

SUMMER 2013

THUNDERBIRD

Preservation



THUNDERBIRD LODGE | THUNDERBIRD YACHT | TOURS | WINEMAKERS' DINNERS | CRUISES | WEDDINGS | CORPORATE FUNCTIONS



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FRONT COVER PHOTO: JARVIS PHOTOGRAPHY

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Supporters and Friends,



Between our charitable and preservation work, weddings, private parties, and corporate retreats, 2013 will be a busy season.

Change is inevitable and our staff is no exception. Bill Dohrmann, our project manager for the waterfall restoration and so many other things, passed away quite unexpectedly in early April. Bill volunteered when Thunderbird Lodge first opened to the public back in 2002 and our hearts go out to Barbara, family, and friends. Departing employees have created new opportunities for

growth. After nearly 30 years with California State Parks, Susan Grove joins us as the Lodge Manager, assisting Bill Watson with day-to-day operations “on the mountain”. Logan McDowell, formerly of Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe and Tahoe Luxury Properties, has assumed the helm of our sales and special events department. Aaron Pearlman, well known for his years aboard the Sierra Cloud, is the new Skipper of the *Thunderbird* Yacht. Dave Triano returns as overseer of historic preservation, and Chef de Cuisine Anne Wiles continues her culinary education programs, and provides delectable presentations for Thunderbird member events.

The Flagship and Castle Club fundraising programs continue to evolve yet we still need your help and support. I look forward to seeing you at one of our fundraising events or at a Thunder Thursday outing soon.

Best wishes,

Joan Gibb

CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dear Thunderbird Friends,

It's September, 1941, in the lingering days of that last, idyllic summer before America's entry into World War II. Captain George Whittell of Thunderbird Lodge has just commissioned Castle Films (how apropos) to document his 60th birthday celebration. Hollywood producers, cameramen, and technicians will soon descend upon the few small lodging houses on Lake Tahoe's North Shore.



In the ensuing weeks, Whittell underwrites the grandest event Nevada's famous Cal Neva resort has ever seen: colorful coryphées, talented musicians, late-night poker games, exquisite French cuisine, and fountains filled with champagne. The party continues at Whittell's lakefront estate as our illustrious Captain stiffly courts visiting dignitaries in one scene and boogies a jig with showgirls in another. Always a twinkle in his eye, and with his friend Mayris Chaney and her dancers at his side, Captain Whittell and his troupe tour Lake Tahoe and environs on film: Washoe Valley, Nevada State Prison, a brief visit with Nevada Governor Carville, Zephyr Cove, Emerald Bay, Meeks Bay, Tahoe City, and the East Shore. Seaplanes land on the Lake, Tahoe City Constable Harry Johanson's dog sled team performs, archery and skeet shooting take place at Sand Harbor, and a chorus line tap dances aboard

Thunderbird Yacht. Gay times in this intimate peek at Lake Tahoe's yesteryears, presented in explosive 16mm Kodachrome color, and enhanced with high-fidelity sound.

Today, our Flagship and Castle Club members relive that gilded age as they enjoy Thunderbird Lake Tahoe events in the Captain's castle: private tours, *Thunderbird Yacht* cruises, gourmet wine dinners, Thunder Thursday celebrations, and more. These fundraising activities underwrite the Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society's charitable mission including preservation, education, and conservation. Each year, we chip away at nearly \$6-million in deferred maintenance at the Thunderbird Lodge and on the Yacht. All the while, our Donald W. Reynolds Program for Lake Tahoe History and Culture hosts hundreds of Hands-on-History school tours and thousands of visitors from around the world. The Whittell films offer a glimpse of what these guests hope to experience.

I will see you and your family at Thunderbird Lodge soon. Until then, I remain wishing you a happy summer!

Bill Watson

CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CURATOR

In 1941, the mail boat, *Marion B*, was lost near Thunderbird Lodge and George Whittell mounted a search in his sleek wooden motor cruiser, *Thunderbird*. The mail boat is believed to have exploded and no survivors were found.

George Whittell, Jr.



Captain George Whittell, Jr. lived an adventurous, charmed, eccentric, and generous life. Born in San Francisco in 1881, George Jr. and his twin Nicholas joined a family of great wealth. Their grandfathers had both made a fortune during the famed California gold rush, not panning for gold but shrewdly exploiting opportunities in real estate, banking, and industry. Nicholas died at age 3, leaving “Junior” as sole heir to the Whittell fortune.

YOUTH, EARLY MARRIAGES, AND A FOUR-LEGGED BEST FRIEND

While Anna and George Sr. were no doubt hoping their son would excel in a fine university, succeed in the family business, and marry the proper San Francisco debutant, Junior had other ideas. He succumbed to the thrill of adventure and joined the Barnum and Bailey Circus at age 17, going on safaris and developing animal training skills. This relatively brief foray resulted in a lifelong passion for game animals, especially big cats. At his California Woodside Estate, Whittell eventually maintained a private zoo filled with lions, tigers, elephants, zebras, bears, and more.

After his time with the circus, George Jr. entered into two unsuccessful, and in his parents’ eyes, inappropriate marriages. At the age of 21, he shocked them by eloping with chorus girl Florence Boyer. Sufficient money was paid to annul the match, which was discovered when Boyer sued, causing quite the public scandal. Finding love once again, George fled to New Jersey to marry a member of the Floradora Sextet, his second wife, Josephine Cunningham. The elder Whittell’s gave into George’s persistence, and accepted their new daughter-in-law. Within months, however, Josie filed for divorce to return as a stage performer. However, he and his second wife, Josephine, remained friends. Later, Josie presented George with a unique wedding present on the occasion of his third marriage to Elia Pascal: a lion cub named “Bill” who went everywhere with his master including bars and racing events.



THE WAR YEARS AND A GILDED AGE

Once again seeking adventure, Whittell enlisted in the Italian army upon the outbreak of World War I. He served as an ambulance driver, enjoying the same speed thrills as he experienced back home in California while driving one of his five Duesenberg automobiles. He later served in the French army and finally in the U.S. military once his native country entered the War. It was during his military service that Whittell obtained the title of Captain, one that he relished and used for the rest of his life.

