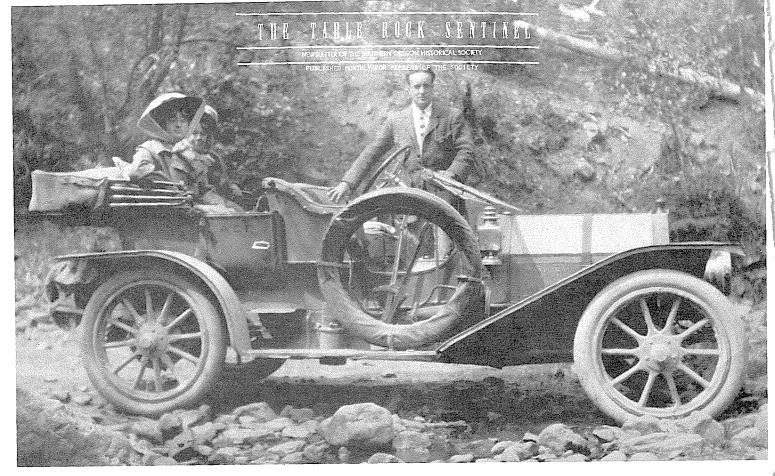
# THE TABLE ROCK SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

GRACE ANDREWS FIERO FISHING IN THE ROGUE



The picture above was taken on the way to Crater Lake. The ladies in the back seat are unidentified, although they are probably Conro Fiero's sister and mother, who, like Conro, bought orchards and lived in southern Oregon during the pear boom. The highway to the lake was a far cry from a four-lane freeway, and the stop on the side of the road was probably one of many to allow the engine to cool.

During the sixties and early seventies Grace Andrews Fiero was a familiar figure in Medford. As an enthusiastic worker for the Red Cross and as a supporter of local musical activities she nearly always made the scene. She was a cousin of Caroline Andrews Werner, called "The Lark" by Major Bowes, who appeared for some time as soprano soloist with the Radio City Music Hall Symphony Orchestra. Both ladies accepted their retirement in Medford with some regrets, but certainly brightened Medford's musical sphere for a while.



#### THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

#### OFFICERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Robert Butler	President
Vicki Anne Bryden	1st Vice President
Gary Wheeler	2nd Vice President
Anne Finley	Secretary
Laurel Prairie-Kuntz	Treasurer

#### STAFF

Executive Director	Nick Clark
Director of Operations	Sam Wegner
Children's Museum Coordinator	Stacev Williams
Curator of Collections	Marc Pence

Curator of Exhibits	Jime Matoush
Curator of Interpretation	Dawna Curler
Curator of Photography	
Curator of Preservation and Maintenance	Byron Ferrell
Curator of Swedenburg House	Leslie Gould
Financial Manager	Maureen Smith
Librarian/Archivist	. Paul Richardson
Membership/Administrative Assistant	
Newsletter Editor	Raymond Lewis
Oral Historian	Marjorie Edens
Volunteer Coordinator	Marge Herman



# CRACE ANDREWS FIERO

HEN GRACE ANDREWS came to Medford for the first time, southern Oregon was abloom with promise, a land of milk and honey and orchards, with wealth untold for those who would invest—if fortune favored them.

Her family had been encouraged to come here by Grace's Uncle Ed, a theatrical performer, who, while on tour, passed through Medford and decided he wanted to live here. Grace said in an interview\*

Mrs. Fiero made an oral history tape in June 1963. She was interviewed by Seth Bullis. Some of her statements have been edited.

"He fell in love with this country and he wrote back to mother and father and, oh, many, many people in Minnesota that this was the most marvelous place in the world and they must all pack up and move out. So I wrote mother and father every day in those days, and I wrote and said, 'Don't go to Medford—to Oregon—it's the end of the earth. I'll never see you again.' But they paid no attention to me, they came right out anyway."

The Andrews were a theatrical family with an established reputation and

3

MARCH 1986

twenty years experience as a performing opera group who had their own railroad coach which they used when they were on tour during the season. In the summer they ran a popular resort at Lake Wetonka, near Waterville, Minnesota, where they rehearsed new operas and performed Gilbert and Sullivan for the guests. They had a special railroad spur built to the park and many celebrities patronized the gracious hotel which had two wide verandahs where the Andrews presented their musicals. The family also had stables and a race track as attractions at their resort.

In later years Grace recalled the park. "There were Japanese lanterns lighting the lake and the grounds. Every night the family presented the Mikado, H.M.S. Pinafore or a light opera. It was an enchanting spot." She added, The family kept the resort until they lost it. The Andrews never had any money, but, boy, they had fun."

In 1903 the operatic group disbanded after a tragic train accident in which several members of the Andrews Opera Company were killed. Some of the musicians came to southern Oregon, still stunned from the tragedy and, for a while, not wanting to make appearances as frivolous characters from the Gilbert and Sullivan repertoire.

The family members of the troup were an ill-assorted bunch to invest in orchard land, plant young trees and enter a commercial world. They were artists and anything beyond planting fruit trees and waiting for the crop to bring forth an abundant yield, was beyond their knowledge. When they found they had spent more money than they had intended--a chronic problem with the Andrews--they joined forces with a few musical friends who had come west with them and started a School of Music in Medford. Still in love with the Rogue River Valley they were reluctant to leave it, and thus stayed to become citizens.

little while before their move west, Grace Andrews, a member of this talented family, had been selected to understudy Frances Starr, a young protogee of David Belasco. Miss Starr was appearing in the 1906 production of his dramatic play, The Rose of the Rancho.

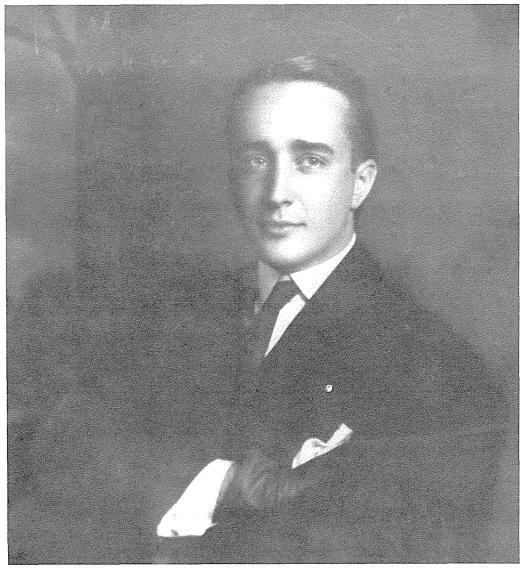
Belasco was a famous dramatist and independent producer and his successes included productions of *The Heart of* Maryland, *The Girl of the Golden West*, and *The Darling of the Gods*. His shows were noted for the sumptuousness of their stage effects and their elegant costuming.

Grace did not record how she was chosen to understudy Miss Starr. She once said, "I became a dramatic actress because I was the only one of the family who didn't sing." Her roles on Broadway did not demand a singer, but, as an Andrews, she probably had a good ear and a pleasant range. Those who knew her have indicated that as a young lady she had a most expressive, resonant speaking voice and matchless diction.

Perhaps, as a young actress seeking a job, she was fortified with some recommendations from her relatives, Uncle Ed and Uncle George of the opera company, and, of course, she was filled with ambition to be a great star. told Eva Hamilton, who interviewed her for a Mail Tribune story in 1963, that after leaving Minnesota for Chicago, she learned to make do on little, having existed for weeks on a diet of bananas only, which "you could buy for ten cents a dozen in those days." Her story was probably laced with minor exaggerations, a completely forgivable trait in an effervescent young actress. In any case, she eventually attracted the notice of David Belasco. Her flashing eyes and her dark glossy hair were probably responsible as well for her being given the position of understudy to The Rose of the Rancho.

Her theatrical career began in the famous Garrick Theater in Chicago. In keeping with true theatrical tradition Frances Starr eventually fell ill with an attack of laryngitis, and Grace Andrews stepped into her slippers. She was an immediate hit and David Belasco began grooming her for stardom. She went on tour with the show and when Frances Starr left the production, she became the star and appeared on Broadway.

On some nights she received as many as ten curtain calls, and the theatrical world declared her to be "David Belasco's find of 1908." During the run of the play her mentor began writing a new play for her based on the successful



Conro Fiero
"I just took a long breath and said, 'Whew'."

novel, Beverly of Graustark. When her play closed for the summer, Grace decided she would come to Medford to visit her family.

She said, in her interview with Seth Bullis, "So I took this vacation and I came out. [My parents] had a ranch over on Antelope Creek, and I stayed with them for six weeks. They had a claim up back of the house at the time. I guess it was a Soldier's claim or something that my father had taken up, and they built a little shack and someone had to sleep in that shack once a month to prove-up on the claim. So I went up there and slept, and I just had a wonderful time. I wasn't afraid of the coyotes or anything."

After her brief vacation she returned to New York, continued with the run of her play and signed to star in *Beverly of Graustark*. Before rehearsals began, she again decided to visit her parents

in Medford. "I came out with my round trip ticket," she said, "just to visit for the summer." Her story continues:

My sister Edith and James Stevens, my brother-in-law, came to visit us and I went down to the station to meet them, and there I saw this man in riding clothes. He was the best looking thing I had ever seen. I just took a long breath and said, "Whew." But when he tried to flirt with me, I didn't flirt back with him at all. I don't know how that happened, but I didn't.

