In this issue of the newsletter, we reprint articles and ads from the *St. Helena Star*, items we’ve found fun and interesting as we’ve poured through the microfilm while doing research. The story below is from November 14, 1902. The mishap occurred on November 10, 1902.

**WRECKED TRAIN.**

**Gentle Milch Cow Causes Great Disaster.**

**TWO MEN BADLY INJURED.**

**Engine, Tender and Mail Car Leave the Track and Are Overturned—Engineer Remained at the Throttle.**

For the first time in the history of St. Helena the people have seen a train wrecked within the town limits and the trouble was all caused by a gentle milch cow having no grudge whatever at the Southern Pacific Company. Monday morning at 10:25 o'clock as the north-bound passenger train was steaming into town a cow, belonging to Chris Mills, which was browsing behind a clump of trees and out of sight of the engineer, ran onto the track in front of the train. There was not time to stop as the animal was only a few yards ahead of the train so Engineer Ball opened the throttle in hopes of increasing the speed to a rate sufficient to knock the cow off the track. The distance was too short, however, and the engine cut the cow in two, the head and shoulders being dragged under the engine. In a second more the crossing at Charter Oak avenue was reached, and the hairpind ground at this point caused the obstruction to raise the engine sufficient to throw it from the track. Before Engineer Ball could get the train stopped the engine had plowed through the fence into the Solarcon cellar yard, had uprooted a tree and caused considerable havoc, finally sinking deep into the soft earth. The tender was badly broken and the mail car tipped partially over.

She stubbed her toe on a cow: This embarrassing happenstance occurred at St. Helena in 1902. Locomotive 1309 and its train sprawls over the intersection of Charter Oak & Main.

Fireman C. C. Smith jumped from the engine and had his shoulder dislocated. Mail Clerk Lewis Mitchell was hurled from one side of the mail car to the other as it tipped and sustained the fracture of one rib and severe bruises.

Passengers in the coaches did not know when the train suddenly stopped that anything so disastrous had occurred. Road Master McWade, who was on board the train, thought it only an emergency stop.

The passengers for Calistoga and Lake County were taken to Calistoga in a coach by F. T. Mooney and the contents of the mail car which had been placed in the St. Helena post office were taken to Calistoga in charge of Postmaster Grauss.

The injured men were placed in charge of a physician and were soon resting easily. Mail Clerk Mitchell was able to go to Vallejo on the down train which left here by special engine nearly one and one-half hours late.

A large crowd viewed the wreck during the remainder of the day. At 8 o'clock in the evening a wrecking train reached here and commenced working, but at 8 o'clock received a telegram to quit work and proceed to Suisun to clear a wreck there. It returned to St. Helena about 8 o'clock Tuesday morning and shortly after noon the engine of the wrecked train on the track again.

The kodak fiends were in evidence and many snap shots of the wreck were taken as mementoes of an event seldom witnessed in Napa valley.
January 3, 1896

The Last Shot Fired:

New Year’s eve about 9 o’clock Messrs. Cavalina and Porta, two Swiss citizens, called upon Trustee Forni and asked permission to announce the arrival of the year 1896 by firing the old town cannon. Mr. Forni told them the gun was considered unsafe to handle but upon their urging he gave his consent upon the condition that they would ask some of the other Trustees and Marshal Johnson. This was done and when the word became noised about twenty-five or thirty men had assembled long before midnight to assist in arranging for the noisy reception of the new year. The water and mud was poured out of the cannon and it was placed in position, corner Spring street and Oak avenue, and given a heavy charge. The crowd then waited for 12 o’clock when the fuse was lighted and the crowd scattered to await the result. There was an immense explosion and when the men went to look for the cannon they found only remnants of it scattered about. A piece weighing twenty-five pounds was hurled through the basement of Mrs. Potter’s house a hundred feet distant. Another fragment nearly cut the limb of a locust tree in two in the Windsor hotel lot fully four hundred feet away, and a piece weighing five or six pounds was picked up in the Presbyterian church. Had the immense missile that went through the basement of Mrs. Potter’s house struck nine inches higher it would have gone through the room in which Mrs. Potter and Miss Lena Merk were sleeping. As it was there was no one injured which was certainly a streak of good luck for the beginning of 1896.