Laid up in a French hospital after a minor injury, he fell in love with his young volunteer nurse, Elia, who became his wife of 50 years after their marriage in 1919. Elia and George sailed aboard their 135-foot yacht, flew about in their DC-2 aircraft, and lived a charmed life.

PREMONITION AND BUYING LAKE TAHOE

Shortly before the “Crash of 1929”, Captain Whittell liquidated \$50 million from the stock market. This move, either as a result of a premonition or an inside tip, saved the family fortune and caused him to seek residency in Nevada after California enacted its state income tax that same year. After moving part time to Reno, Whittell purchased approximately 45,000 acres of timberland on the east shore of Lake Tahoe. Priced at a mere \$6 an acre for the lakefront and \$3 an acre in the back country, George Jr. and his partners had plans of developing casinos and house lots. Whittell decided on a beautiful and centrally located rocky point for the construction of his new summer cabin, to be

named Thunderbird Lodge. After experiencing the peace and beauty, and enjoying the wildlife of the property, Whittell aborted his plans to develop. He jettisoned his partners and except for a few forced sales, never sold or developed his land. He enjoyed his solitude at Thunderbird Lodge for most of his remaining summers.

DEATH AND LEGACY

Despite heavy drinking, smoking, military service, and dangerous living via early airplanes, fast cars and boats, Mr. Whittell lived a long life. Melanoma took the Captain at age 87 on April 18, 1969. In his will, the childless Whittell took care of Elia and his nurse, but left the vast bulk of his millions to animal protective organizations including the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Defenders of Wildlife, and the Audubon Society. His generosity no doubt benefitted a plethora of animals, but his real legacy lies in the undeveloped east shore of magnificent Lake Tahoe. Whittell’s resistance to build on his pristine land proved instrumental in preserving approximately two thirds of his original holdings for the enjoyment of people and wildlife alike.

Today, the Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society maintains and restores Captain Whittell’s Thunderbird Lodge and Yacht. The Society educates thousands of visitors and schoolchildren, and conducts conferences to help protect Lake Tahoe’s fragile resources.



Conservation *of Whittell Films Needed*

The Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society requires funding for an aggressive project to conserve and utilize vintage Lake Tahoe films.

In 1989, Montgomery Gallery of San Francisco auctioned off many of George Whittell's personal effects at his Woodside, California estate. Among historical items to change hands that day were two collections of Whittell family films. Through the generosity of donors John Nelson and Bill Davis, and Keith and Jane Rongey, these glimpses into Lake Tahoe's past have returned home where they can be preserved, digitized, interpreted, and incorporated into the programs of the non-profit Preservation Society.

Brittle and fading, our first step was to capture the old films' content. As a stop gap measure to capture the content of the films, we turned to Allan Cruet of M2DVD. He timely and professionally transferred these many reels to digital media. We recognized this would be a low-cost, draft quality, preliminary effort. However, we can now see the Captain and chums frolicking in the pool at Death Valley's Furnace Creek Resort, flying high above New York City and Niagara Falls in Whittell's DC-2 aircraft, cavorting with Jack Dempsey, and visiting Hoover (Boulder) Dam in its first months of operation.



THUNDERBIRD TRIVIA

Captain Whittell was a consummate prankster and is said to have once painted his pet elephant pink so as to frighten his pals following an all-night bender.



Nearly half the 16mm reels are shot in brilliant Kodachrome color. Some film reels are further enhanced with “high fidelity” sound. All of the film will require a serious conservation effort before deteriorating for eternity.

After much debate, we’ve adopted a 4-point plan for the films:

- 1) Obtain bids for a professional film laboratory to digitize each film reel using a high-resolution, frame-by-frame scanning process.
- 2) Incorporate movie segments into a new 10-minute multi-media experience that we will use to launch our public and school tours. We’ll need to produce this new feature and buy all of the associated equipment to install in the Lighthouse Room for showings (ideally) in 2014.
- 3) Work with PBS affiliates or others to produce a Whittell-Thunderbird documentary suitable for airing to a national audience and for sale through various online and retail outlets to raise funds for the preservation of Thunderbird Lodge and Yacht.
- 4) Throw a screening party for our elite members and the community to underwrite these conservation efforts. We will show the raw, unedited footage just as George Whittell enjoyed it.

This will be an expensive undertaking, likely requiring in excess of \$200,000 to preserve more than four hours of never before seen Lake Tahoe history for all to enjoy. Researchers will wish to access the digitized media for historical, planning, documentary, and artistic purposes. Where else might one grasp the bold, vivid colors accenting the totem poles that once lined the main street of Tahoe City? Or the verdant hillsides of Incline Valley before development? Or Jake Obexer, looking sharp in his white outfit, pushing off from his Standard Oil dock destined for an amicable game of cards with Captain Whittell? These are the jewels of history and you can help us share them with generations to come.

Please call or write Thunderbird Chief Executive and Curator, Bill Watson, if you have expertise about how to fund or proceed with a project of this nature. Watson@ThunderbirdTahoe.org. 775-832-8755.



conservation

TOURS



THUNDERBIRD TRIVIA

Captain George Whittell placed extra locks on nearly every cabinet he owned. He locked the hinge side of each cabinet door so that others could not tamper with the hinge and remove the valuables inside.

THUNDERBIRD TOURS

Peek into the 1930's lifestyle of the rich and famous...waterfalls, winding pathways, a card house with poker stories, and secret tunnels are just the beginning. Escape into a world that only a privileged few have dreamed of, and be entertained by the legendary story of George Whittell's Thunderbird Lodge, known as Lake Tahoe's "Castle-in-the-Sky."

This unique castle tour with panoramic Lake Tahoe views can be enjoyed through public tours by land or water, private group tours, corporate outings, or our Hands on History school tours.

All public tours are docent-guided and are scheduled from mid-May through mid-October. Private group tours of 15 or more may be scheduled year round.

Please note: Reservations are required for all tours. Self-guided tours are not available. Smoking is not permitted in the buildings, on the grounds, or aboard shuttle buses and watercraft. Children must be at least six years old. Comfortable, walking shoes are required and a warm jacket is recommended. There is no public boat access to Thunderbird Lodge.

PUBLIC TOURS BY LAND

Public tours by land operate Tuesday through Saturday from the Incline Village-Crystal Bay Visitors Center located on the north shore of the lake where you check-in and depart via shuttle to Thunderbird Lodge. Tickets are \$39 per adult and \$19 for children ages 6 to 12.

