

Our September feature is a special tribute to one of North Lake Tahoe's very own Miriam Biro who passed away on September 16, 2023.

Miriam and her husband Lou were among the founding members of the North Lake Tahoe Historical Society. There are few people that were a part of this organization that worked as hard as Miriam.

Carol Van Etten, Miriam's good friend and lead historian at NLTHS has written a beautiful tribute to her friend. Miriam will be dearly missed.

**Tahoe Profile**

**Name:**  
Miriam Biro.

**Occupation:**  
Director of museums, which includes the Gatekeeper's Museum and Watson Cabin. She has been the director since September 1981, one month after the museum opened. "I came in to give somebody a day off and never left," she said.

**Lived in Tahoe for how long:**  
She has lived in Tahoe year round for the past 18 years, but had been coming here from Santa Monica all her life as a summer resident. "Tahoe is the most wonderful place in the world," she said. "I love it here. I always used to hate the end of vacations, but now I love it."

**Family:**  
Husband, Lou (to whom she's been married 40 years). Two children, Kat and Brian, and two grandchildren, Kelsey and Jenna.



*Miriam Biro, 1981*

## Miriam Biro

by Carol Van Etten

On Saturday September 16th, 2023 the North Tahoe community lost a great old friend and advocate with the passing of Miriam Biro. Though Miriam and her husband Lou have long been retired from public life, many readers will recall how in the North Lake Tahoe Historical Society's early decades, they were critical to its very survival, doing all they were asked and more to make the fledgling organization a success.

At any Society fund-raiser in those early days, Miriam and Lou would be found at the periphery, intent on the success of the event and ready to assist wherever needed. It was the Biros who, in the absence of volunteers, stepped forward in the wake of departing NLTHS event crowds to return the folding chairs to their rack.

In the early years of the Society, though individual invitations to its annual events numbered in the hundreds, Miriam insisted on giving the mailings a personal touch by hand-addressing every envelope.

It was the Biros who planted the bulbs that today greet visitors at the entrance to the Gatekeeper's Museum. It was they who maintained the grounds, unclogged temperamental toilets and dealt with the landlord.

Miriam also served for two decades on the CA State Parks Advisory Board, championing the cause of Tahoe's home-grown Museum, which is built on State property.

In spite of their volunteer work, the Biros found time to develop a business that combined Lou's woodworking skills with Miriam's sense of composition and skill with a paintbrush to produce redwood signs for countless homes and businesses in the area. A skilled watercolorist, Miriam focused this aspect of her talent on natural landscapes, producing views that she sold as notecards. The Biros called their enterprise Creative Signs & Cards For Framing and were still actively involved in the venture until just a few years ago.

I had the pleasure of knowing Miriam Biro for over 40 years, and in that time she managed to quietly bring excellence to everything in which she involved herself. She was a true Citizen of Tahoe whose good deeds will live on to benefit future generations. I will surely miss her.

*Carol Van Etten is a Lake Tahoe historian, NLTHS board member and published author.*