[Later that afternoon a lawyer, Holbrook Worthington, came to the house] and told me that this young man, Conro Fiero, wanted to meet the girl in the red had with the cherries on it.

That evening another young man took me to a dance at the Wigwam.

The Wigwam was on the corner near the Medford Hotel, across the parking lot.

They had a great big dance flooor with a tent over it and every Thursday night they had a band concert in the park followed by a dance at the Wigwam. It was a terrific place. Everyone turned out for the dance. So I went to the dance and that's where I met Conro and I forgot all about the man who had brought me. I danced every dance with Conro, and then he wanted to take me home.

Meanwhile my sister Edith Stevens and James had arrived at the dance, and I said, "Well, I'll ask my sister."

So I asked Edith if Fiero could take me home, and she said, "Certainly not. You let your escort take you home."

So I said, "All right."

I told Conro I couldn't go home with him. And when I arrived home, Aunt Flo was visiting us, and I wento into the room, and I said, "Aunt Flo, I've fallen in love. Oh, it hurts, it's so terrific!"

Conro I saw each other every day and he wanted to marry me so I wrote back to the management of Beverly of Graustark and said I had a better engagement and wished to break my contract, which I did, and turned in my railroad ticket. Conro and I were married the following June, 1910.

The young couple moved into their new home on Hamrick Road near Central Point. Conro, at the time a millionaire, commis-

sioned Whitehouse and Foyou to design the house which sat in the corner of a 140 acre estate. The light fixtures and other metal work were hand hammered by Honeyman Hardware of Portland. The house has remained a show place for many years.

Mrs. Helen Lydiard Barnum, who also made an oral history tape, said:

As a little girl I watched that place being built. We had a horse and buggy; I thought the buggy was pretty nice, it was woven reed—or something—but when we passed the Conro Fieros coming out on the road with their low, sleek French sports car, and they with their veils flying and their gauntlets, I thought they were the most wonderful creatures I had ever seen.

ONRO FIERO, his mother and sister, had come to Medford at the suggestion of Henry Palmer of the Modoc Orchards, Conro in turn was responsible for bringing others from Chicago, including Chandler Egan, the McCormicks and the Phil Hammills. Conro Fiero owned fifty acres including the Woodlawn property and his mother and sister owned eighty acres across the street.

When their crop of Wealthy apples sold in 1910, netting \$2,000 an acre, Conro decided the more acres he had, the more money he would realize and he bought property all over the valley, including 38 acres at \$750 an acre, on the east



Woodlawn
In the above picture the house has just been completed.
The spectacular landscaping has not been begun.

side of Medford where Keeneway Drive is today. He gave eighty acres in the Buckshot Hill area as a gift to the city of Medford for (the first) country club. Purchasing land with little planning and supervision, he soon became land poor. Yet their continual round of parties never stopped.

#### Grace said:

There was a Louve Cafe (on West Main Street) where they had terrifically gay parties. Champagne was always flowing like water. And the Nash Hotel. There was a very fine restaurant. It was the center of night life.

In the lobby was one of those round seats of padded leather. The wives of the orchardists would come in with their husbands, at first with horses, later with cars, and sit there chatting while the men went into the Nash bar. We would wait for our husbands to come out through the swinging doors and take us home.

We had the finestin theater in the opera house. Medford was the one stop between Portland and San Francisco, and the Shasta Limited went through at two o'clock in the morning. The companies would come down from Portland, stop here and give their play and then take the Shasta Limited on to San Francsico. We had Al Jolson, Maude Adams, Mae Robson and Sir Forbes Robertson and just everybody.

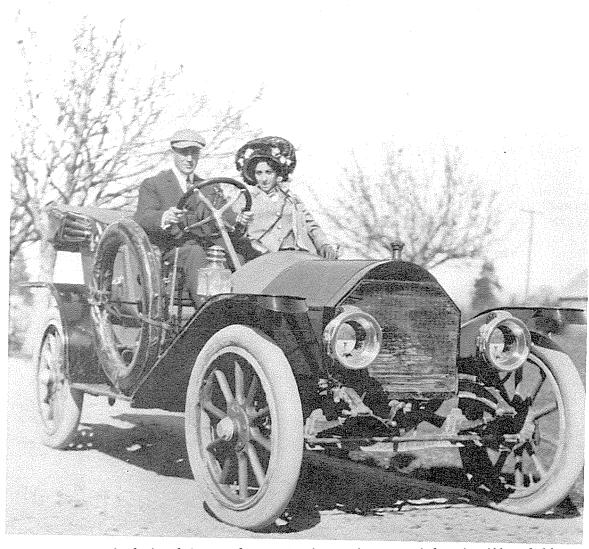
There were always parties and we had no curfew. There were people from Chicago and people from Los Quite a few came from Angeles. San Francisco. Frank Preston bought a ranch over on the Applegate. They used to have great parties, and we'd motor out and they'd meet us with the haywagon--hay rick--and we'd all get on that and ford the river. We entertained at Woodlawn and at the new Holland Hotel. We gave a lot of parties there. They had a room we danced in. Do you remember that seth?

SETH BULLIS: Yes, I remember that parquet floor. It was awfully hard on your feet.

GRACE: I don't remember that. SETH BULLIS: You wouldn't. Your



Grace and Conro dancing for a benefit.



Conro's cap is designed for speed; Grace's chapeau is so gussied-up it will probably present a little problem when they tear down Hamrick Road at the breakneck speed of twenty miles per hour.

feet never touched the ground.

GRACE: Do you remember the George Carpenters who had such a lovely place? Their place and our place were the two show places of the valley. One time they engaged an orchestra from Portland for a dance, a fancy dress party they were giving. I don't know what happened. In the early days the Carpenters served cocktails with all their dinners and wine and so forth, but this evening they took a pledge or something, and the party was perfectly dry.

They had punch with nothing in it and here was this magnificent orchestra from Portland and everything for a gay party, so we all gave dinner parties before and some of the people got so cheery they almost didn't get to the party. Stanton Griffin, who later became ambassador to Spain and Argentina, was in our party.

At the Carpenters someone would

occasionally slip up and put a little stick into the punch so it became quite strong. We danced all night.

Sometime after we left in the early morning, the Carpenters left Medford forever. Where they went, I've never known. Years later I drove by their place with someone and, looking into the windows, I discovered everything was just as they had left it. There was the beautiful Steinway piano with photographs on it, framed pictures, you know, and in the kitchen you could see the glasses. I guess they'd had a drink. Maybe they just got tired of the continual partying and the drinking and decided they weren't going to do it anymore.

But the Carpenters weren't the only ones who left Medford and walked out on the parties. The orchard boom had had it. Those who had over-extended themselves and had planted little trees

couldn't wait for them to start producing. The Fieros thought their trees would have marketable crops in five years; when they found the orchards would require ten years, they couldn't weather it through the non-productive period. On year the Weather Bureau failed to notify the orchardists of a freezing spell, and many of the people lost their entire crop.

#### Grace said:

That was our finish. We had just hung on by an eyelash up to that moment, and thought we were going to get a good crop. The year before a wind storm had blown down all the apples and we had barely held on. Now we didn't have a penny left.

Conro thought he could recoup if he diversified so he bought some pigs. They were very distinguished-looking pigs, white with smart black belts, and Conro went into the bacon and ham business.

One morning he was delivering bacon to a freight office, and as he was banging around, the secretary came out to see what was going on.

"Oh, excuse me," she said. "I thought you were the garbage man."

"Not yet," Conro said, "but soon."
The bacon business was too little and too late. It was 1914 and the whole world started turning over.

ONRO went back to Chicago to see what he could find in the way of a job. After he went back, I sold everything on the place to pay the merchants. We went out clean and didn't owe anyone.

Conro had an insurance policy and he sold it for enough to get me back to the east to join him. (While I was still in Medford) I had moved in with my Aunt Lydie until Conro sent for me. We were putting on a James M. Barrie play for the Red Cross—we had put on a lot of

\*About this time A.C. Allen and Holbrook Worthing wrote a scenario and produced a promotional film, *Grace's Visit to the Rogue River Valley*. Roles were taken by valley people, members of Grace and Conro's social set, and show many interesting spots and activities in the valley. The film was presented at the San Francisco Panama-Pacific International Exposition, and was probably responsible for attracting several families to the valley. Thanks to the efforts of Robertson Collins, a workable print of this film has been made, and it is now on file at the Southern Oregon Historical Society.



Conro in his orchard.

amateur plays—and the last night I was in Medford I was in a blaze of glory. I played in that play and then attended a dinner party given for me at the University Club. It was my farewell party. In those days they never had women at that club, but that night they made an exception and had everyone in the valley. And that was when the University Club was in the Vawter house on Main Street.

N THE EAST CONRO looked up friends from palmier days, hoping they could give him leads for a position. He and Grace eventually gravitated to Washington, D.C. It was wartime, and the capital buzzed with excitement and activity, just the place for a handsome young couple who hoped to make a new start.

Grace was a talented decorator. She could sew draperies in a professional manner and could reupholster furniture like an expert. With a can of paint, a brush and a square or two of wallpaper, she could produce an interesting and attractive apartment for very little. When she had a sizable bank account, she could turn a modest suite into a show place.