Incline Village-Crystal Bay Visitors Center is located at 969 Tahoe Boulevard, Incline Village, Nevada. For reservations by phone, call 1-800-GO-TAHOE or 1-800-468-2463. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday and holidays, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. All major credit cards are accepted.

Visit www.activitytickets.com to make land tour reservations online.

TOURS FOR SCHOOLS

Thunderbird Lake Tahoe is open year round for school field trip tours offering educational programs for students from fourth grade and older. Our Hands on History program follows the Nevada's Social Studies curriculum standards for 4th and 5th grade students. School field trip ticket prices are \$5 per student, and teacher. Ticket prices include teacher and student workbooks and study aids. To schedule a school field trip, e-mail AskUs@ThunderbirdTahoe.org or call 775-832-8752.





THUNDERBIRD TRIVIA

Despite the fact he would not permit his employees to harm a squirrel, Captain George Whittell filled his lodge with the animal hides he collected as a young man in Africa. Today, the Preservation Society displays a few such trophies including a rare, Bengal tiger skin donated by the family of Neil, Bobbe, and Yvon Weaver of Carson City. There are also items from Whittell's sporting endeavors including lion-taming equipment and early snowshoes and skis.



PUBLIC TOURS **BY WATER**

From Lake Tahoe's South Shore

The historic 40' cruiser *Tahoe* departs from the Tahoe Keys Marina in South Lake Tahoe Tuesday through Saturday at 10 a.m. This five-hour experience includes continental breakfast, a narrated cruise along the lake's shoreline, the Thunderbird tour, and a picnic lunch. Ticket prices are \$135 for adults and \$55 for children ages 6 to 12. For south shore water tours call Tahoe Cruises at 888-867-6394 or 775-588-1881, or visit www.TahoeCruises.com.

From Lake Tahoe's North Shore

Action Water Sports provides boat departures on the north shore from the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe hotel dock each Thursday through Saturday at 9 a.m. The four-hour tour is \$110 for adults and \$80 for children 6 to 12, and includes beverages, fruit, pastries, the Thunderbird tour, and a cruise by the prestigious exclusive homes of Lakeshore Drive. Call Action Water Sports at 775-831-4386 or visit www.awsIncline.com.

By Kayak from Sand Harbor

For the more adventurous, kayak the pristine east shore waters from Sand Harbor to Thunderbird Lodge. Tour includes kayak rental, paddle lessons, gear, snack, deli lunch on the beach, and the Thunderbird tour. Offered every Tuesday and by appointment June–September. Cost is \$124 per person with a 2 person minimum. Tours start at Sand Harbor State Park. A \$12 State Park parking fee applies. To book a tour call 530-913-9212 or visit www.tahoeadventurecompany.com.

TOURS **FOR PRIVATE GROUPS**

Thunderbird is available year round for private group tours. Car clubs, spousal outings, service organizations, church groups, senior centers, large families, wedding parties, non-profit organizations, and government agencies have all enjoyed educational and entertaining visits to Lake Tahoe's Castle-in-the-Sky. Ticket prices are \$39 per adult and \$19 for children ages 6 to 12. Children under six years of age are permitted on private group tours by prior arrangement only. There is a \$500 minimum charge for private group tours.

By advance arrangement, private group tours may arrive on foot, by personal automobile, bicycle, shuttle bus, helicopter, boat, kayak, seaplane, or nearly any kind of transport imaginable.

To make private tour reservations for your group, call Thunderbird Lake Tahoe at 775-832-8752 or e-mail AskUs@ThunderbirdTahoe.org.



In many ways a patriarch of all things Thunderbird, Buzz Gibb with his former wife, Joan, bought and became consumed by *Thunderbird* Yacht in 1982. Since that time, Buzz continues to feed his passion for the finer things in life. Fearing for a place to make significant repairs to Thunderbird when necessary, Buzz donated the Society's warehouse in Incline Village, now known as the Clyde R. "Buzz" Gibb Building. It is here where the Society conducts its maritime heritage programs, its partner boat building program with the Tahoe Maritime Museum, and where our craftsmen (and women) turn out the replica pieces and parts needed to keep Thunderbird operational on Lake Tahoe. Buzz, we raise this glass of fine cognac in your honor, with thanks.



WINEMAKER'S DINNERS



THUNDERBIRD TRIVIA

The shawl in the lady's bedroom belonged to Elia Whittell and was donated by Thunderbird volunteers Kirk Montero and Mary Reno. Kirk's family rented the Zephyr Cove Lodge from Captain George Whittell.



2013 WINEMAKER'S DINNER SERIES

SUNDAY, JULY 14TH

Whitehall Lane Winery, Tom Leonardini, II, Proprietor
Campo Restaurant, Chef-Owner Mark Estee

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11TH

Pride Mountain Winery, Stuart & Suzanne Bryan, Owners
Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH

Palmaz Vineyards, Julio, Amalia & Florencia Palmaz, Proprietors
Six Peaks Grille, Executive Chef Jason Friendly

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13TH

Rombauer Vineyards, KR Rombauer, Proprietor
Moody's Catering, Executive Chef Tom Marrin

BRET COLE PHOTOGRAPHY



There is no place like Thunderbird Lake Tahoe, and no fundraisers quite as unique as our Winemakers' Dinners! These events offer an experience like no other...breathtaking Lake Tahoe views, castle tours, terrace sunsets, and glorious gardens! Did we mention a chance to cruise on the *Thunderbird* Yacht, exclusive auction items, and wine drawings? And, let's not forget California's finest wines paired with gourmet preparations by the region's celebrity chefs.

Thunderbird Lake Tahoe hosts a Winemaker's Dinner on the second Sunday of each month from July through October. You may buy tickets for each dinner or the series of all four dinners.

For the ultimate Thunderbird experience, upgrade to a VIP Reception and *Thunderbird* Cruise with the winemaker during the July, August, and September dinners. Your memorable evening will include early arrival, parking at Thunderbird Lodge, and a special greeting by the curator in the Old Lodge. Sip champagne while you stroll through the boat house tunnels to join the winemaker aboard the *Thunderbird* Yacht. During the appetizer cruise, enjoy select or reserve wines chosen by the winemaker exclusively for our VIP donors. Return to the private Thunderbird Cove dock in time for

dinner seating in the Lighthouse Room. As an extra incentive, a portion of your ticket is a charitable contribution!

