

Students leave books behind to learn about Tahoe history

By Kathryn Reed

A place with super old items was a completely new experience to a group of third-graders.

“Everything in this museum was used by someone in South Lake Tahoe,” Bonnie Turnbull told the students. Turnbull looked like she was home at the museum, dressed in an outfit that would have been popular more than a century ago.



Bonnie
Turnbull tells
Tahoe Valley
students about
Snowshoe
Thompson.
Photos/Kathryn
Reed

Remodeled a year ago, the Lake Tahoe Museum is the place to learn about local history. Because third-graders in California must be taught local history, the museum is now part of that process.

Turnbull explained how back in the days of Snowshoe Thompson skis were used as a mode of transportation and not for fun.

She touches on how the Washoe Indians first called Lake Tahoe home, talks about ranching, the Pony Express, water travel, old hotels, railroads and so much more.

Educating half the class outside was Jackie Dumin, who is assistant manager of the Tallac Site for the U.S. Forest Service.

Prior to the museum visit Dumin goes into classrooms to educate students. Outside the museum she was telling them about the 150-year-old Osgood Tollhouse, how money was collected to travel on roads in the Lake Tahoe Basin and what it was like to travel by horse and wagon.



Students learn about the Osgood Tollhouse at Lake Tahoe Museum.

A bathtub that was recently donated sits on the porch of the old cabin. Students learned about when indoor plumbing was not available and that bathing would be done outback. A couple students wrinkled their noses when Dumin said every family member used the same bath water.

Inside, one of the largest displays is from the Celio Ranch. This was Colby Glaze's favorite part. He really liked learning about making ice cream.

"I enjoyed looking at the saws and learning how they cut ice

with them,"Glaze also said. Later the group learned about refrigeration and how those blocks of ice would be put in iceboxes, with the upper compartment for the ice and below where the perishables are stored.

He and his classmates in Kelly Martin's class at Tahoe Valley Elementary School were at the museum Wednesday.

All third-graders in Lake Tahoe Unified School District will visit the museum by mid-April, with St. Theresa School going as well. The Tahoe Heritage Foundation paid to bus the students.

"I had never been to the museum and I don't think any of the kids had," Martin said.

For more information about the museum, call (530) 541.5458.