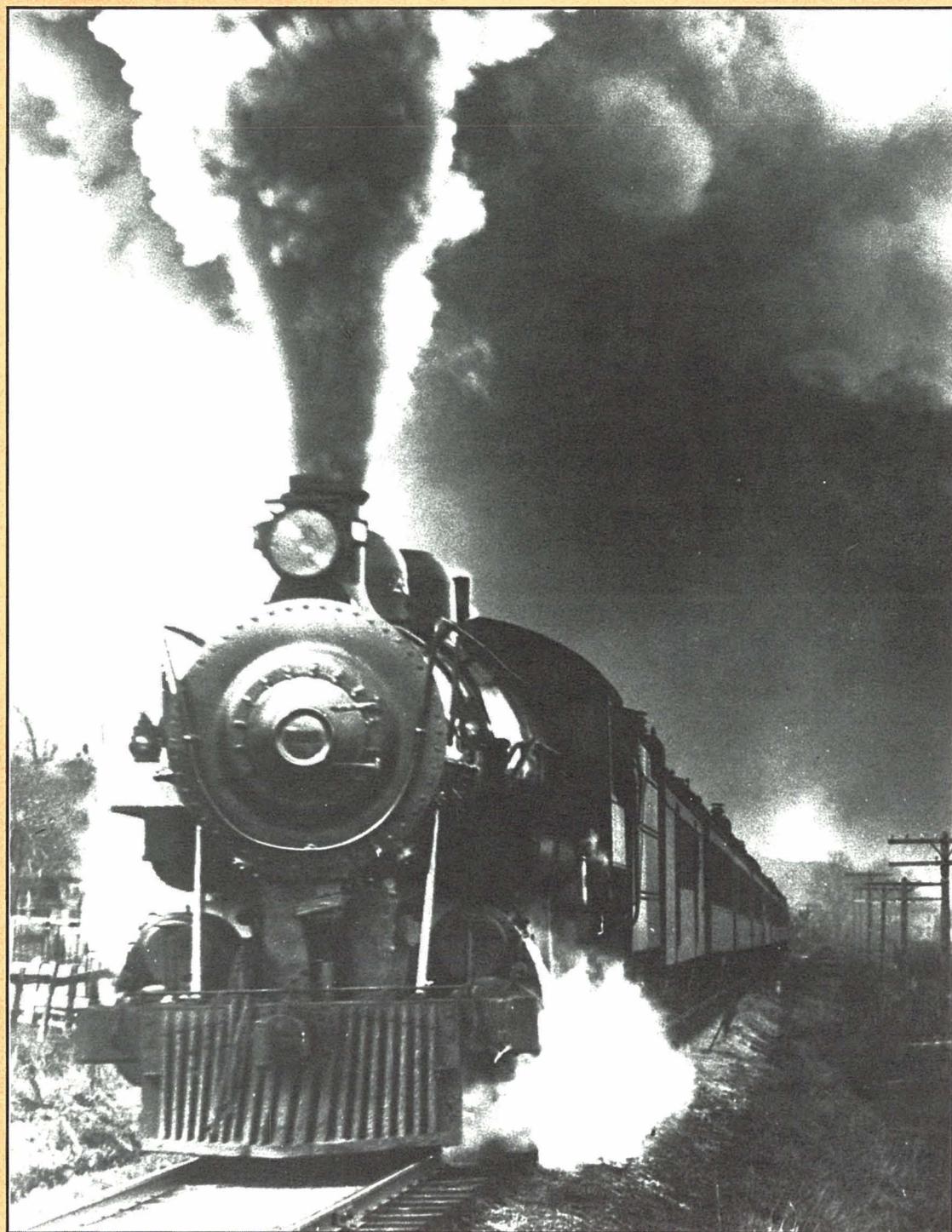


TABLE ROCK

\$2.50

SENTINEL

MARCH 1988



The
Magazine
of the
Southern
Oregon
Historical
Society

Commentary

It opens March 26th. And you get to see it first. I'm speaking of the Society's first major exhibit since the Magna Carta came to town in November 1986. "Making Tracks: The Impact of Railroading in the Rogue Valley" makes its debut in the Jacksonville Museum late this month. Society members will have the first opportunity to see the exhibit during the members-only reception on Saturday, March 26th, from 6 to 9 p.m.



