

# PRESTON COMMUNICATOR

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## Preston Castle Haunt is Here October 11,12,18,19,25,26

A Decade of Screams - the 10th annual Preston Castle Haunt is here. What could be better than wandering the halls of a real haunted location? That's easy! Turn it into a haunted house!

Come join us for the Preston Castle Haunt for the scare of your life!

The Haunt runs for 3 weekends in October every year and is not only a great way to spend some time getting the heart pumping, but helps with our efforts to restore this historic location. All proceeds from this event go back into the restoration efforts of Preston Castle. We are 100% volunteer run, there are no paid actors or a third party running this event. So come out, get scared, and help us save this grand building!

The Preston Castle Haunt is bigger and better than ever with hundreds of volunteers and experts involved in its creation and execution. We use high tech animatronics, special effects, dynamic lighting, and custom props, set designs and soundscapes to give our visitors the ultimate haunted experience in the spookiest setting around. People travel from all over California and even from other states to experience our unique Haunt. Our objective is to make you scream, laugh and have lots of scary fun... <<insert evil grin and diabolical laughter here>>

The Preston Castle Haunt brings six nights of fun and fright: October 11th, 12th, 18th, 19th, 25th, and 26th -- 7 to 10 pm. This is a fun "scare" tour and not a historical tour of the Castle. We will have food vendors, as well as some great merchandise, including cool T-Shirts, for purchase.

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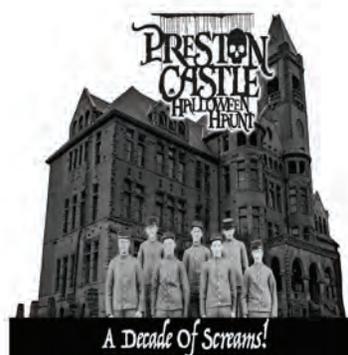
*Haunt continued.....*

Tickets: \$30 General Admission. A special \$40 VIP Fast Pass entitles you to gain access via a much shorter line.

### Come and see if you dare!

Gates open at 6:45 pm, scare tours start at 7:00 pm. Admissions are limited for each night, so order early to make sure you can get in. Tickets will not be sold at the gate. No Refunds.

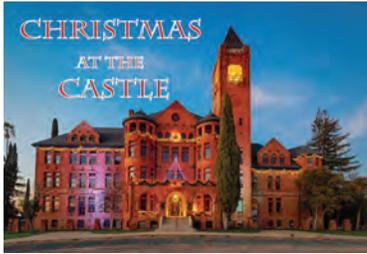
Go to our website, prestoncastle.com for info and tickets.



If anyone wishes to add or change anything in the newsletter, or would like to get copies of past issues, please let us know at info@prestoncastle.com or at the next meeting. We always enjoy hearing from our readers!

## Christmas at the Castle December 14

It's our last event of the year, so don't miss it! Christmas at the Castle wraps up our season of events and tours, until we start again in Spring 2020. This is your chance to buy the perfect items for the holidays and your last chance to tour the Castle. From 10 am to 4 pm, vendors will occupy the Castle with displays of unique and impressive creations. Santa will be on hand starting at Noon. Self Guided Castle tours will be from 10 am to 2 pm.



Fair-Bazaar: Free

Castle Tour (self guided): \$10; ages 5 and under free.

Tickets are limited and can be purchased on line in advance. You can select your tour tickets according to whether you want morning (10 am to Noon), or afternoon (Noon to 2 pm). Order your tickets early as this season ending event will sell out.

## President's Message

*The Preston Castle has been a busy place throughout the 2019 season. We have had over 8,000 guest visits so far this year. Our events this year, Movie Night (July 20th), Plays on the Patio (June 8th), TGIF concert (June 21st), Yard Sale (August 10th, 11th), three Photo Days (April 14th, June 9th, August 18th), Paracon (June 14th, 15th), and the Lone Business and Community Association annual dinner (August 16th) were all a great success.*

*Saturday historic public tours ended on August 31 for this year. We had twenty-one Saturday tour days this year. Public tours will resume next April.*

*On June 29 the Castle celebrated its 125 year anniversary, officially its Quasquicentennial celebration. There was a fantastic celebration ceremony. We had a recreation of the arrival of the first seven wards. That was followed by resolutions from the Amador County Board of Supervisors and the California Legis-*

