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NEWS

VILLAGE HOMES

COMMENTARY

ENTERTAINMENT

SPORTS

BUSINESS

WHAT'S
HAPPENING

THE LIST

CAMERON PARK
LIFE

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Dennis Amaral of the Sierra Nevada Mormon Pioneer Group led his horses Doc and Donner through Clarksville during Clarksville Day last Saturday. The Percheron Welsh cross horses carried many 'a weary travelers in and out of the town that predates El Dorado Hills. Amaral said he bought the covered wagon from the Ponderosa Ranch, Incline Village, where some episodes of Bonanza were filmed. Village Life photo by Julie Samrick

Feature Photos

Clarksville Day 2017

By **Julie Samrick**

From page A1 | May 10, 2017

Clarksville Day was back and better than ever last Saturday. History lovers, and those just curious to know more about the local region's past, came out in perfect weather for the one day a year the locked gates of Clarksville are open to the public.

Located on the south side of the new Silva Valley Interchange, Clarksville predated El Dorado Hills by 100 years. On the Pony Express route and a place for gold seekers to stop for hospitality at the Mormon Tavern, Clarksville disappeared once Highway 50 was constructed, yet there are still remnants of the town that stand, each with a story as rich as its history.

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The freshly graded parking lot offered ample parking for the approximately 5,000 people who attended, a celebration in itself since the once-annual event couldn't be held during construction of the Silva Valley Interchange. The last Clarksville Day was held in 2013.

For those who didn't mind waiting a spell, they could take in the majestic oaks while two covered wagons carried visitors into and out of the Clarksville entrance, marked by a bridge not built with the weight of modern cars in mind. Just past the bridge it is noted that travelers are on one stretch of the Lincoln Highway, America's oldest highway, which was completed in 1915 and traveled until Highway 50 came to be.

Part of the frame of the original Wells Fargo Building, the oldest standing structure in El Dorado Hills, was admired on the walking tour just before the classic car exhibits, which Clarksville Region Historical Society co-founder Betty January called, "The best we've ever had."

There were free souvenir photographs available and music was performed all day by Ol' West Trio.

Visitors also meandered past the Griggs House, Kyburz House, Tong House, each the name of a Clarksville family with stories that make up the fabric of the region. A one-room school house still stands and there was a photo of children in the 1930s playing a game in the schoolyard, in which they ran around a pole until centrifugal force lifted them into the air. Just behind the photo the pole still stands.

Every hour an Old West, shoot-out re-enactment was performed as was the blazing speed of Pony Express riders. Everything was a trip back in time for the young and old.

"We couldn't be happier with the turn out," January said after the event. "It was a constant line of cars all day and the STAR volunteers did a great job directing traffic. Our exhibitors all said they want to come back next year and the public praise was very, very gratifying. Our sponsors were outstanding, as were all of our volunteers. My profound thanks to everyone involved."

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Julie Samrick