In 1862, the "Wayanda" was one of an elite fleet of U.S. Navy vessels, called the Pawtuxet Class steam ships. Until these were built, the U.S. had only sailing ships, powered by wind and water currents. Built at the beginning of the Civil War, The Wayanda worked as a revenue vessel, patrolling the East Coast. After the War, she was lengthened and steamed around south America to serve along the Pacific, mapping the coastline of Alaska.

The bell of the Wayanda is all that remains of the Pawtuxet Steamers, who were examples of the growing American Industrial Revolution and the interests in navigating travel and communication across the U.S. The mineral wealth of California and Nevada of the 1850’s-1880’s accelerated not only the populating of the west but also funded many advances in industry.

By 1865, which type of economy would you consider California to be?

Agrarian: Based on producing and maintaining crops and farmland.

or

Consumer: Buying and selling of goods and services being the most important economic activity.

Looking at the different examples of wagons displayed, consider how Studebaker’s assembly line for them would differ from Henry Fords.

- John M. Studebaker first came to Placerville in 1853 to mine for gold but soon took a job with a blacksmith producing wheelbarrows for miners.

He left and became the premier wagon manufacturer in the U.S. Returning to Placerville in 1912 for a reunion of old friends, he considered his experience in the Gold Country to be his most important education. Today he is known to be one of the few industrial magnates to successfully transition from horse power to gasoline, producing Studebaker automobiles in 1902.
Gold Rush Industry

In the outdoor displays of the County Museum, you will find a progression of inventions that initially were used as a more efficient way to process the gold from the ground. Harnessing power to make jobs easier for mining also changed the economics and entrepreneurship rapidly in the first ten years after the 1848 gold rush in California.

The rivers and waterways of the Sierra Nevada’s provided the staple source of energy through hydro power and steam.

Augmented by canals, dams, tunnels and siphons, the early water system is still in use today, although the main purpose for it has changed significantly.

1.) Find the stamp mill display;

2.) Find the Steam Donkey;

3.) Find the water wheel display;

4.) Find the hydraulic monitor display;

All of these artifacts were state of the art industrial pieces of equipment in the late 1800’s, operating without the availability of electrical power. Of these inventions, what do you think we still use in industry today? Why?

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Communication and Transportation

Placerville signifies the end of the Overland Trail, and today’s Highway 50 follows along much of the early Overland Trail route through the Sierras. Considering there was no direct route into the Gold Fields passable with wagons in 1848, transportation here was quickly enhanced. List 5 artifacts that show this progression displayed both inside and outside museum.

1.)________________________________________

2.)________________________________________

3.)________________________________________

4.)________________________________________

5.)________________________________________

In 1849, what was the fastest way to reach Placerville, from the East coast of the United States?

________________________________________

In 1861, what were the three main ways to send and receive mail from California to New York?

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