*President's Message continued.....*

*lature. One thousand and sixty-six people toured the Castle on that day.*

*The Castle is now undergoing it's metamorphosis for the Castle Haunt in October. A large team of volunteers are working for five weeks in September and early October to make this the tenth annual Haunt. Tickets are currently on sale through the website. This event will sell out, so get your tickets early.*

*As the Castle moves past the Haunt and Christmas events some structural stabilization projects will get started. There are some very large beams in the fourth floor and fifth floor mezzanine that are showing strain. Those will be stabilized by rebuilding the fifth floor mezzanine floor that is missing and installing some bracing on the beams. Estimated cost of this project is somewhere over \$50,000.00. All of the ground floor exit doors are in a state of decay from rot and termites. They also need to have fire code upgrades to the hardware. This project is going to be somewhere around \$40,000.00. So the work on Amador County's biggest "fixer upper" continues.*

*The Preston Castle is going a little greener. We have just placed water coolers with five gallon bulk water tanks on all three floors of the Castle and in the Visitor Center. This will replace the thousands of single use water bottles that have been used in the past each year. Just the Haunt would typically go through two pallet loads of single use water bottles in past years.*

*There are still two events for you to attend or volunteer to help with in 2019. The Castle Haunt is in October. Christmas at the Castle will occur on December 14. Please see the website and this newsletter for additional details.*

*Even though the Castle will be closed from mid-December until April there are still plenty of opportunities to volunteer. Feel free to contact us to lend a hand.*

*Let's work together to "Save the Preston Castle".*

*Karl Knoblauch,  
President*

## Earl Crook

### The Story of a Preston Ward

Sometimes, it's all in a name. Arrested for auto theft, Earl Crook arrived at Preston in the fall of 1920. Keeping out of trouble while at the institution, he received his parole after 14 months on February 17, 1922.

J. Arthur Gould, a Woodland rancher, felt sorry for the youth and hired him to give Crook a chance to succeed. Apparently, though, Crook didn't like the long hours, or the hard labor involved and disappeared the night of March 12th.

When the Goulds awoke the next morning, they discovered Crook was gone and after a short investigation realized so was \$200 worth of jewelry and a revolver hidden in a dresser. Gould notified the Preston authorities.

The school immediately sent out an arrest notice for Crook. It wasn't until the first week in June, though, that Sheriff J. W. Monroe received word from authorities in Joliet, Illinois that they were holding Crook.

Sheriff Monroe took the train to Joliet to collect Crook and returned the evening of June 9th. After a thorough interrogation, Crook admitted the theft of items from the Goulds and disclosed where he had hidden the loot. Monroe successfully retrieved much of the stolen property.

With the evidence and confession, the court sentenced Crook, sometimes using the alias Charles Wagner, to San Quentin on the 5th of July and he became convict number 36615 serving a one-to-10-year term.

Despite the fact that Crook violated his Preston parole by burglarizing the Goulds on March 12th, Preston officially discharged Crook on March 19, 1922, claiming he was a reformed individual.

One of the items Sheriff Monroe returned to the Goulds was a suitcase stolen from their home the night of March 12th. When they opened the case, the Goulds realized Earl Crook must have visited their place a week after the first theft, stealing other trinkets and keepsakes, a watch chain, fountain pen and flashlight.

Mrs. Gould made another discovery that led authorities to believe Crook didn't confess the full details of his flight from the Gould ranch on March 12th. An express tag showed the suitcase left Sacramento on a train March 31st. Crook

*Earl Crook continued .....*

had told Sheriff Monroe that he boarded a train for Joliet, Illinois, the day after the first burglary.

Sheriff Monroe contacted San Quentin authorities asking them to question Crook concerning the latest developments, though there is no record of their response.

At the time of his June 9th arrest, Crook was only 17, the youngest prisoner Yolo County had ever sent to a state penitentiary.

Crook admitted stealing Mrs. Gould's engagement and wedding rings. Obviously not a connoisseur of jewelry, he told officers he sold them to a stranger in Roseville, accepting only fifty cents for the engagement ring and 15 cents for the gold band.

Crook received his discharge from San Quentin on October 5, 1926.

This story comes from "Castle of Broken Boys, Volume 1" a History of the Wards of the Preston School of Industry, which can be purchased at the Preston Castle Gift Shop. The author is Gary W. Stout, an active PCF member.



Crook's Quentin ID Card