This is the first large-scale exhibit change in the Jacksonville Museum since the mid-1970s. The exhibit occupies the entire second-floor courtroom and tells not only the story of the coming of the railroad but also the tremendous impact railroading has had on the growth and development of the Rogue Valley in the past one hundred years. We look forward to seeing you at the members' reception on March 26th. Just to whet your appetite and heighten your interest we are including in this issue a feature article by Society staff member Sue Waldron who conducted much of the research that helped make this exhibit possible.

The January issue of the *Sentinel* reported on an effort underway to raise funds for the repair and restoration of McKee Covered Bridge in the Applegate Valley. This significant historical landmark has been the victim of time and the elements and now is in need of major repairs.

Anyone who has lived very long in this area has heard of McKee Bridge. Most residents of the region have visited the bridge and adjacent picnic area at one time or another. But to truly appreciate the bridge today one must understand the story of its past and the people who figured in its history. To that end we present a feature article in this issue on the history of McKee Bridge written by Society Trustee Mark Wolfe.



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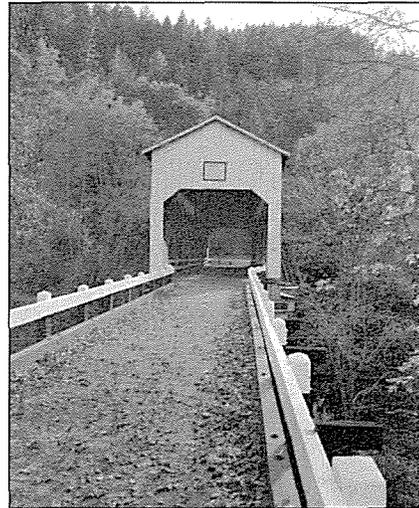
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SENTINEL



p. 4



p. 12

Features

4 Growing Up in Ashland's Railroad District

by Sue Waldron

The railroad schedule and surprises brought on the trains governed the activities of the community which developed near the tracks. In this exciting atmosphere, opportunities abounded for children to work and play. Marie Prescott and Elizabeth Fenger remember the pranks, chores, and trains of their childhood.

12 The Bridge at McKee's Place by Mark Wolfe

The treacherous roads through the Applegate area did not provide adequate access to the Blue Ledge mines. The McKee Bridge crossing the Applegate River not only provided an easier, alternate route, but also became a favored picnic area and wayside for weary travelers.

Departments

16 Society Update

22 Regional Digest

17 From the Collections

24 Calendar of Events



cover: A "Mikado Type" 3-2-0-0 class steam engine pulls into Ashland near the Helman Street crossing in 1912. SOHS #10503.



(opposite) A crowd gathers to send Ashland's National Guard company off for a "secret" assignment during World War I. SOHS #6585

(below) Childhood chums Paul Jones (l) and Elizabeth Carter (r) show off toothless smiles. Elizabeth's brother, Wayne, joins them.

Growing Up In Ashland's Railroad District

by Sue Waldron

Settlers founded Ashland in early 1852, and the community developed as a farm supply center and mill town. The lumber, flour and woolen mills on Ashland Creek encouraged growth and the town spread along Main Street and beside the creek. Moderate growth continued through the 1860s and '70s. But because of the Rogue Valley's isolation by the surrounding mountains, businesses found that transportation problems limited the number of potential customers that they could serve.

It was 1859 before a "good" road was built south over the Siskiyou Mountains to California. About the same time a road was opened over the Coast Mountains to Crescent City. Yet even with improved roads the only transportation in and out of the valley was by stagecoach, expensive freight wagon or pack train, or on foot or horseback. This made it difficult to import or export products or materials. The area was largely self-sustaining.

Then in May 1884, after a ten-year delay in Roseburg, the Oregon and California Railroad reached Ashland. The first steam engine and cars that rolled into town so frightened one group of people that they drove their wagon into a ditch for protection. Others were excited by the idea that they could now take the train to Portland, connect with the transcontinental rail line and get to New York City in less than seven days. It was like traveling by telegraph!

When the railroad was completed south to California in 1887, Ashland, situated at the base of the Siskiyou Mountains, was an ideal location for a division headquarters. The railroad purchased the old Hargadine donation land claim¹ and began surveying for a



Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Fenger

train yard.

By 1888 major building was under way in the train yard. A large depot hotel was built with sixty sleeping rooms, a dining room that would seat 200, a bar, baggage room, large kitchen and ticket office.² Across the tracks, the ten-bay roundhouse with a brick-lined turntable was built. Soon a water tank, ice storage building, car repair shop and stockyard were added. Once the train yard was established the

railroad made property west of the tracks available for homes and businesses, dividing the area into twenty-five-foot frontage lots. Contractors bought the lots and built what came to be called "railroad spec houses." Ashland's railroad district began to grow.