Conro found a position in the diplomatic offices; Grace went to work in the State Department. The colorful life resumed. Grace said:

'Well, there we were in Washington. I had a marvelously interesting job deciphering cablegrams, so secret, secret, secret."

SETH BULLIS: You were unscrambling codes?

GRACE: And helping to make codes: a new secret code called the Green Code. Ever so hush-hush.

Oh, those were the most terrific days. We had a marvelous time and met the most interesting people. We didn't have any money, of course, and we had a little teeny apartment, but we knew all the interesting people and the different attachés from other countries, and we went to parties at the embassies and to Alice Longworth's big New Year's Day party. We were members of the Montgomery Club where we danced and danced.

HEN THE WAR WAS OVER and Conro got a position in Paris, representing

the Buda Motor Company who made motors for big tractors and so forth. His job kept us going back and forth from Paris to London. We were there for about two and a half years, and then the exchange all went to pieces and business was so bad we had hard times."

Earlier, at a farewell party held for them at the Ritz Hotel in New York, Conro med a former friend whom he had known in military school when he was 12 years old, J. Rathburn, head of the foreign department of White Motors, and he gave Conro his Paris address. When the Buda Company ceased prospering, Rathburn hired him to enter his department. Conro and Grace returned to Washington, where Conro was trained in the motor company business. When he was thoroughly indoctrinated, the White Company sent him to Africa.

SETH B: You lived in Africa?

GRACE: Yes, we were first on the west coast in Nigeria and then on the Gold Coast. We went up to the edge of the Sahara Desert to Kano, the old walled city of Kano, and saw the native dances up there. When I started up there, they said, "White woman can't go on this trip, it's impossible," but I talked them into it."

"From there we went back to London briefly and then down to South Africa where Johannesburg was our headquarters. We lived there for two and a half years spending some time up in the Belgian Congo."

Making money was secondary to living an exciting life for both Grace and Conro, and they were happiest when they were least financially secure. After Africa, they could have gone to India, but Conro suddenly became conservative. When he was offered a large salary to work in Canada, he accepted the position even though both he and Grace would have preferred a more glamorous location.

"Conro and I never thought about money --it came and it went and we had nothing at all and then we'd build it up again. I'll never know why we took the job in Canada."

In Toronto Grace got footlight fever again and received some of the best notices she had ever had. She made a starring appearance at the Hart House



Views of Woodlawn after its conversion to Mon Desir Restaurant

Theater in the play, The Three Weddings of a Hunchback. Her characterization of a different role brought such comments as "Appalling effectiveness and dynamic power."

"It was a wonderful comeback," Grace said, "after so many years at the bridge table."

At the end of the twenties, Conro gave up the position in Canada and they returned to New York. He had invented a razor blade vending machine, and he was excited about getting a patent and producing it commercially. The plans did not materialize, but the Fieros invested in the market and for a little

longer they were in the big money.

Then came the crash and the depression. Conro's health broke, and he was unable to work. They moved into a tiny apartment with Conro's sister, a not-very-successful sculptress. Grace had said several times, "It was always feast or famine with us—the Ritz or a park bench; it was either a dinner at the Palace or we went hungry." If her statement was not an exaggeration, she and Conro had finally come to the park bench stage.

Grace managed to find work in a dress shop. In the evenings she made corsets and foundation garments for special friends, selling them at \$40 each. In search of better garters for her exclusive models she came up with a novel new kind of garter. Encouraged by her friends to get a patent, she took her invention to the Venus Corporation.

"Too expensive," said the management. "Try a less costly gadget."

"I have it," she answered and returned with a bottle guard she had made in Paris to keep Conro's shaving lotion from spilling into his luggage. Her invention was accepted at once, but the royalties did not appear for years and for some time the Fiero fortunes were at rock bottom.

Then Conro recouped his finances in the same

way he lost them, the stock market. But his health was not so easily regained. At the age of 56, once more out of debt, he died.

RACE returned to Medford. Her sister Edith was still here and so was her mother. With the returns from her invention she bought a modest home and garden on Tenth Street, and the three of them moved into it. Her royalty checks grew from two to three to four figures and she had money to spend, but the patent on her botle guard abruptly ran out after seventeen years.

She went to work at Puruckers Music Store, and with her sister Edith cared

for her ailing mother. After her mother died, she devoted her time to her gardening and worked on other inventions. She was always the center of a group of loving friends.

Mrs. Barnum said:

"But when Grace became ill, she sold her house on Tenth Street and moved into the Medford Hotel. She was in her eighties, but, characteristic of Grace, she took a whole



Mrs. Grace Andrews Fiero

up her apartment.

"She went into that nursing home over on Stevens Street, but she never liked it. She needed a garden to putter in and she needed some decorating to do. But there was nothing really there for her, and she faded away. She and Edie were there at the same time.

suite.

The Andrews

family, if they had any money, they spent it

right now. So she got

over the west and south

and you could see the courthouse and a lovely

view. She bought ex-

lovely material, and

she spent money here and there, I don't know,

hundreds and hundreds

of dollars, just spending all she had re-

ceived for her place.

as so many theatrical people do, that money

was always going to

finally came to the end of her supply,

and she had to give

come in. But she

"She always thought,

pensive draperies,

beautifully lined,

that suite and it looked

Grace died first, Edie later. It was a kind of sad ending, but one must say, 'She was certainly an undaunted spirit'."

HE ANDREWS SCHOOL OF MUSIC and the Andrews Opera Company are long gone. No one remembers Grace's thrilling debut in Rose of the Rancho, and few remember the beautiful young couple that

brightened the valley for a few years.

But with her film, Grace's Visit to the Rogue River Valley and her gracious home, now Mon Desir restaurant, Grace has left us a small legacy of fun and beauty and a little touch of class.

About 1912 Conro Fiero, Janette Preston, Grace Fiero, Frank Preston, Sr. (Picture courtesy of Mrs. Frank Preston.)





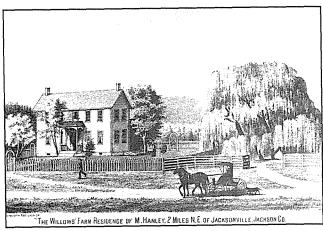
Director's Report . . . . . . . . . . . . . Nick Clark

Your Society will be celebrating 40 wonderful years of preserving Rogue Valley history in 1986. To celebrate this milestone we'll be hosting dozens of special events throughout the year.

On the next two pages, you will find a Calendar of Events for our anniversary, running through August. We encourage you to clip those pages and post them on your ice box (woops-historian's slip) refrigerator, bulletin board or calendar, 'cause we have <u>SO MANY</u> exciting events this year. We don't want you to miss any of them!

It pains us a great deal to announce that Miss Mary Hanley is now a permanent resident of Villa Royal Nursing Home. Miss Hanley fell during the Christmas Holidays and sustained injuries which have left her permanently disabled. Mary has been very special to all of us and has given so much of herself to our society. We wish God's blessings on Mary.

Although we did not have resources earmarked for opening The Willows in 1986, the Gold Diggers Guild of the Southern Oregon Historical Society has come to our rescue and agreed to provide docents at the farm on the third weekend of each month. We will open the farmstead on April 19 and 20, from 1PM until 5PM. The Willows is particularly beautiful in the spring and we know that you will want to visit and enjoy the flowering shrubs, carpet of daffodils and historic home.



The large willow is seen in the above lithograph and is obviously how the farm received its historic name. The California valley oak now dominates the landscape, but is the much smaller tree to the left of the house in the above print.

Since there will be a great expense in maintaining the home (we have already spent over \$100,000 in maintenance) your Board of Trustees has authorized a \$1.00 admission fee for adults and .50¢ for children 12 and under. This will pay only a small portion of our total costs but will help towards our efforts to preserve this very important portion of our heritage.

We invite you to join us at The Willows, 1053 Hanley Road, opening weekend, April 19, 20, 1986 from 1PM to 5PM.









# SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY 40th ANNIVERSARY CALENDAR

#### March

11 - "Mother, Mom, Mama, Ma" An exhibit featuring motherhood May 6 and coinciding with Women's History Week. 1-5PM, Chappel-Swedenburg House, Ashland.

#### April

- 1-26 "Arbor Exhibit" Line drawings and photographs of historic and special trees in Ashland. 1-5PM, Chappel-Swedenburg House Museum, Ashland. (Tuesday-Saturday)
- 19-20 "Grand Opening At The Willows" Tours of historic Hanley Farm and Home. 1-5PM, The Willows Living Historical Farm, 1053 Hanley Road, Central Point.
- "Life Begins At 40" a special exhibit homoring the 40th Anniversary of the Southern Oregon Historical Society. 10AM-5PM, Courtroom, Jacksonville Museum.
- "Honoring Our Members" a special reception for members of the Southern Oregon Historical Society to view "Life Begins At 40". 2-4PM, Jacksonville Museum.
- "Henley/Hornbrook/Copco Lake Historical Bus Tour. Reservations required. Leave from Jacksonville Museum parking lot at 8AM.

  Bring "brown bag" lunch. Contact Marjorie Edens, 899-1847.