Each dinner provides many ways for you to be philanthropic while experiencing Thunderbird's magic. Buy the dinner series and receive a bottle of wine at each dinner...make a donation and be entered to win a bottle of each of the evening's wines...raise your hand to win an exclusive Thunderbird auction item, bid on silent auction items, or purchase select wine at a discount price.

All dinner proceeds go to Thunderbird Lake Tahoe's preservation efforts. This year's targeted preservation project is the Boathouse foundation wall, which is crumbling into Lake Tahoe. Your participation can help us raise the \$300,000 needed to restore the home of the historic *Thunderbird* Yacht.

The price of each dinner is \$195 per person (\$125 of each ticket is a charitable contribution). The upgraded VIP Reception and Cruise is \$1,000 per person (\$700 of each ticket is a charitable contribution.) Early reservations are recommended as seating is limited to 90 people per dinner. For more information call 775-832-8752 or book online at www.ThunderbirdTahoe.org.

2013 AUCTION ITEMS | RARE SCOTCH TASTING *THUNDERBIRD* CRUISE & STAG'S DEN DINNER | PRIVATE SUMMER GAZEBO WINE LUNCHEON & TOUR | JARVIS *THUNDERBIRD* PHOTOGRAPHY | DIAMOND VAULT JEWELRY | MAGNUM OF WHITEHALL LANE CABERNET SAUVIGNON | CHARCUTERIE LUNCH AND RESERVE CABERNET VERTICAL TASTING AT WHITEHALL LANE WINERY IN THE VIP CLUB ROOM | PRIVATE COOKING & WINE PAIRING CLASS AT *THUNDERBIRD* LAKE TAHOE | CAMPO WINE DINNER

HAPPENINGS

Experience the magic of Thunderbird Lake Tahoe and help save historic national treasures. Both members and non-members are invited to enjoy a unique array of fundraising events year round. The non-profit Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society hosts these happenings in order to raise the funds needed to preserve and support the historic Thunderbird Lodge and *Thunderbird* Yacht. Please visit our new website at www.ThunderbirdTahoe.org for the latest happenings!

RESERVATIONS 775-832-8752

or e-mail Reservations@ThunderbirdTahoe.org

To join our members-only events, see page 19 for membership information.

BRET COLE PHOTOGRAPHY



WINEMAKER'S DINNERS

July 14th, August 11th, September 8th, and October 13th ~ Sundays at 5 p.m.

Reserve an intimate evening at Thunderbird Lake Tahoe where you'll have the opportunity to meet the winemaker, enjoy a fine meal, tour a castle, and catch a sunset. This unique Lake Tahoe estate hosts the magical pairing of California's finest wines with Tahoe's celebrity chefs. Cruise aboard *Thunderbird* Yacht during our VIP Reception Cruise for a classic Thunderbird experience. Make your reservations early for all four dinners held the second Sunday of each month July through October. Limited to 90 guests, the price of each dinner is \$195 per person (\$125 of which is a charitable contribution). The VIP Reception is \$1,000 per person and is limited to 14 guests.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC & ALL THUNDERBIRD LAKE TAHOE MEMBERS. PRIORITY RESERVATIONS GIVEN TO THUNDERBIRD CAPTAIN, COMMODORE, ADMIRAL & CASTLE CLUB MEMBERS.

THUNDER THURSDAY RECEPTIONS

Thursdays 5–7 p.m.

July through September

Savor summer evenings at Lake Tahoe every Thursday at the historic Thunderbird Lodge. A dazzling array of gourmet hors d'oeuvres, and fine wine and beer will be served while you bask in a summer sunset from the Gazebo or Old Lodge Terrace. Thunder Thursday is the perfect time to show off the Thunderbird estate to your friends, or to see and be seen before dining along Lake Tahoe's North Shore.

BY INVITATION TO MEMBERS ONLY. CAPTAIN, COMMODORE, ADMIRAL & CASTLE CLUB MEMBERS AND INVITED GUESTS.



BRET COLE PHOTOGRAPHY



THUNDER DE MAYO CELEBRATION

Thursday, May 1st, 2014, 5–7 p.m.

Fiesta at Thunderbird Lake Tahoe! Margaritas, mariachi music, and your favorite South-of-the-Border hors d'oeuvres spice up this celebration of Mexico's heritage. Kick off the summer with your compadres where the views are priceless. Tours are offered and sombreros are optional.

BY INVITATION TO MEMBERS ONLY. CAPTAIN, COMMODORE, ADMIRAL & CASTLE CLUB MEMBERS AND INVITED GUESTS.



INDEPENDENCE DAY BBQ

Friday, July 4th, 2014, 5–7 p.m.

Celebrate America's Birthday at historic Thunderbird Lake Tahoe. This is a home-style 4th of July BBQ picnic. Bring your own adult beverages and favorite side dish. We'll supply the barbecued meat, fixins, desserts, music and beautiful Lake Tahoe views.

BY INVITATION TO MEMBERS ONLY. COMMODORE, ADMIRAL & CASTLE CLUB MEMBERS AND INVITED GUESTS.

CHAIRMAN'S RECEPTION

Thursday, September 5th, 2013, 5–7 p.m.

Thunderbird Governing Board Chair, Joan Gibb, hosts an intimate evening at Thunderbird Lodge to thank you for supporting the charitable programs of Thunderbird Lake Tahoe. There will be a brief program accompanied by a selection of fine wine, beer, and gourmet hors d'oeuvres.

BY INVITATION TO MEMBERS ONLY. EAST SHORE, LIGHTHOUSE, CAPTAIN, COMMODORE, ADMIRAL AND CASTLE CLUB MEMBERS AND INVITED GUESTS.



A THUNDERBIRD HOLIDAY GATHERING

Thursday, December 12th, 2013, 5–7 p.m.

It's our favorite time of the year when we invite our Castle Club and Flagship members to ring in the holiday season with good cheer. A decorative end to the season is toasted with special wines from the Thunderbird cellars paired with Chef Anne's festive cuisine. It's our opportunity to toast our thanks to the major supporters of our preservation efforts!



Reservations are required for all happenings and events.