The district became a separate part of Ashland with restaurants, a grocery store, a drugstore, rooming houses, a bakery, an ice cream parlor, a pool hall and brothels. Livery stables, a butcher shop and a district fire department also crowded into the area around Fourth Street. It became a town within a town.

Some homes already existed in the district before the railroad came and most of those families stayed. But the railroad brought in many new families—different people. Railroaders moved often and their commitment was to the railroad, not the local community. They moved when the railroad asked them to; they had free passes to ride the trains; they were more cosmopolitan. Their rootless life kept many of them from having families. The number of single men increased dramatically in Ashland when the railroad arrived. These men did not want to own homes, so boarding houses flourished, as did the pool halls, restaurants, and Madam Eva's house of prostitution.



Ashland children sold apples, peaches, plums, cherries and strawberries to railroad passengers at the depot. SOHS #11156

There was an excitement about living in the railroad district, especially for children. Something was happening all the time. Trains came and went and there was noise and activity. Elizabeth Carter lived just east of the tracks on Mountain Avenue. She and her sister, Esther, and her brother, Wayne, grew up in the railroad district using the tracks to walk into town. Their father was H.B. Carter, who farmed his property, ran a dairy and worked for the railroad off and on. Marie Prescott and her brother, Glenn, also grew up in the railroad district. Clarence Prescott was Marie's father and he made his living as a carpenter. Marie was born on Blaine Street, moved to Third Street and has spent the rest of her life on B Street.

Children looked for excuses to go down to the depot. Mailing a letter was a good excuse and Marie remembers that if a kid was "real late and real brave and tall enough" the letter could be put in the slot on the side of the mail car itself. Another reason to go to the depot was to get Lithia water. In 1916 Ashland constructed three Lithia fountains, two in the park off the plaza and one north of the depot. Elizabeth's mother "...thought Lithia water was just wonderful. Mother would get a lot of lemons and we would get that darn Lithia water and she would put the lemons in it and

would think it was good and we children thought it was horrendous."⁴

A crowd of kids always waited at the depot when a train came in. Many were there to sell things to the passengers. They would have apples, peaches, plums and boxes of fresh strawberries or cherries. Sometimes the organ grinder would come to play a tune for the passengers. Wayne Carter sold magazines and newspapers and fresh roses were also available. With the construction of the Lithia fountain, one enterprising young man came to the depot at train time and sold paper cups. Each cup cost a nickle and allowed passengers to sample the Lithia water. After the train left, this outrageous young

man would pick up the used cups, dry them and sell them again to the next batch of train passengers.

Restaurants and hotels in the area hired young people to work as curb runners. When a train arrived, the curb runners' job was to move among the train passengers and encourage them to patronize the businesses they represented.

In the early 1900s Southern Pacific became alarmed at the number of near-accidents attributed to the antics of the boys selling at the depot. Some of them were caught catching rides of the cars as the train pulled into

The first steam engine and cars that rolled into town so frightened one group of people that they drove their wagon into a ditch for protection.