#### <u>May</u>

- "Happy Birthday SOHS" a huge birthday party on the lawn of the Jacksonville Museum. Our Society will be 40 years old, and we will celebrate with historic craft demonstrations, a re-enactment of winding the May Pole, special music, a gigantic birthday cake, food, a children's parade and many activities inside the Jackson-ville Museum. 10AM-5PM. EVERYONE COME AND BRING A FRIEND!!!
- 6- "Ashland Residences" Photographic exhibit of Ashland homes. 1-5PM Sept. 30 Chappel Swedenburg House Museum, Ashland. (Tuesday-Saturday)
- 8 Special membership reception honoring "Ashland Residences" 7-9PM, Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum
- 16 S.O.H.S. "40th Anniversary" Annual Membership Dinner 6-9PM Peggy Rubin, Oregon Shakespearean Theatre, will perform a special historical tribute. Red Lion Motor Inn, Medford. Reservations required.
- 17-18 "The Willows" Open House. Tours of the historic Hanley home and grounds. 1-5PM. 1053 Hanley Rd., Central Point,
- Society changes to summer schedule of hours. Jacksonville Museum and Children's Museum, daily 10-5; historic houses daily 1-5PM.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS!!



DON'T MISS ONE!!



#### 40th ANNIVERSARY YEAR CONTINUED

#### June

14-15 "The Willows" Open House. Tours of historic Hanley Farm and house. 1-5PM, 1053 Hanley Road, Central Point.

16-

- Sept 28 "Picture That" Exhibit of children's books and book illustrations. 10-5 Daily, Children's Museum, Jacksonville.
- "Happy Camp" Historical Bus Tour. Reservations required. Leave from Jacksonville Museum parking lot approximately 8AM. Bring brown bag lunch. Contact Marjorie Edens, 899-1847.
- 22 Strawberry Lawn Festival, Sunday Social. 2-4PM. Musical entertainment and refreshments. Chappel-Swedenburg House Museum, Ashland, OR.
- 29 Ashland Heritage Sunday Celebration. 1-5PM. Chappel-Swedenburg House Museum, Ashland, OR.

#### July

- 9-10 "Gold Beach/Mail Boat Trip" Historical Bus Tour. Reservations required. Leave from Jacksonville Museum parking lot at 24M. Contact Marjorie Edens, 899-1847
- 19-20 "The Willows" Open House. Tours of historic Hanley Farm House and grounds. 1-5PM. 1053 Hanley Road, Central Point.
- "Annual Farm Days" The Willows Living Historical Farm Museum, 1053
  Hanley Road, Central Point. 11AM to 4PM. Historic crafts demonstrations, displays, food, etc. Bus transportation provided from the Britt Parking Iot in Jacksonville. NO PARKING AT THE FARM. We will use the Tooze Steam Engine for the first time on this day.
- "Claire and Mary Hanley Contributions to S.O.H.S." a special exhibit from 11-4 at The Willows Living Historical Farm Museum, 1053 Hanley Road, Central Point.

#### August

- "Historical Mystery Trip" Bus Tour. Reservations required. Leave from Jacksonville Museum Parking lot approximately 9AM. Contact Marjorie Edens, 899-1847.
- 16-17 "The Willows" Open House. Tours of historic Hanley Farm Mouse and gounds. 1-5PM. The Willows Living Historical Farm, 1053 Hanley Road, Central Point.
- "Historic Places" reception opening special exhibit of area artists in the U. S. Hotel, Jacksonville. 7-9PM.

23 -

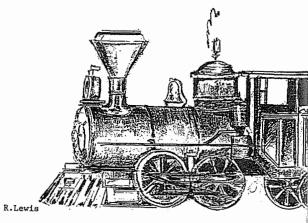
Sept. 7 "Historic Places" water color exhibit depicting Jackson County scenes. U. S. Hotel Ballroom, Jacksonville, Oregon. Time to be announced.

PLEASE POST!!!



PLEASE POST!!!

15



### THE JAC:

AS EARLY AS 1863 parties of surveyors met in Jacksonville for the purpose of surveying a route for a railroad to connect Jacksonville with the major cities of the Pacific coast. When the surveying parties reached a complete disagreement and were ready to give up their assignment, Joseph Gaston of Jacksonville raised funds to keep them in the city through the winter months. Payments were made in cash, wheat and oats and room and board. Those contributing included the Hanleys, the Applegates the Colemans and the Van Dykes.

The Oregon and California Railway was incorporated

The Oregon and California Railway was incorporated in Jacksonville and eventually, after years of delay, in which the owners weathered a continuing string of difficulties, changes in management, organization and reorganization, the line from the north reached Roseburg, and there construction

halted for nine years.

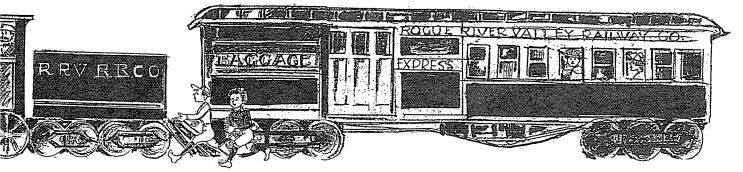
But twenty years after the initial plans were made, the railroad entered the Rogue River Valley. Jacksonville citizens were elated, the railroad would come through the city, the residents were to be the chosen people -- party time! party time! -- and everyone would be rich and beautiful. History, unfortunately, followed a different script. Instead of becoming a population center on the railway, Jacksonville found itself pushed out into the hinterland. This is the story of how the townspeople fought to survive the blow.

very town, from Buffalo to Bear Wallow (population 11) has its own personality, and every citizen, give or take a few, has his fierce loyalty towards it. From the beginning, then, Jacksonville had its faithful and vigorous champions, the settlers, mostly, who fell in love with the little valley when they first beheld its primitive, unspoiled beauty, and, with these settlers, a handful of miners who felt a surge of allegiance to that part of

earth which had generously enhanced their pokes.

If these folks had ever considered the town's future, they may have visualized a metropolis buzzing with financial activity and progress, or, at the other end of the circle, a ghost town where leaves blow through the deserted buildings and the unchecked forest has again taken over the streets. They could hardly have stretched their imagination to conceive of a time when Jacksonville would become a cluster of forsaken brick buildings, huddled in the midst of a town full of dilapidated houses, its great days forgotten, a Squattersville for those who could afford nothing better.

Of course, no young town should ever become too big for its britches——least of all Jacksonville——because there was no season when permanence was a sure thing. Don't forget the lively little mining towns: Sterlingville, now only a cemetery and some scattered farms; or Waldo, a hole in the ground where the last building fell into its cellar when there was no one around to keep it propped up; or Buncom, two or three weather—stained sheds, barely holding out in a vain battle with the wind. Far more of the early settlements disappeared than ever became cities.



### SONVILLE CANNONBALL

But in Jacksonville there was one exciting possibility: when the railroad came through the town and linked it to the other cities in the west, the little county seat could become a shining city. The Iron Horse had converted dusty little stage stops to metropolitan centers, and "the turning wheels of the railroad were the wheels of fortune. Wealth beyond the dreams of Midas might result.\* And the hopeful citizens of Jacksonville could surely appreciate a bit of that loose change.

But could anyone guarantee such a windfall? There were those complacent citizens who said, "Of course the railway will come to Jacksonville. We don't have to do anything to beguile it. It has to come here; we're the county seat." And others said, "Don't be too sure. We may have to scrounge up some capital. A few thousand dollars handed over to the company bosses might be a mighty persuasive inducement." And still others said, "Don't build false hopes. That railroad is going right down the middle of the valley, and Jacksonville is stuck up here in the foothills."

But the most pessimistic asked, "Why \*Francis D. Haines, Jr., in a paper presented at the annual session of the Council on Regional Historial Research in Progress held in Portland, April 11, 1959.

would the railroad officials even want to detour way out here, up an unnecessary grade, to make a railway stop in a town that's already on the skids?"

That hit a nerve. It was true that the mines had practically fizzled out, although the Opp diggings still showed promise, but several merchants who had been in Jacksonville for a long time had packed up and taken their stores elsewhere and practically all the Jewish businesses had moved to San Francisco or Portland. But when the faint-hearted deserted, those who stayed became more positive even though it soon was evident that the railroad wouldn't have to go to Jacksonville; Jacksonville would have to go to the railroad.

T WAS A PRETTY WELL-KNOWN FACT that the Oregon and California Railroad was nearly bankrupt, and was building as fast as possible before the collapse. Cost of course was a paramount factor in the location of the line and had the town fathers held on by some manner of means and come up with a big boodle and had the railroad officials been less determined about the course of the line, there might have been some foundation for the golden dream.

When the Oregon and California Line

MARCH 1986

forged its way through the mountains and reached the Rogue River Valley, the destitute company gave up the struggle, and the Oregon and Transcontinental became its leasee. New officials took over the project and they had money for more deliberate operations and may have been more easily swayed by the suggestions of the earnest delegation from Jacksonville. But when four substantial gentlemen, who owned sites on Bear Creek, scarcely five miles from Jacksonville, offered their land for free to the officials as a right of way and as land for a depot, and also handed over every other block in the area to the railroad men as a gift, the handwriting was etched into the wall and the disillusioned hold-outs threw in their cards.

