Biffle, Kathy Smith, Leigha Robbins, Eileen Mahoney inside the church**



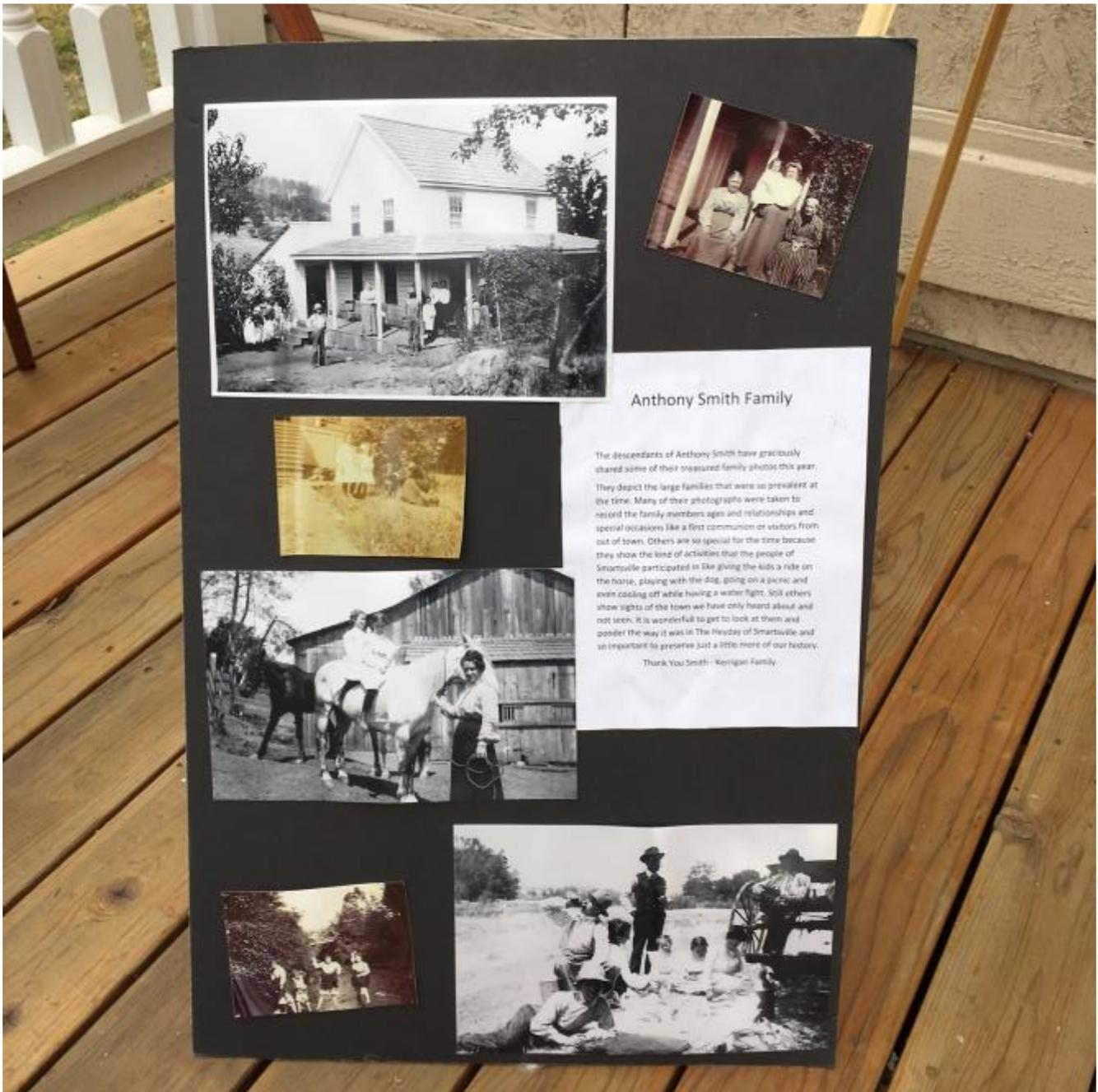
**Kit Burton and Jerry Smith discuss church construction**



Picnicking on the new staircase



Chris Ward uncovered a buried head stone. Kathy, Leigha, Eileen, and Jerry witnessed it.



One of Kathy's many informative posters

## The Anthony Smith Family Story

By Kathleen Smith

Eileen Mahony, a descendant of the Anthony Smith family of Smartsville, which extended to the Kerrigan, Connolly, and Beasley families, was a guest at the family history picnic. This is a good example of how descendants and SCRFI can be of help to each other.

Eileen contacted me a while back when she was researching her family history. She had uncovered a treasure of photos, most unlabeled, and was trying to identify them. Never having seen Smartsville before Eileen wasn't sure if they were even of Smartsville. Working together we were able to identify some places and events and even some of the people. She shared some of them and the story of her family's life in Smartsville, to be added to our collection of historical information being curated to illustrate the epoch of the historic church. They give us a glimpse into what life was like for them -- images of good times, every day occurrences and even the sad events, along with post cards exchanged between friends and neighbors -- all adding to our understanding of life in the heyday of Smartsville.

Many descendants like me will recognize the similarities between the Anthony Smith story and those of their own families. In so many ways they were a typical family of the area, Irish immigrants who arrived on the east coast and traveled west to make a life for themselves in a new place. Anthony and Margaret Smith had a large family, worked diligently to provide for them, and helped build a new community including the Church of the Immaculate Conception where they enjoyed the comfort and the fellowship that the Church afforded them.

Anthony pursued mining and served as the town constable and in his later years took up a road contract and was considered an excellent road master. The children attended the Rose Bar School and made their first Communions in the church, meeting and marrying and starting their own families. One daughter suffered the tragedy of losing a spouse to the dangerous work of mining, but had the support of an extended family nearby to assist in raising her family.

As mines came to a close and it was harder to make a living in the area many folks moved to cities where jobs were plentiful as did the Smiths who moved on to San Francisco. Fast forward several generations, people like Eileen wonder about their ancestors, but their story is almost lost. By connecting with other descendants it helps us all to piece the puzzle together, adding to the overall picture.

Family history is important to SCRFI because it brings to life the story of the folks who settled the surrounding towns and built the church, connecting the restoration to the history of the community. If you would like to share some local family history or even want some help researching yours, please contact me at (916) 838-2757 or [smartsville@gmail.com](mailto:smartsville@gmail.com). I hope next year we will have some new old stories to share and that you will come to our next picnic.

# *Our Next Project*

By Kit Burton

With completion of the front porch we turn to the task of weather protecting the south face of the building. Specifically, we will be repairing the front door, replacing siding, and adding a new steeple.

As part of the porch project we constructed a new foundation for the bell tower but some of the upper parts have settled, causing the front door to be inoperable. Our first decision is how to arrest further settling. Once that problem is solved we can replace the siding.

We have discovered that the octagonal cupola surrounding the bell can be replaced with a prefabricated unit. A spire similar to the one that was damaged about 80 years ago can also be purchased.

A local architect has been contacted to help us with this major project. He will assist us with construction methods and a budgetary cost estimate.

*Please consider SCRFI when making plans for tax-deductible contributions in 2017.*

## **An Easy Way to Help**

For those of us who order on Amazon there a simple and automatic way to support a favorite charitable organization every time we shop, at no extra cost. When shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) the prices and selections are all the same, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to the organization we select. If you choose Smartsville Church Restoration Fund, SCRFI will receive a donation from amazon. Thanks for checking out this link: [How to choose SCRFI on smile.amazon.com.](#)

**SCRFI's next monthly meeting is Tuesday, November 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm at the Rose Bar School. Please feel free to join us!**