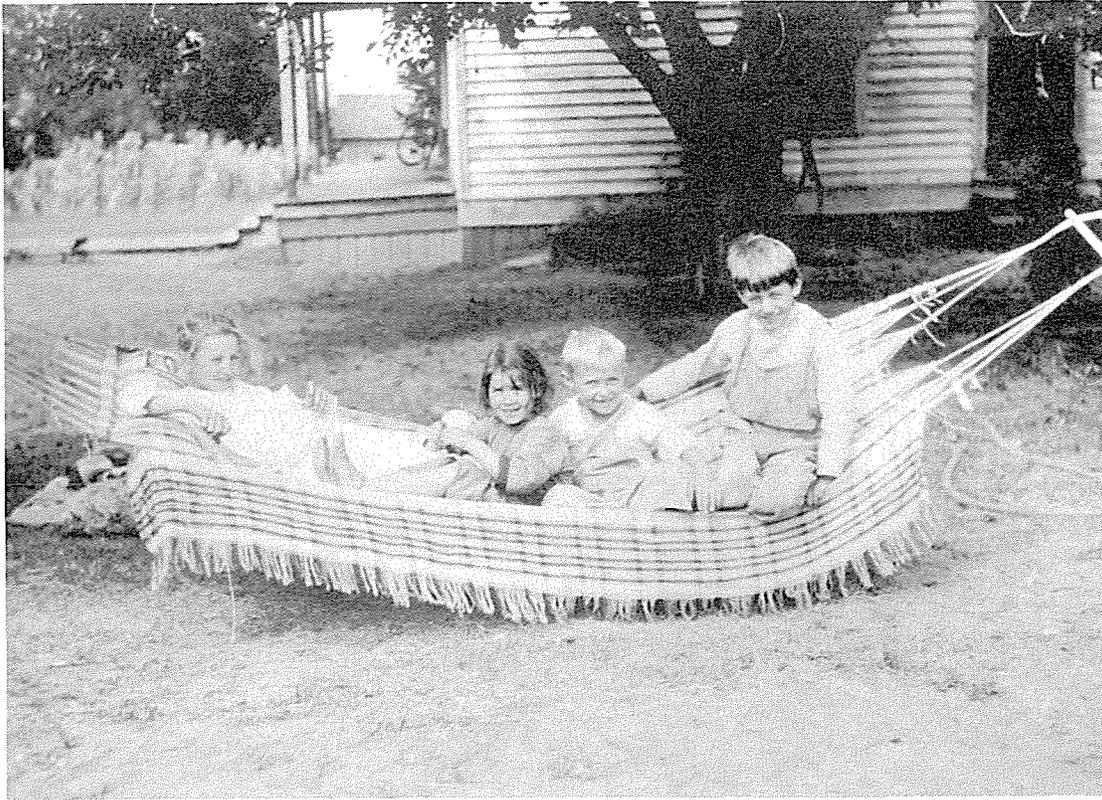


Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Fenger

Four of the Jones and Carter children squeeze in a hammock on a warm day in 1917.

the depot. In 1905 the cities of Eugene, Albany and Salem prohibited selling at the depot.⁵ Grants Pass and Ashland tried licensing the boys and restricting them to certain areas for their selling. Ten years later Southern Pacific recommended an ordinance prohibiting all selling by children at the depot.⁶

Some young people, like Elizabeth Carter and her friends, loved to go down to the depot just to tease the Chinese cooks in the hotel kitchen. ‘...we had to go around to the back where all the cooks were. ...and we would holler ‘Houlama, Houlama, Houlama!’ Now we just made that word up but it sounded kinda Chinese, and they would come running out with their big cleavers and run down there after us...and we would just run for home down the tracks as fast as we could go. They were having just as much fun as we were, I’m sure.’⁷

Left behind when the gold rush slowed down, the Chinese turned to railroad work. By the early 1900s there were still a number of Chinese in the Ashland area. Most of them lived around Second and A Streets. Many worked as gandy dancers and on the section crews for the railroad. A number also worked as cooks and waiters at the hotels in Ashland. Since there were few Chinese women in the district, there were even fewer

Chinese children. Two well-known children were Jenny and Sammy Wah Chung. Their father was a labor contractor in Ashland and he ran a store. Elizabeth remembers going with her father and brother to the store to buy firecrackers. Sammy came to Elizabeth’s house many times to play. Marie remembers attending Jenny’s birthday party. ‘They invited everyone in Jenny’s room [in school] ...and it was a real meal—lovely food—served by Chinese men...and I can remember a salmon-type of salad that was delicious.’⁸

Children living in the railroad district didn’t chase the ice wagon down the street on hot summer days. Instead, they went up to the depot when the train came in. A baggage cart was used to move ice from the storage building to the train yard. While the workers were busy up on the top of the train putting ice in the cars, boys would climb into the cart and chip off a piece of ice to suck on—much easier than chasing a wagon on a hot day.

The depot was the main focus of activity in the area, but there were many other things to do without leaving the district. About 1910 George Damon decided to build a merry-go-round down at the end of B Street. Marie remembers that they built an octagonal-shaped building that had a water-powered motor to make it go

“Mother...would get that darn Lithia water and...put the lemons in it... and we children thought it was horrendous.”

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Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Fenger

Five well-balanced Ashland children demonstrate their equilibrium on stilts in Ashland's railroad district, 1919.

around. They used an Amberola music box and there were bench-type seats. "Well, then a real merry-go-round came to town, with horses. and they set up down on the left hand side of B Street on Water Street. And, of course, that just ended their fancy merry-go-round with straight bench seats. And then one older lady, Mrs. Mickelson, fell off and broke her arm....that sort of ended the merry-go-round business. The Damons cut this merry-go-round into pie-like sections and lived in about half of it and the other half became a cabinetworks."