What a stunning blow this must have been for the community. Perhaps there was some excuse for Mingus and Phipps and Brobeck, but C.C. Beekman was Jacksonville's premier citizen, and if anyone owed the town his loyalty and allegiance, "Beek" did. He had entered the scene when the town was first quickening, had made money--lots if it--from the miners and the settlers, and had become an aloof dignitary, honored by his fellow townspeople. Maybe he did love the little town and wanted no change in the tenor of its ways. He may have had a vision of Jacksonville as a railroad town and decided he would save it from that. If so, he took what must have been a most unpopular stand.

On December 22, 1883, the four men deeded to the Oregon and Transcontinental 18.86 acres, 41 city blocks, together with certain miscellaneous lots in a new townsite, which would soon become Middleford, the rival town which Jacksonville folk regarded as an upstart and tried to ignore.

ROM THE FIRST, Middleford, later
Medford, was an immediate success.
Even before the tracks were laid,
several buildings were under construction, and during the winter forty stores
and residences were erected. It was hard
to look down your nose at a neighbor that
threatened to become so large he would
eventually push you out of the nest.

Jacksonville sulked as most of the remaining professional men and merchants moved to Mud City, taking the agricultural trade with them. But Jacksonville

still had the plum: as county seat with the courthouse and the county political offices, it was still the most important town even though it was only the third largest and even though that blasted railroad continued to bring business and money to the enemy. If there were only a railroad connecting Jacksonville and Medford, Jacksonville would once again regain its predominance in the valley.

Although the idea was a winner and people could see that such a step was about all that was left to them to regain their former stature, the movement didn't take an immediate hold. The hopeful citizens of Jacksonville had to organize, and businesses and individuals had to make pledges and contribute substantial sums. Since Medford people would profit from a railway spur, they were also expected to help. There was a period of five years of planning and collecting before the project even began to be a possibility. In the meantime Medford grew and thrived and paid little attention to Jacksonville's plight. After all, as a fledgling, it had growing pains of its own.

HE MEDFORD AND JACKSONVILLE RAILWAY COMPANY was incorporated on January 17, 1890, and the completion date for the little railroad was set for January 1, 1891, just about a year later. By January 23 Medford businessmen had subscribed to a bonus of \$7,500 to be paid to the builders upon completion of the road. Jacksonville outdid itself and came up with \$12,500, some of it raised by a bond issue, as its share of the bonds.

Almost at once the new corporation set out to survey the route of the exciting new railway line. Surveyor Howard was called to duty and by August the company was engaged in securing the right of way.

After all the delays the developments of 1890 were pretty impressive. But rail—way tracks won't lay themselves and an engine and cars won't appear with a presto-chango. The bulk of the work still remained to be realized.

The Medford and Jacksonville Railway contracted a Corvallis firm, Crawford, Howell and Company, to build the line and run it. The bonus was safely tucked away in the bank, and the steel rails were on order. In October



The picture above is a Natalie Brown photograph of a colorful painting by John S. Anderson. The Jacksonville Cannonball, under the steam of Engine No. 2, chugs impressively up the tracks on C street, headed for the depot. The court house looms majestically in the background.

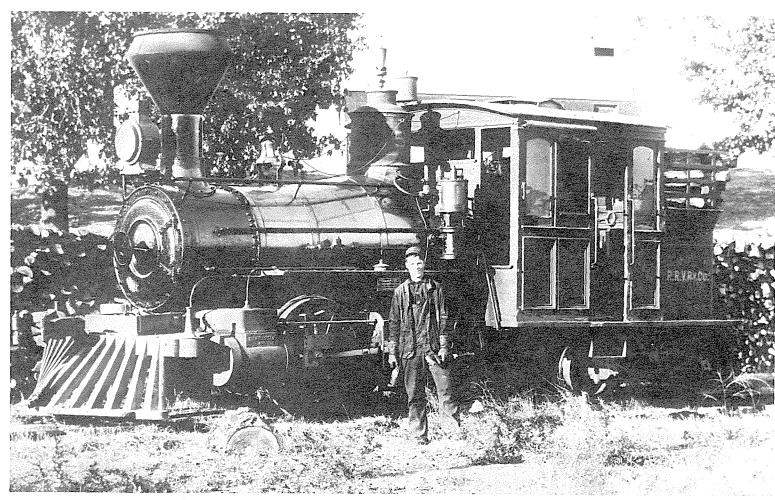
the new company subcontracted the ties and grading for the line, and construction was begun immediately. But there were delays. The site of the Jackson-ville terminal was not selected until December, and it was December, too, before a franchise was secured from the Town Board of Medford for a right of way within the town limits.

With unnecessary stalling, continual deliberation, postponements and bickering among the members of the Medford-Jacksonville Railway Company, the Crawford, Howell Railroad Contractors eventually decided they had exhausted any possibility of profits. When delivery of the rails was held up for unexplained reasons, the Corvallis company announced they had had it with the Jacksonville spur and they unceremoniously withdrew from the project, taking their expertise and their heavy equipment back

to their home base. The disagreements were unforeseen and costly, but they were to be expected. Too much money had gone into the project to give up without an additional battle. After all the railroad bed was only a few miles long and the land was now set aside for depots at each end of the line with room for a roundhouse in Jacksonville in the unused lots behind the terminal.

The Board of the Jacksonville-Medford Railway Company, after some more name calling and some more bickering, agreed to make an effort to persuade Honeyman, DeHart and Company to take over the construction of the final lap of the faltering railway. Perhaps the fact that Honeyman and DeHart had extensive timber holdings in southern Oregon, made the completion of the spur seem to be a worthwhile project. In any case they accepted the challenge.

MARCH 1986



The engine above may be the Jacksonville locomotive No. I. The label on the back of the picture says "Old wood-burning tank locomotive, Jacksonville to Medford, early 1900s." The man is unidentified, but the picture was contributed to the SOHS files by Fred Coffman.

Work was accelerated in an effort to make the deadline, January 1, the date the train had to reach Jacksonville to qualify for the bonus. As the day approached, the overworked crew laid the rails up the last little grade and headed into town, up C Street past the court house and on to the depot grounds. In Jacksonville there was great excitement and hullabaloo, but the fanfare was premature. The rails had been laid on the ground only. They were not ballasted and there were no cars to drive on to the brand new rails, not an engine nor a caboose, and there was no railroad personnel to stoke up the fire box, shout, "All aboard," or punch the tickets.

Nevertheless the management at Honeyman and DeHart were not ready to give up their hopes of making the deadline. Eager to get the bonus, someone at the top borrowed a locomotive from the Union Pacific. That rail line unfortunately didn't own a dinky little engine of about ten-tons, sitting on a siding just waiting for its

day of glory, but they did have an unused 25-ton engine which they delivered to Medford. The news of the locomotive's arrival reached Jacksonville and the suppressed excitement erupted. The city fathers announced an impromptu dinner and grand ball at the U.S. Hotel, and the enthusiastic citizens rallied round to celebrate. They danced far into the night, drank unending toasts to the borrowed locomotive and exultantly shot up the town.

Early the next morning the crewmen got the new car on the tracks, and an acting engineer fired the boiler, shrilled the whistle and pulled away from the Medford depot in great style amid the shouts and applause from the enthusiastic bystanders who lined the tracks leading to Jacksonville. The engine puffed along at a good rate of speed—maybe five miles per hour—and the delighted fans shouted and ran along beside it, urging it on to success.

Sadly for all the great expectations,

the engine soon chugged onto the strip of unballasted tracks, and even as the triumphant toots and whistles blared forth, the rails began sinking, the heavy engine tilted and, as the spectators gasped in tragic disbelief, it tipped over unceremoniously into the ditch.

Well, not to worry. The engine was back on the rails in a couple of days, and a surge of optimism spread through the valley. By January 16 the rolling stock for the line had arrived and the crew worked diligently to secure the road bed and make the rails safe for the cars. Charlie Nickell, the editor of the Jacksonville Democratic Times, suggested that the new line be extended to Eagle Point. A railroad to that town, he editorialized, would encourage capital to invest there and put Eagle Point's magnificent supply of water power to use, not to mention its great potential for the lumber trade. Why, Eagle Point might easily become an important manufacturing city in no time. This was only one of many grand projects envisioned for the little railroad, and the citizens began calling it the "Jacksonville Pacific." Even though the first attempt to get the railroad underway had ended in a fiasco, the citizens felt there was no end of future possibilities for Jacksonville, as a hub on several railroads, radiating out in almost any given direction.

till using the Union Pacific cars, the first train, equipped for passenger and freight, reached Jacksonville on the morning of January 16, 1891. This time there was no advance notice, probably because the original debut had been such a fizzle, and the unsuspecting citizens were startled to hear the whistle of the locomotive and the chug-chug of the engine as it huffed into town. There was a mad scramble to dig out the noise makers and the banners which had been stored for months awaiting the big day. Soon Jacksonville resounded to the clanging of anvils, the explosions of black powder, blasts of mill whistles and the ringing of every bell in town. Some elated citizens were so jubilant they beat their dish pans and wash tubs into scrap metal.