June 18, 1886

Wanted a G.A.R. Star.

About half past one to day, as our printers were preparing to go to press with this issue, they were startled by the sudden appearance of a bull in the front office. The animal had broken away from the herd being driven past and rushing in at the open door, doubtless expected to get one of the Grand Army Star’s about to be issued from this office. By dint of skillful maneuverings on the part of the drovers and the Star force he was pursued outside without going through the plate glass window.

April 26, 1909

The St. Helenas Defeated.

The second game of the Native Sons League was played Sunday at Hunt’s park. The Dolores parlor team crossed bats with the St. Helena nine, the former winning in a game full of heavy hitting, by a score of 20 to 17. McQuaid was in the box for the Dolores team and was hit hard at times. Flynn started the pitching for the St. Helena team and was given poor support in the first and second innings, and in the fifth inning Guigni was sent in to handle the sphere. Flynn, Wheeler and Schaffer of the St. Helena team, did some fine work with the bat. This is the second time this season that these two teams have met, the St. Helena team winning the first game. Bismarck Bruck handled the indicator and gave general satisfaction.

A Reminder...

Renewal letters were mailed in June. If you have not already done so, please renew your Historical Society membership today using the form in this newsletter. Thank you!
6-16-1876
Joe Straus only caught 105 trout in York Canyon Tuesday. He is going back after the rest soon.

12-7-1877
Old Grimes is dead, that good old man,  
But Adsit keeps the store,  
Where you can buy your Furniture  
Much cheaper than before.

3-10-1882
A burning out of Miss McCgeorge's chimney excited a fire alarm Monday morning. Somebody with a sack of salt fortunately passing rushed up on the roof and, pouring it down the chimney, put the fire out.

6-18-1886
Members of Unity Base Ball Club are highly indignant at the interference of some of the churches, which has lost them their play grounds. They say that this will not stop them as Sunday afternoon is the only time they can get together to play. From a moral point of view they claim there is less harm in playing ball than indulging in drink the whole afternoon.

**September**

**Sep 1:** Program: historic restoration tour of St. Helena Catholic Church, 4:00pm.

**Sep 15:** Board of Directors meeting, 5pm, Library Meeting Room. (Open to all members.)

**October**

**Oct 4:** Program includes lunch at Aetna Springs Clubhouse Restaurant and a visit to an abandoned mine at Aetna Springs Road. See below for more info.

**Oct 20:** Board of Directors meeting, 5pm, Library Meeting Room. (Open to all members.)

**November**

**Nov 7:** Saturday, at 1pm, Annual Cemetery Tour: Famous Women: Fannie Pritchard Schneider, civil war nurse; Sarah Chase Bourn, pioneer settler; Hannah Weinberger, first woman winery owner; Clarice Vance, black jazz singer; Lola Grace Mackinder, publisher of The Star; Ivy Loeber, founder of NCHS. *We’re looking for more “actors” to portray these women. Please call our voicemail if you’d like to help.*

**Nov 17:** Board of Directors meeting, 5pm, Library Meeting Room. (Open to all members.)

**December**

**Dec 8:** Christmas Potluck: 6pm location and details in the next newsletter.

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**Mission Statement**

The St. Helena Historical Society is a public educational organization. Its mission is to collect, preserve, exhibit, and provide access to historical materials of all kinds from our community as well as to promote public awareness and participation in the collection of such materials.

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**ST. HELENA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Presents:

**Lunch & Mining Tour**

**In Pope Valley**

**Sunday, October 4**

11:00 am

Aetna Springs Clubhouse Restaurant

Join us at 11am for a social hour, followed by a catered lunch at noon. After lunch we’ll tour an abandoned mine on Aetna Springs Road and hear about the thriving mining industry that once existed here. Details about the cost of lunch and how to make reservations will follow.

St. Helena Historical Society
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