For reservations, please call 775-832-8752 or e-mail Reservations@ThunderbirdTahoe.org. Unless otherwise indicated, attendees must be at least 21 years of age.

MAKING MAGICAL MEMORIES AT THUNDERBIRD LAKE TAHOE

CATHERINE HALL STUDIOS

If you are looking for an extraordinary place to celebrate your wedding ceremony, reception, or rehearsal dinner, there is no place more unique than Lake Tahoe's Thunderbird Lodge. This 1936 Tudor-revival style estate provides stunning views of the Sierra Nevada mountains from every room. With sweeping lakeside lawns and terraces, and the roar of the *Thunderbird* Yacht, there is nothing more enchanting than this historic venue.

Thunderbird Lodge is a place where history meets mystery, and the allure of Captain Whittell's legacy increases with each turn of the 600-foot underground tunnel. Your guests will step back in time and be captivated during a docent-led tour through the impeccably manicured buildings and grounds of this historical site. Charming stone pathways lead you back to the lakeside lawn reception to dance the night away.

Hosting only six to eight weddings each year allows Thunderbird to be a venue for those who are interested in an exclusive and distinctive celebration. Imagine watching the sunset on the Sierra among family and friends while toasting to a new chapter in your life.

A Thunderbird wedding is not only an event, it is an experience unlike any other. It's the setting for making magical memories on your special day while contributing to preserving the legacy for future generations to enjoy.

For more information about weddings at Thunderbird Lodge, please visit our website at www.ThunderbirdTahoe.org or call 775-832-8752.

Weddings

&

CORPORATE EVENTS

Thunderbird Lake Tahoe is for companies who are ready for a new experience. If you seek to impress a client, host an incentive activity for your top achievers, stage an unforgettable party, or hold your next business meeting, Thunderbird Lake Tahoe is certain to impress.

With space to accommodate small meetings to big affairs, Thunderbird Lake Tahoe is the perfect outing. Thunderbird offers experiences to fit all budgets. Our tours start at \$39 and are a unique spousal activity. For the ultimate Thunderbird experience, executive groups may indulge in a castle tour, step aboard the world famous *Thunderbird* Yacht for a cruise, and finish with an unforgettable dinner in our Old Lodge.

Make your next event your best event and leave your guests with a lasting impression that sets you apart from the rest.



JARVIS PHOTOGRAPHY

GOURMET *Cooking*



Learn to cook like a pro in a Castle-in-the-Sky. Expanding on its cultural education program, Thunderbird Lake Tahoe now offers gourmet farm-to-table cooking classes. Chef de Cuisine, Anne Wiles, has created elegant menus to prepare in an enjoyable hands-on cooking class. Anne's passion for cooking and her natural approach to food will inspire you to find your inner chef! Moreover, the extraordinary setting of Thunderbird's lakeside kitchen will delight you every step of the way.

After class, you'll be seated in the Lighthouse Room to enjoy the panoramic views of Lake Tahoe while you dine on the sumptuous meal you prepared with specially selected wines from the famous Thunderbird cellars.

Each dinner is a themed event. Check our website for class offerings and availability.

\$250 per person for Flagship and Castle Club Members (\$150 is tax deductible), \$350 for others (\$250 is tax deductible). Pricing includes instruction, wine, beverages, supplies, and dinner. Following selected classes, a spouse or one guest may join each student for dinner priced at an additional \$100 per person.

Limited availability, 10 per class. Inquire about private group cooking classes and dinners for your special occasions and gatherings, available year round.

For private Cooking or Spice Blending Classes held at the historic Thunderbird Lodge, please call 775-832-8752 or send e-mail to Reservations@ThunderbirdTahoe.org.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC & ALL THUNDERBIRD LAKE TAHOE MEMBERS

NEW SOLETTI-STYLE FRONT GATE

Graces Entry to Thunderbird Lodge Estate

By commission of Captain George Whittell, Italian immigrant Antonio Soletti handcrafted and installed nearly all of the ironwork one enjoys at Thunderbird Lodge. One great mystery, however, is that of the missing front gate. No photos of an original gate have ever surfaced. Lore has it that an original "Soletti Gate" was removed when Jack Dreyfus owned the property from 1972–1999, to be replaced by the garden-variety gate we've known for years. However, if Soletti built a front gate for Whittell at Thunderbird Lodge (as he did for Whittell's Woodside, California estate), why did Whittell commission Reno Iron Works to draft plans for a gate in 1940? The Reno Iron Works plans were garish—more like the style from the French Quarter of New Orleans than matching the design of Thunderbird Lodge—and the gate was, near as we can tell, never built. Therefore, in recent times, Thunderbird Lodge has never had a gate worthy of its grand entryway.

In 2011, Bill and Carol Meehleis of Meehleis Modular Building in Lodi, California, adopted the dismal front gate replacement project. When Bill and Carol sink

their teeth into something, they bring home the bacon, whether it's building a boathouse on a small lake in their home town or recreating a Soletti masterpiece. First, they researched the existing Soletti ironwork and made pattern templates of various deer, pine trees and art forms. Without any cost to Thunderbird Lake Tahoe, the Meehleis team crafted, welded, fit, welded some more, and fit again. The unfinished gate made several trips between the Lodi factory and Lake Tahoe. After the gate received a powder coat finish of gloss black to match other restored ironwork on the property, Bill and Carol oversaw installation in early June of this year. Check out our new front gate. It perfectly complements the historic Soletti ironwork and we think the Old Master would be proud. Soon a solar-powered electric opener will operate the gate, once again, through the generosity of Bill and Carol Meehleis and their family and friends.

This is just one more tale of preservation in progress and how, over many years, one family has supported Thunderbird Lake Tahoe in so many special ways. Thank you Bill and Carol Meehleis and family.



THUNDERBIRD TRIVIA

Historically, trespassers at Thunderbird Lodge are said to have encountered Whittell's dogs, lions, and other beasts. Not to mention irate caretakers, and, occasionally, the Captain himself sporting a shiny, nickel-plated shotgun. In recent years, nighttime prowlers report only ghostly apparitions, odd noises, and fleeting figures. Today, however, nearly every intruder is cited for trespassing as the grounds are monitored by a sophisticated video surveillance system and patrolled by off-duty peace officers.