The feeling of excitement ran so high

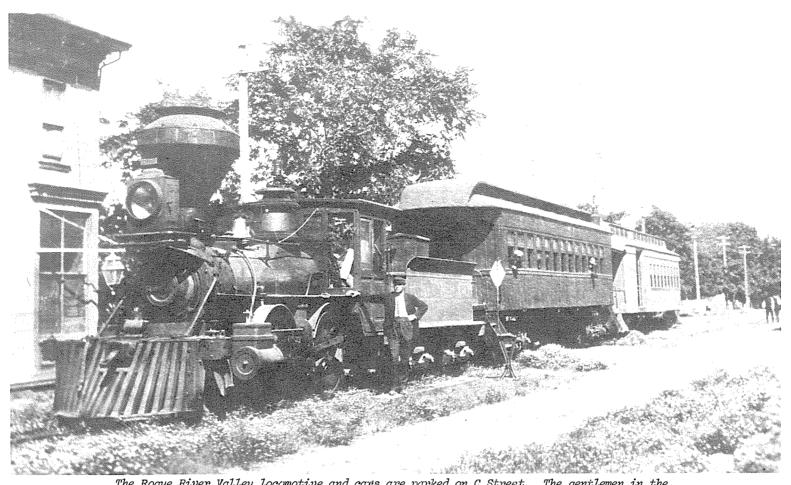
that two young ladies boarded the train and became the first passengers to Medford. The fact they had to walk back home didn't dampen the glory of the occasion, and they were probably not the first damsels to walk back to Jacksonville from a little junket to Medford. The Ashland Tidings declared it was a day "which will long be remembered as the inauguration of renewed life and prosperity into the grand old pioneer town."

A city couldn't get much more up-beat than Jacksonville on that day. Completion of the line had taken concentrated dedication and determination, but it had all been worth it, and it certainly looked as if the county seat could once more hold its own with Chaparrel City, and, to be honest, it appeared that the good folk of the rival town were just about as delighted as the citizens of Jacksonville.

HE CELEBRATION was long and loud, but the company was not prepared to establish immediate passenger service after its initial trip, even though the railroad made a little profit from curious citizens who wanted to try out the ride. By January 23, the train made the run from Jacksonville to Medford in the astonishing time of twenty minutes and Editor Nickell crowed proudly. No one bothered to clock the Medford to Jacksonville run; that was up hill nearly all the way.

By the end of January the Jacksonville depot was almost completed and the line had been extended two miles to the gravel pits on Jackson Creek. Most of the rails had been laid and the cattle guards and crossings were under construction. But it wasn't the true Jacksonville-Medford Line until it had its own engine and its own cars in operation. On February 7, 1891, Honeyman, DeHart and Company incorporated the line as the Rogue River Valley Railway Company. The capital stock was \$100,000, divided into \$1,000 shares. Delighted with the progress, the city fathers extended the bonus date to May 1891.

The new locomotive arrived in March. It was a pretty little engine, weighing in at 12 tons and just as shiny as a new whistle. But it simply couldn't produce the power and pep to climb the uphill



The Rogue River Valley locomotive and cars are parked on C Street. The gentlemen in the background on the right are standing in front of a vacant lot where the fire station is now located. The building on the left was the Democratic Times Building. The flag on the court house is barely discernable in the distance.

grade from Medford to Jacksonville. Hooked up to the passenger car, it steamed and puffed and tried its level best, but it couldn't do the job. The simple fact had to be accepted: on the uphill run the dinkey little engine could only pull empties and usually it balked at that. It was the cutest little engine in the state, but it wasn't worth a damn.

The company found it necessary to retain, very probably at a rental, the Union Pacific engine. While they were borrowing from their neighbors, they also borrowed a couple of passenger cars from the Southern Pacific, and the Jacksonville-Medford line was in business. The trains ran twice each day. On one run it made connections with the Southern Pacific, and on the second run carried the mail from Medford to the county seat.

With its borrowed equipment the rail-road began to live up to everyone's expectations. The ever-hopeful citizens of Jacksonville anticipated not only a return to prosperity but a spectacular future. When the new railway was extended to Crescent City or Port Orford,

Jacksonville would become the big metropolis between Portland and San Francisco, rivaling both of them.

In May the bonus was paid to the builders. The company had spent \$32,902.87 on construction and \$8,257.24 for rolling stock. Honeyman, DeHart and Company filed articles of incorporation with the Secretary of State for a corporation to be known as the Rogue River Valley Railway and Improvement Company. The organization announced their intent to build and conduct a railroad and telegraph line linking Medford, Central Point and Eagle Point. The capitalization authorized was \$500,000.

HERE WERE, AS ALWAYS, a few problems with the unregenerate teenagers
They sometimes broke into the car barns and helped themselves to a hand car which they put on the tracks. In the 1890s kids were just as hooked on speed as they are today, and, as the young men wildly pumped the hand treadle with all their might and main, they sometimes reached astonishing rates of speed, easily out-

distancing the irate city marshall who could only watch them disappear down the tracks as he shouted after them, threatening them with incarceration for life.

Other turn-of-the century delinquents greased the tracks near the school house hill, and from time to time the students could look out the window and see the engineer and a couple of passengers busily scrubbing the tracks with gunnysacks to remove the grease so the locomotive could make it into town with its car load of late passengers. A 44-caliber pistol cartridge which had surrepticiously been placed on the tracks barely missed Charles Nickell who wrote an irate editorial and would have distributed a little corporal punishment could he have put his hands on the guilty party.

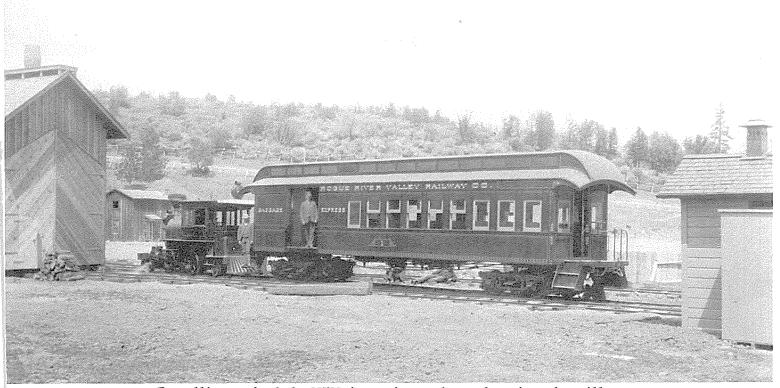
But aside from these bearable nuisances, the train made its schedule, took the local baseball team—Bum Neuber's Goldbricks and their fans—to the game, planned special trips to transport lodge members to their meetings, made jaunts to the county fair and the Fourth of July celebrations, and, in the heat of summer, took the gentry to Colestin, a resort in the Siskiyous. A Chautauqua

Special was docketed, and when an outstanding play or opera appeared at the Medford Opera House, special excursions were called.

At this time the train was indispensible to southern Oregon. Although there were continual jokes about the schedule, the mishaps, and the delays, there was no other practical route to bring passengers to the county seat. The road between Medford and Jacksonville was a cow trail at best, and during the rainy season, it was a muddy bog to be avoided if at all possible. Farmers dreaded trusting their wagons to the ruts, and a horse-drawn carriage was out of the question.

Rumors, actual plans, schemes and proposals for more profitable developments continued to arise. Talk of an Eagle Point railroad surfaced time and again. The possibility of an extension to Klamath Falls was bandied about, and Medford and Jacksonville were frequently asked for subsidies.

But as the years slipped by and no subsidy was forthcoming and the rumors proved to be unfounded, the promoters lost interest. Unfortunately the road had not been an over-all profit-making venture although some years had ended in



The rolling stock of the RRVRR is resting at the car barn in Jacksonville.

The dirt road in the background leads to the cemetery.



The interior of a RRVRR car. The seats were upholstered in straw, and the wooden parts were of solid oak and walnut veneers.

the black. The year, 1891, closed with a deficit of \$2,408.78; the following year, 1892, showed a further deficit. But in 1895 the owners declared a profit of \$642.97, after the liabilities had been met. In 1895 a 20 ton locomotive was purchased. Even with its cost, \$1184.35, an accounting at the end of the year revealed the road had made \$417.26 clear. These profits of course made no one connected with the line a famous and wealthy railroad magnate. The State Board of Railway Commissioners was abolished in 1896 and the financial picture for the next ten years is not available.

Unexpected episodes occurred which were all classified as "business as usual," but which gave the railroad much of its character and its nickname, "The Jacksonville Cannonball." The engine

ran off the track near the depot on February, 1898, and the passenger car left the rails in May. In March 1899 the engine went into the ditch on the curve entering Medford, and the passengers had to walk the rest of the way into town carrying the mail. Incidents like this, which could only have happened on a little podunk train, tended to make the RRVRR a comedy railroad. The title, Jacksonville Cannonball, evolved naturally.

URING THESE YEARS service continued with few serious interruptions even though the railroad changed hands a time or two. In 1893 it was leased to William Seldon Barnum, and running the train became a family affair with Barnum and his two sons operating



The RRVRR Depot, restored
the line. The Cannonball attracted widespread attention when John Barnum, aged
14, was pictured on the cover of the
Railway Gazette as the youngest conductor
in the nation.

With the line making no growth and less profit, Honeyman, DeHart and Company at last became discouraged. In 1899 the railroad was sold to its lease holder, W.S. Barnum, for a sum believed to be \$12,000. Word was passed around that had Barnum not taken over, the rolling stock would have been sold to a lumber company and the road dismantled.