MEMBERSHIP



Join or Renew

Your Thunderbird Lake Tahoe membership underwrites the preservation and restoration costs needed to keep Thunderbird Lodge and Yacht open to the public and sustain the Thunderbird educational and Hands on History programs. With compelling benefits and memberships starting at just \$100 per year, joining or renewing your membership annually is as enticing as ever.

In addition to the individual level benefits, Thunderbird Lake Tahoe members receive Museum Store discounts, the *Thunderbird Preservation* magazine, members-only event invitations, newsletters, and monthly e-mail bulletins. We offer membership levels for all budgets or the flexibility to make a donation at any level that is comfortable for you. Sign up today to take advantage of the members-only events this coming season.

FRIENDS LEVELS

\$100 Gatehouse
\$250 Duesenberg
\$500 East Shore
\$1,500 Lighthouse
\$2,500 Captain

FLAGSHIP LEVELS

\$5,000 Commodore
\$10,000 Admiral
\$100,000 Castle Club

Members at the Flagship Levels gain access to invitation-only dinners, Flagship events, and unique Thunderbird experiences. The Castle Club is open to individuals, families, and foundations making a legacy gift of \$100,000 or more to the Society's permanent Preservation Fund.

Please join or renew your Thunderbird Lake Tahoe membership online at www.ThunderbirdTahoe.org or call 775-832-8752. Sign up today to take advantage of the members-only events this coming season!

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

Thunderbird Lake Tahoe welcomes corporate sponsorships of cash, products, or services allowing businesses to support specific preservation efforts. In appreciation for your sponsorship, you will receive defined benefits based on the level of sponsorship, a corporate spotlight on our Wall of Fame showcasing your company logo, and key membership privileges.

Corporate sponsorship level benefits include private receptions, estate dinners, yacht cruises, and special events. We invite your business to become a Thunderbird Lake Tahoe sponsor today. To discuss a corporate sponsorship e-mail AskUs@ThunderbirdTahoe.org or call 775-832-8752.

Thunderbird Lake Tahoe receives no government support and is funded entirely by gifts from friends like you. We welcome contributions in any amount.

Thunderbird Lake Tahoe is operated by Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society, a 501(c)(3) public charity. Your contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



CIPRIAN PHOTOGRAPHY



BRET COLE PHOTOGRAPHY



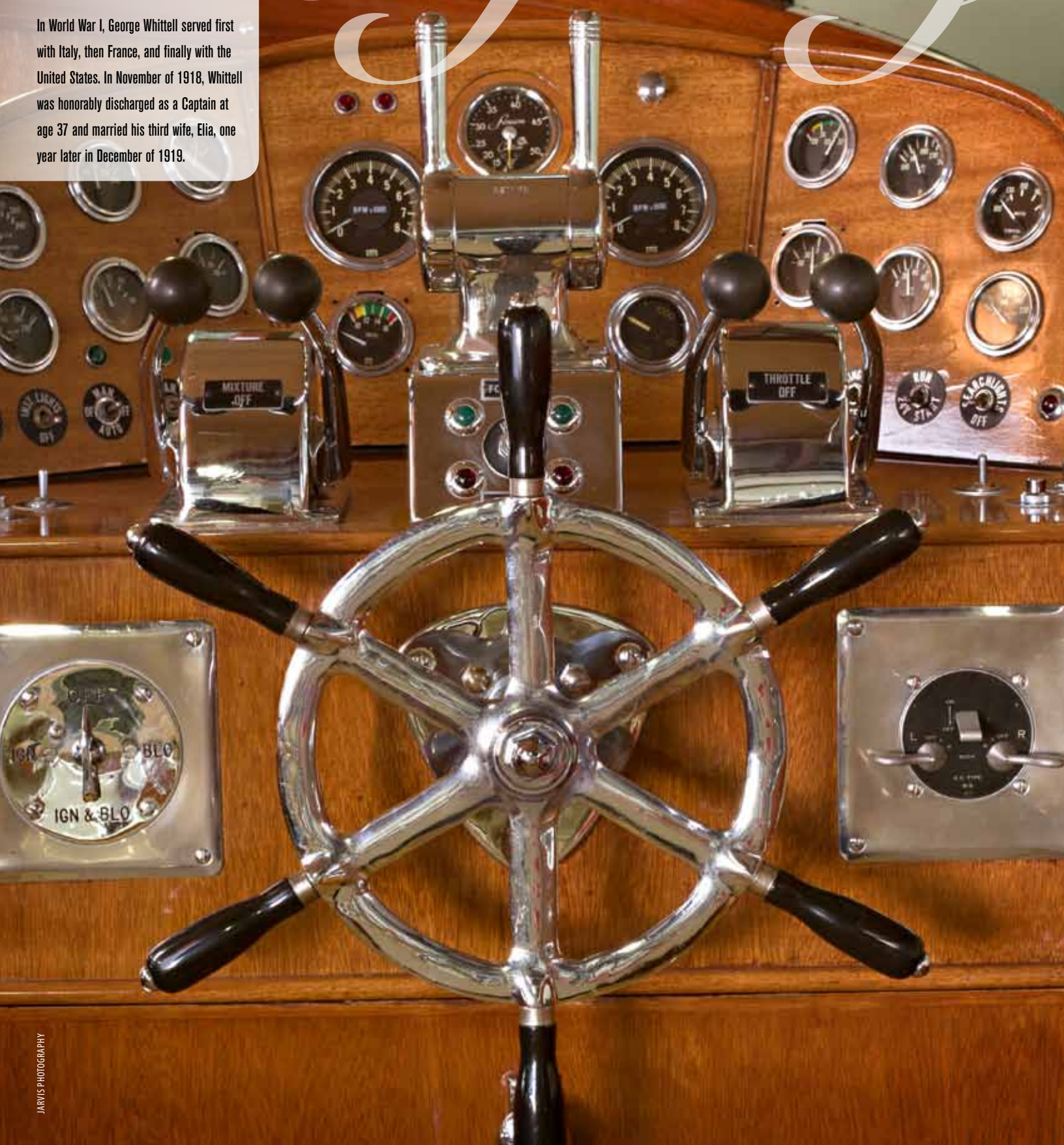
HEIDI HUBER PHOTOGRAPHY



THUNDERBIRD TRIVIA

In World War I, George Whittell served first with Italy, then France, and finally with the United States. In November of 1918, Whittell was honorably discharged as a Captain at age 37 and married his third wife, Elia, one year later in December of 1919.