ILLIAM S. BARNUM, his wife and his two sons, John and Bill, had come to Medford from New York in 1884. A third son was born in Medford. Shortly after William Barnum arrived in southern Oregon, he started a sash and door factory, later adding a machine shop. Medford was experiencing its initial building boom and Barnum's expertise and stock were in demand. He soon had money to invest and looked around for a project that would bring a return on his investment. When the Rogue River Valley Railroad Company came up for grabs, he bought it. Selling his factory and machine shop, he moved his family to Jacksonville where for many years he was a town fixture.

At first, under his management, the line ran one engine and one coach per day, but soon he added a more powerful engine capable of pulling several freight cars, and as many as five round trips were made each day. The railroad played an even more significant part in the

business of the period. In addition to its other services, it had a Wells Fargo Express and U.S. Mail Compartment.

In the 1890s raidroad trains were always more or less grimy. Dust drifted in the cracks and through the window ledges. A well-dressed lady wore a duster if she had one and continually dabbed at her face with a dainty, cologne-drenched hanky. Of course between Jacksonville and Medford there were no smutty tunnels, but when a smartly gowned lady arrived at the depot, she always preened considerably before she was ready to sally forth into town.

Even so, the conductor on the Jack-sonville Cannonball had always been neat. He had worn a white shirt, a trim black tie, an approved black suit and a conductor's cap, tilted at a racy angle. With William S. Barnum, the conformity to the dress code came to an end.\*

His chief garment was an old swallowtail coat that had long since turned green with wear and exposure to the weather. He sported a scraggly white beard about a foot long and wore a well

Barnum's description is taken from a story which appeared in the <u>Jacksonville Miner</u>. He was remembered by a retired railroad man who had worked on the RRVRR.



John Barnum, 14, the youngest conductor in the United States.

broken-in conductor's cap perched upon his head. When the "Barnum Special"-one or two passenger cars and an engine with a full head of steam--was ready to take off, Barnum would come out on the rear platform, yell, "All aboard!" and then alight to the ground. He would hurry forward to the cab of the dinkey, take off his cap and his swallow-tail, heave a few sticks of cordwood into the burner, wash his hands in a barrel of water he always carried in the tender, set the throttle so the train would plug along about four miles an hour and then don his cap and swallow-tail coat again.

He would then leap to the ground, wait for the end of the coach to approach, swing to the rear platform and enter the car through the back door. From somewhere behind his beard he would produce a punch and amble off down the aisle, calling sharply, "Tickets, please." When he had finished with this duty, he would climb over the tender, take off the cap and coat and be fireman, engineer and owner for the rest of the run. When the boys weren't in school, they helped out.

Under Barnum's management the Cannon-ball continued being as much of a character as its owner. Stories of the train at the turn of the century frequently appeared in the papers. Some of them are worth another run-through.

One tale concerns a drummer who boarded the train in Medford and impatiently endured the slow pace of the Cannonball as it inched toward Jacksonville. There was an extra boxcar that day loaded with flour, and each laborious stroke of the drive rods convinced the salesman that the Cannonball was about to expire.

"Can't you go a little faster," fretted the gentleman.

"Sure, I can go faster," Barnum replied pleasantly, "but I have to stay with the train."

Raymond Reter. a citizen of early Medford, had a favorite Barnum story which was published in the *Jacksonville Miner*. It is reprinted here in the editor's words:

On one occasion, the old funnel-shaped

teakettle that Bill Barnum hitched to the business end of his string, actually exceeded its average maximum speed of about ten miles per hour. This was not due to a tender full of pitch wood, but rather to the pitch of the grade above Jacksonville.

It seems that Barnum had trouble with his air brakes one day as he was coming down out of the hills with two extra cars loaded with pretty good sized logs. Belching sparks, hissing steam and rattling in every connection, the old iron horse careened from side to side as it gathered momentum down towards the old town and Bill jumped for his life before the runaway train was certain to make the leap for death and destruction. But Barnum hadn't correctly looked into the future when he leaped. The speeding locomotive did not leave the rails but, as the astonished citizens gasped at the unscheduled rush through town, it roared on and on--out onto the flats to come to a final halt--unaided and unabetted--at Perrydale Station, some three miles from Jacksonville.

Another story of the Barnums makes young John the protagonist. After he married his young lady, he decided they should take a leisurely, long-to-be-remembered honeymoon in the east. A little study of the pleasant sights available to young couples revealed that Pennsylvania was a bride and groom's paradise, and John accordingly wrote a letter to the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad for free passes, a courtesy often exchanged by railroad lines.

The president of the Pennsylvania line, after some delay, wrote back that an investigation revealed to him that the Barnum line was but five miles of track, whereas the Pennsylvania line was over 15,000 miles long, and an exchange of passes would hardly be equitable.

Young John, with his heart still set on his honeymoon, wrote back that it was all true: the Pennsylvania line was 15,000 miles in length and the Rogue River Railroad was but five miles long, but he asked the gentleman to remember one thing. Though the Pennsylvania road was much longer than the Jacksonville road, Barnum's railroad was just as wide.

According to Raymond Reter, young John Barnum got the pass.



W.S. Barnum sits for a photograph in the Jacksonville depot, where he kept a modest collection of pin-ups. The gentleman on the right is John Corbin Barnum, the eldest son of William. Photograph courtesy of Dr. William Barnum of Medford.

Rumors that Barnum was selling out to wealthy interests, and reports of improvements and extensions to the line continued, but the Cannonball went on its indifferent way. The citizens of both Medford and Jacksonville were frequently out of sorts with Barnum. In 1905 he was arrested and fined for blocking traffic. In 1907 he was ordered to install a new depot. He agreed to the edict, but made no effort to start the building.

As time passed and nothing seemed to be accomplished as far as building a Jacksonville depot, the Railroad Commission decided to investigate. On a day early in December Oswald West, a member of the commission—and later governor of Oregon--paid a call on Mr. Barnum, For some reason J.F. Reddy, Mayor of Medford, came along. There was no cause for him to be included in the party, but as a dignitary of Medford, he probably invited himself to be part of the investigation committee, and came along th express his importance around the railroad yard. His presence did not set well with W.S. Barnum, who had enough to do to try to placate the commission, and when Mayor Reddy insisted on getting into the unpleasantness, tempers really flared.

Barnum went after the mayor with fisticuffs, and Reddy took off in high speed across the muddiest section of the tracks. Not being able to catch the flying mayor, Barnum hurled a double-bitted axe at him

MARCH 1986 27

which failed its mark by a foot. The mayor retrieved the axe and made a brave stand, but the bystanders interfered and prevented further mayhem—even though they seemed to feel if anyone deserved to have an axe flung at him, Dr. Reddy was certainly the one.

Barnum was arrested on a charge of assault with a dangerous weapon and was released on bail. The grand jury found him not guilty. In their opinion there had been no crime committed.

This brought George Putnam, the editor of the Medford Mail Tribune into the affair. He had apparently joined the commission as a newspaper man, and had come along for the ride. He was an eyewitness to the event and he wrote an editorial strongly criticizing the grand jury and the deputy District Attorney, Clarence L. Reames. The grand jury immediately returned an indictment for lible against the editor. When Putnam left Medford for a meeting in Portland, the sheriff telegraphed the authorities at Roseburg demanding his arrest. He was taken from his berth on the train and confined in the Roseburg jail awaiting trial.

During the hearing Judge H.K. Hanna refused to permit Putnam to introduce any evidence concerning the assault. He ruled that the findings of the grand jury must be accepted as the unquestioned truth. The jury found Putnam guilty as charged and he was fined \$50.

The case attracted widespread attention. Other newspaper editors rallied around the cause and attacked Judge Hanna mercilessly. The battle was still raging when Putnam appealed the verdict to the Oregon Supreme Court. The judgment was reversed and Putnam was vindicated.

In 1909 the Railroad Commission ordered Barnum to provide heat and drinking water on passenger coaches and demanded that he maintain a regular schedule. The year 1908 had been the railroad's most profitable year. Barnum had added a gasoline motor car, three freight cars, and now owned a total of six "company cars." Records show that on July 4, 1913, the Cannonball carried 3500 people to a celebration in Medford and realized \$1400 that day in fares. Much of the profits on the railroad was a result of the pear

boom which swept the valley. John Barnum announced that a four-story building to cost \$75,000 was to be erected in Medford. The first floor would serve as a depot and the other floors as a hotel. The Barnum Apartments—later the Hotel Grand—was the result of this plan.

UT THE MANAGEMENT had continual difficulties. Profits again dropped. Passenger traffic and freight revenues declined sharply. A source of trouble was the new all-weather county road from Medford to Jacksonville. That invention of the Devil, the horseless carriage, began to appear on the highways and some enterprising soul began a jitney service and charged the passengers 50 cents a round trip, the same fare as that charged by the railroad. Barnum countered by making hourly trips with a 25-cent round trip fare and the jitney service gave up the struggle--for the time.

The year 1912 had showed a profit of \$1, 143.25, and 1913 had cleared several thousand. With the entire family on the payroll, the Cannonball was paying a good return. But in that year a new development came to the valley: a realty company of Oakland, California, applied to the Medford City Council for a franchise to operate an interurban electric system. The application was countered by Barnum who determined to meet the terms of his rival.

resentment against Barnum and the Cannonball, his offer received little consideration. The Oakland offer was accepted. A 55 year franchise was granted by the Medford City Council for the construction and operation of an electric street railway within the city. To construct the new line, the Southern Oregon Traction Company was incorporated.