Gifts



LEGACY GIFTS

Like many non-profit organizations, the future of Thunderbird Lake Tahoe rests with its permanent Preservation Fund, or endowment. The Preservation Fund consists of major gifts received from individual donors, businesses, family foundations, private foundations, and donor-advised funds at community foundations. The Preservation Fund's corpus—or principal balance—is never touched; only the investment income the corpus earns is used for capital preservation projects for both the Thunderbird Lodge and *Thunderbird Yacht*.

To sustain preservation of these historic treasures, the Preservation Fund must grow to \$20 million. With thanks to the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation and individual donors, Thunderbird Lake Tahoe's Preservation Fund is at 25% of the goal.

CASTLE CLUB

Despite these difficult times, Thunderbird Lake Tahoe occasionally receives major gifts of \$100,000 or more to its Preservation Fund. These major contributors to the Preservation Fund are automatically inducted into the Thunderbird Castle Club.

And matching gift opportunities are presently available. Other donors have pledged to match \$100,000 and higher contributions to the Preservation Fund dollar-for-dollar.

There are many ways to structure a Castle Club contribution including multi-year gifts, transferring unappreciated stocks or securities, gifting an I.R.A. distribution, establishing a matching gift campaign, granting funds from a family foundation or donor-advised fund, or making a bequest from your estate.

MAKING A BEQUEST

Bequests allow you to make a meaningful gift to Thunderbird Lake Tahoe without jeopardizing your family's security. A bequest can be cash or tangible property or can be a percentage share of your estate or a specific dollar value. Your bequest can be designated for general purposes, the permanent Preservation Fund, or for a specific Thunderbird Lake Tahoe program or preservation project.

Although you are not obligated to notify Thunderbird Lake Tahoe of your intended gift, doing so will allow us to appropriately thank you for your gift and keep you updated about our charitable works.

For more information about making a Legacy Gift to Thunderbird Lake Tahoe, please contact Chief Executive and Curator Bill Watson at 775-832-8755 or e-mail Watson@ThunderbirdTahoe.org.

Thunderbird Lake Tahoe is operated by Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society, a 501(c)(3) public charity. Your contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



Paul and Alice Baker alternate between the desert Southwest and the Lake Tahoe region and have been long-time supporters of Thunderbird programs. They've even shared the fine artisanship of their handy caretaker, Don Mechals, to construct the wooden benches on board the *Thunderbird Yacht*. The only thing close to dining at Thunderbird Lodge is sitting on the deck with the Bakers at their Cascade Lake home enjoying BBQ followed by fine brandy and a cigar. Paul and Alice, we are grateful for your years of friendship and so many wonderful times.



BRET COLE PHOTOGRAPHY



THUNDERBIRD TRIVIA

Since 1937, each light switch at Thunderbird Lodge has been individually identified with a small brass holder with a typewritten label. The label describes the switch's function, and includes such names as Siren, Lighthouse, Searchlight, Chandelier, Wishing Well, and more.

THUNDERBIRD



LAKE TAHOE

THE GARDENERS

How do our gardens grow? According to visitors to Thunderbird Lodge, they are more beautiful each year, thanks to the dedicated work of volunteer gardeners, most of them certified master gardeners.

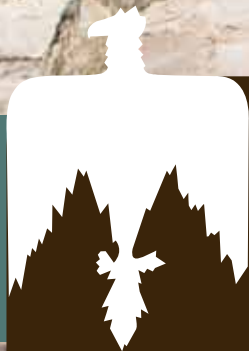
Work begins in May, with Mondays set aside for the gardening crew. Snow or rain usually plays havoc with the schedule, but the “chain gang” jumps in, filling bags of winter debris and firing up the chain saw to clear manzanita and dead branches. Then, after spreading twenty bags of mulch, the planting begins.

By June, the gardens begin to bloom. The newest garden, the herb garden, is the playground for our resident Chef de Cuisine, Anne Wiles, who goes out with her basket to harvest fresh herbs for her culinary preparations. The challenge for the gardeners is keeping the critters, not so fondly named “the grinnies,” from munching before Chef Anne gets to pick them.

The critters have a hard time because, over the years, the gardeners have learned what they can successfully plant. The plants that go in the pots around the grounds are planted in the gardens at the end of the season, to bloom again another year. And, this year a new garden next to the restored waterfalls will become a showcase garden.

The gardens are funded by a grant from Lake of the Sky Garden Club and the Thunderbird Lodge general fund. So, tour dollars and donor gifts fund the beautiful gardens each year.

Most surprising, the chain gang is a group of women! Men are actively sought, but somehow they don't seem able to handle the 6 hour Mondays. If you would like to volunteer on Mondays to garden in the most beautiful setting on the east shore of Lake Tahoe, contact Lead Gardener Ginny Lewis at AskUs@ThunderbirdTahoe.org. Ginny is actively recruiting new gardeners, and you don't even need a green thumb!



Dr. Michael Fischer recently joined the Thunderbird Governing Board of Directors. As a native Nevadan, and as former Nevada Director of Cultural Affairs, Mike embraces the history of the Silver State. A dentist by trade, Mike spends weekends rooting around swap meets for old bottles or memorabilia and recreating historic personalities as a Chautauquan. Mike lives in Carson Valley with his lovely wife, Janet. As a former Douglas County Commissioner and State cabinet-level officer, Mike represents the experience the Preservation Society often needs to advance its legislative agenda to ensure these Lake Tahoe treasures are preserved in perpetuity. Additionally, we look to Mike to attract Nevada interests and individuals to grow support for the Society's preservation and educational programs in that State. Please join us in welcoming Mike to the Governing Board.



Congratulations!



Our congratulations to Mr. Paul Gilbert of Northern Nevada, the winner of our Ring Raffle, and a steadfast supporter of the Preservation Society since 2007. We sincerely thank the generous donors of the ring with its proceeds going to the restoration of the Whittell Waterfalls. We also thank Mr. Gilbert and everyone else who participated in the raffle. This raffle brings us one step closer to meeting our \$300,000 goal needed to complete the waterfall renovation.

Coming Soon

SUMMER OF 2013

The roar of the magnificent Whittell Waterfalls will be heard this summer! Repairs are underway to fix the leaking falls, and we are working to raise the last \$30,000 to complete them. Your support to preserve this magnificent structure on the historic estate is needed.

For donation information please go online to www.ThunderbirdLakeTahoe.org.

WHAT'S IN YOUR ATTIC?



Like so many of the documents, artifacts, and furnishings at Thunderbird Lodge (and aboard *Thunderbird Yacht*), the Whittell films came to us from patrons who elected to forego selling for profit on Ebay and gifting the material directly to the non-profit Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society.

There is still much Whittell and early Lake Tahoe material out there ranging from items auctioned at the 1987 Woodside Estate Sale following Whittell's death, to items once possessed by Whittell caretakers and staff but now undiscovered or untended by descendants, to early photos and books of Lake Tahoe, San Francisco, and the Sierra Nevada region, to entire Duesenberg automobiles which might one day return home. Early Nevada, California, and Lake Tahoe documents, material, artifacts, souvenirs, post cards, letters, advertisements, photographs, films, fit our purview, and will be conserved with museum-quality care when gifted to the Preservation Society. Also, we often exchange items with other institutions when they have an article more suited for our collection or we to theirs.

Do you have any memorabilia applicable to the Preservation Society? If so, please call us and make a charitable gift today before the material is lost or damaged. Your contribution may be tax deductible and will be conserved and preserved as part of the Thunderbird collection of Lake Tahoe and surrounding area history.

(775) 832-8752 | WWW.THUNDERBIRDTAHOE.ORG



SHOPPING

THE MUSEUM STORE

The Thunderbird Lake Tahoe Museum Store offers gifts that educate, entertain, and heighten public awareness about Lake Tahoe's most unique historical and cultural treasures while raising funds to support them.

The cozy store is located in the former Jack Dreyfus master bedroom on the first floor of the Thunderbird Lodge. The store features an exclusive line of Thunderbird Lake Tahoe logo merchandise. Whether you want to take home a memento of your visit or purchase a gift for someone special, the Museum Store offers an impressive range of merchandise. One of our top sellers, *The Castle-in-the-Sky* book, is a great keepsake showcasing the rich history surrounding George Whittell, Jr. and his magnificent estate.

We are pleased to offer products from a variety of vendors, including items handcrafted by local artists such as wooden bowls, glassware, greeting cards and jewelry, as well as prints from Lake Tahoe area photographers. In addition, we offer a variety of books, posters, bags and clothing, such as T-shirts, hats, and embroidered logo shirts. Souvenirs are plenty, from fun items like Tahoe Trivia to keepsake ornaments and coins.

The Museum Store also serves as a visitor's center featuring a large display of historic Whittell artifacts, as well as two beautiful handmade models of the *Thunderbird Yacht*.

You may now purchase Museum Store merchandise online at www.ThunderbirdTahoe.org/museum-store.

WINEMAKER'S DINNERS
CASTLE SECRET TOURS
MEMBERSHIP
BOOKS
THUNDERBIRD LOGO APPAREL
SILVER JEWELRY
WARDROBE ACCESSORIES
PLAYING CARDS
COMMEMORATIVE COINS
GLASSWARE
POSTERS



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
WWW.THUNDERBIRDTAHOE.ORG



Continuing with Captain Whittell's elegant style of entertaining, we've expanded our items in the Museum Store. Take home a few items for your own entertaining needs, and share the Thunderbird legacy with your guests. These items include Thunderbird logo glassware and bar accessories.

THUNDERBIRD LOGO 11 OZ. WINE GLASSES

THUNDERBIRD LOGO PINT GLASSES

THUNDERBIRD LOGO WINE OPENERS
IN A DECORATIVE GIFT BOX

THUNDERBIRD LOGO POUR STOPS
IN A DECORATIVE GIFT BOX

THUNDERBIRD LOGO SHOT GLASSES

All merchandise is available in our Museum Store or
online at www.ThunderbirdTahoe.org



Tahoe City Marina is a proud supporter of Thunderbird Lake Tahoe ~ North shore home port of the historic *Thunderbird* Yacht

July 1940 ~ *Thunderbird* Yacht was delivered by rail
to Lake Tahoe and launched from the
Tahoe City Marina.



Tahoe City Marina offers the very best in boating, dining and shopping on Lake Tahoe's north shore. Located in the heart of downtown Tahoe City, it is one of the largest and oldest marinas on the Lake, built in the 1940's. Offering services for every aspect of boating, the Marina is dedicated to providing these services to our customers in a highly efficient manner with an emphasis on customer satisfaction.

SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Powerboat rentals
- Buoy rentals: 36 seasonal rentals
- Guest buoys & slips
- Expansion slip rentals: 81 public slips built 2010–2012
- Private slip rental management
- Gasoline & diesel fuel sales
- Forklift & travelift launching
- Indoor winter storage
- Boat and engine service and detailing
- Parasailing and sailing charters

In addition to boat services, Tahoe City Marina hosts a handful of other businesses on property that further compliment and enhance your experience while at Lake Tahoe and visiting Tahoe City Marina.



530-583-1039

700 N. Lake Blvd. Tahoe City, CA

tahoe-city-marina.com

Fax: 530-581-5249 | Channel: 78



THUNDERBIRD LODGE
PRESERVATION SOCIETY
PO Box 6812
Incline Village, NV 89450

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
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PERMIT NO. 12

In 1936, when George Whittell built his "Castle-in-the-Sky," he invited his privileged guests to experience the magic of Lake Tahoe by enjoying his picturesque stone mansion, drinking fine wines, and cruising aboard his *Thunderbird Yacht*.

Today, you can enjoy these elite experiences through public tours, private and group events, fundraisers, Castle dinners, and *Thunderbird* cruises.

For private events, cruises, and dinners, call 775-832-8752 or visit www.ThunderbirdTahoe.org.

Public tours are Tuesday through Saturday, June to October. Call 800-GO-TAHOE (800-468-2463) for public tour information.

All tours and events support the historic preservation of the Thunderbird estate and yacht.

P.O. BOX 6812
INCLINE VILLAGE, NV 89450
WWW.THUNDERBIRDTAHOE.ORG
775-832-8750

EXPERIENCE
THUNDERBIRD
Lake Tahoe