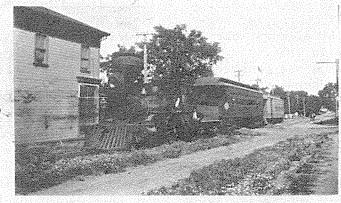
This company was acquired by a New Yorker, S.S. Bullis, who did the actual planning and construction of the Medford street railway. He had had extensive experience in building and operating street railways in the south and east before coming to Medford.

The valley hummed with excitement. Speculation and rumors soared. It was said that Barnum was offered \$125,000 for the Rogue River Valley Railway. The road would extend to Crescent City

# Table

TRAIN TIME Leaves JACKSONVILLE Leaves MEDFORD TABLE

9:45 a. m. and 3:30 p. m. 11:35 a. m. and 5:15 p. m.



25 MINUTES TO MAKE TRIP EACH WAY

#### Just Lately Additional Quick Service!

EFFECTIVE JULY 1st, 1905

ROGUE RIVER VALLEY RY, CO.'s special Time Schedule of Auto Car which is now in service, making morning and evening round trips between Medford and Jacksonville, will leave stations as follows, making quick runs:

AUTO CAR TIME TABLE: Leaves MEDFORD

Leaves JACKSONVILLE

7:00 a. m. and 7:00 p. m. 8:00 a. m. and 9:00 p. m.

15 MINUTES TO MAKE TRIP EACH WAY



four people, additional in number will be extra. Auto Car can also be had at any time during the night by 'Phone,

W. S. BARNUM, President

TEXT TEXT TEXT TO THE TEXT TEXT TO THE TEX

and Bend. There would be a transcontinental line in southern Oregon. If there were any deals, they all fell through. The Barnums continued to operate the Cannonball.

But finally in 1915, the Southern Oregon Traction Company did buy the RRVRR. The selling price was set at \$125,000, part in cash and the remainder held as a mortgage. Electrification of the line was begun in August, 1915. Construction went well and regular service to Jacksonville by electric car was inaugurated early in 1916.

An extension of the line was constructed into the hills beyond Jacksonville and became known as the Bullis Logging Road. Other plans for extending the line to the coast were made, but, in a final decision, Bullis and his son, Seth, rejected it as being completely impractical.

The difficulty of operating the rail-road in wartime induced the Bullis father and son to give up the railroad in 1918. In 1919 it was sold again, this time to J.T. Gagnon of Medford. But again it was unsuccessful. An "auto jitney" offered too much competition and Gagnon sold it to John W. Opp in 1922.

The road was in never-ending difficulties during 1923. The company could not maintain grade crossings or keep up the tracks. The line again reverted to W.S. Barnum, but it was obvious it could no longer be operated successfully. The roadbed was impassable and rolling stock had deteriorated. In 1928 Barnum petitioned the Public Service Commission for permission to dismantle the line.

The rails were taken up and sold to the city of Medford, the engines and the cars were hauled away, and the right of way property reverted to the original owners. Today, practically nothing remains of the early railroad except pictures, memories and the little old Engine No. 1, which is rolling once more.

story in the Grants Pass Courier, dated, 1955, reveals that the Chalwell O'Connells of Alta Loma, California, had spotted the dinkey, the little Engine No. 1, in a logging camp near Cottage Grove, Oregon. O'Connell was an avid railway fan, and, as a birthday gift, his wife Helen bought the little engine for him.

With much expense and trouble -- they

were given a traffic ticket because the engine was too tall, a problem that had to be resolved with a blow torch -- they transported the locomotive to their home where they restored it. It ran back and forth on a private little track among the eucalyptus and lemon trees. But like an unwanted orphan, it was not destined to stay with its adoptive parents.

It next surfaced in Cottage Grove again where it had been purchased by the Village Green Association to promote that tourist complex. After several years it was bought by a representative of a Railroad Club, the Shore Line Enterprises, Incorporated, which is based in Jamestown, California, and once more was taken south.

Dr. William Barnum of Medford, a grandson of W.S. Barnum, has been eager to acquire the engine for years, but members of the railroad club have said they are not interested in selling. Admitting that it is part of the history of southern Oregon, a representative of the company, as late as May 1985, made the suggestion that they might be willing to bring the engine to Jacksonville for display during a celebration.

At present the engine, fitted out with a new boiler to give it more power, takes loads of children during the holiday season into the forest around Jamestown to find Christmas trees. It is certainly a happier use than being shunted off on a siding in a lumber camp.

HE HISTORY OF THE ROGUE RIVER VAL-LEY RAILROAD is the story of Jacksonville's fight for life. The little town was seeking economic salvation, and the citizens hoped the railroad would pour gold into the flagging community. The town was a long time a-dying, and it had to lose its pride before it finally gave up the ghost in the thirties.

It is too bad that someone couldn't have dropped a coin into a wishing-well and turned Jacksonville into Chicago; the citizens had wanted it so badly. They wished for their city to be rich and famous while it was young and vigorous and rowdy. Instead they had to wait for the prestige that comes with the dignity of old age. It's certainly better than no prestige at all, but still . . .

Raymond Lewis

#### SOHS SEEKS VOLUNTEERS FOR LIVING HISTORY

Looking for a rewarding experience?

Join our team of Living History Interpreters this summer season at the Beekman House and Bank in Jacksonville. We need people of all ages to be Greeters or to play roles of the Beekman family, their friends, relatives, hired help, business associates or young music students. Volunteers will be asked to give an average of one day a week between May 24 and September 1 (with a few people needed at the Bank through September 30th.) It's great fun, and a thorough training is provided beginning in mid-April. We will also start arranging for constumes soon, so let us know right away of your interest. For more



Characters & Greeters for the Living History Program

REWARD OFFERED

information on volunteering, contact staff members Marge Herman or Dawner Curler at 899-1847.

A few part-time paid Living History Interpreter positions are also available. Work schedules will generally run five hours a day, 20 to 25 hours per week, and will usually include weekends. Applications with complete job descriptions may be picked up at the Courthouse Museum or the Society's administrative offices in the Armstrong House in Jacksonville or at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum in Ashland. Applications must be returned to the Armstrong House at 375 East California Street in Jacksonville no later than March 31st.

#### SOSC TO OFFER HISTORY CLASS

Jeff LaLande, Archaeologist/Historian for the Rogue River National Forest, will be teaching, for a second year, a course, *History of Southern Oregon*, to be offered by the Southern Oregon State College. The class will be held spring term on the Ashland campus, and may be taken for three credits through the history department or may be taken as a non-credit class through the Center for Continuing Education. Beginning on April 2, the class will meet on Wednesday evenings, 6:30-9:20, in room 107, Taylor Hall.

The course content will cover everything from geological history and archaeology of the Indians to recent events in southwestern Oregon and northern California. There will be an evening field trip.

For additional information call the Center for Continuing Education (482-6331) or consult an upcoming issue of the Center's Quest brochure, a supplement in local newspapers.

#### CORRECTIONS TO BE MADE IN THE FEBRUARY ISSUE

#### THE PERNOLL STORY

The second paragraph on page 7 states that the Pernoll Store was built at the site of the present-day Applegate Store. This is an error. The paragraph should read:

In 1890 William Pernoll built a new store at the intersection of 238 and the North Applegate Road. The residence is still there.

On page 12 a headline lists the "Children of Lydia and William Pernoll." The heading should have been: "Children of Nancy and William Pernoll; a listing continued from page 7."

On page 12 Myra Minerva is incorrectly identified as Mary Minerva.



Jacksonville's Historical and Architectural Review Committee is shown reviewing the Society's plans for the new History Center to be constructed in Jacksonville. L-R are Jim Lewis, Chr., Don Bateman, John Ubhaus, (standing) Jim Goodreau, David Larson city planner Craig Stone and Society architect Lorin Jacobs.

If the project progresses through the various Jacksonville committes at its present speed, construction could begin in July. We'll keep you posted!

#### COVER PHOTOGRAPH IDENTIFIED

To the Editor:

In reference to your most beautiful cover on the 49th anniversary issue, Vol. 6, No.2, February, 1986, please be advised that the "Portrait of an Unidentified Lady" is hereby identified as the cherished picture of my grand-mother.

She was born Etta Mae Hill in Silver City, Idaho, Jan. 23, 1869. She married William Ira Vawter in Eugene, Oregon, February 10, 1889. She died in Santa Barbara, California, on September 3, 1936.

I was finishing a summer job at Crater Lake when I received the news of her death. It was very sad for me as we were very close, having lived with her for several of my 15 years at the time. The same portrait has been reproduced by Mrs. V.H. Vawter of Santa Barbara and both of my daughters have framed pictures.

Certainly Mr. Beall was a talented photographer. Note the sparkle in her eyes and the warmth of a smile that is beginning to form. This is in contrast to the austere look of most photo-subjects of those times.

Thank you so much for my cover girl.
William S. Vawter
Aptos, California



## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

206 N. Fifth St., P.O. Box 480 Jacksonville, Oregon 97530, (503) 899-1847

Volume 6, No. 3, March 1986 ISSN: 0732-0523





NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 13
Jacksonville,
Oregon 97530