If a young person didn't mind some religious education, the mission on Fourth Street frequently put on free magic lantern slide shows. Just walking around in the district was fun, too. There were certain areas where skating and coaster wagons were frowned on because in those houses railroad men slept during the day. Across the street from the grocery store there was a house of prostitution. The kids walked by there deliberately and as Elizabeth says: "...that was a horrible place and we would walk by there and lo-o-o-o-k and look and giggle. That was a Ba-a-a-d place."¹⁰

Just walking around did require some care, especially at train time. Freight wagons and buses from the hotels made Fourth Street very busy. For many

years there were two Railway Express offices in Ashland, one at the depot and one on Main Street. At train time a wagon and team drove from Main Street to the depot to pick up deliveries. For many years the train schedule didn't vary and Mr. Turner's team learned the schedule. Occasionally when the train was late and Mr. Turner did not come out to make the run at the usual

time, the team would start off alone. Marie remembers, "We've seen them go down Third Street just having a good time, taking the wagon back to the depot. We were excited of course--horses without any driver."

Running errands to the grocery store was a kid's chore. Since the Loomis and Nelson Grocery Store was on

the corner of Fourth and B Streets, just up the street from the depot, going to the store was not completely disagreeable, especially since Loomis and Nelson had a cat. George was the store cat and for a number of years the store could have been called "George's Store," at least by the children. George inspected all customers and might allow his fur to be stroked while the clerk filled your order. Loomis and Nelson was not a self-serve grocery store; a clerk waited on you. Most orders were charged, as railroad people were considered good credit. And if you lived near the store, Loomis and Nelson

**"And then one older lady,
Mrs. Mickelson, fell off and broke
her arm...that sort of ended
the merry-go-round business."**



Albert Powell, the “bearded cideman,” grew and pressed his own apples near his home on A Street. He was a familiar sight at Ashland’s depot. SOHS #4733

would make home deliveries. George made the store special for kids but there was one regular lady customer that George did not like, a woman who always brought her dog. Marie tells about one day when the dog got loose and chased George. Luckily there was a glass case in the middle of the store with a door open. George jumped into the case, lay down in the middle of the razor blades and scissors display and began to wash ...after all it was his store.

Going to get milk was a chore Marie remembers. She went to Powell’s Confection Store which was just behind the depot on A Street...you could get ice cream there too. Albert Powell started in business selling apple cider at the depot. He grew his own apples and using a cider press behind his home further up A Street, turned apple cider into a comfortable living. He was a familiar sight to the kids at the depot, who called him the “bearded cideman.”

One of the advantages of living in the district was that many of your friends were from railroad worker’s families. Elizabeth’s best friend and next door neighbor was Paul Jones. Paul’s father was C.R.D. Jones, an engineer assigned to a helper engine that assisted trains up the mountains to Tunnel 13. “He would take the engine up and then he would get up to the top of the

mountain...there was a turntable and he would turn the engine around and he’d deadhead back on it...When we would go up on the engine with Mr. Jones...we would get out and play...at the tunnel. One time we were going to run clear through it. ...and we got way back in there [the tunnel is 3,100 feet long] and we got scared because we thought a train would come. We turned and we ran

like crazy kids just as fast as we could go down that dark tunnel to get out of it. It was a beautiful ride up the mountain and to see those long, long freight trains.”¹²

Exciting things happened down in the railroad district, especially when the circus came to town. The circus train would be pulled onto a siding south of the station and begin

to unload. Marie remembers one year when the circus arrived in the rain. The wagons that hauled the heavy equipment from the train to the set-up site got bogged down in the mud, so they unloaded the elephants. Despite the rain there was quite a crowd of townspeople watching the whole proceeding. Elizabeth’s brother Wayne did more than just watch. When the circus train parked on the siding it stopped right next to the Carter house. “It was the most exciting thing. We kids would get up there and we would watch them unload the elephants and all the animals. And my brother hauled

If a young person didn’t mind some religious education, the mission on Fourth Street frequently put on free magic lantern slide shows.



Marie Prescott

Marie Prescott was born and has lived her life in Ashland's railroad district. Her father, Clarence Prescott, married Anna Austin in Grants Pass, Oregon after she came west from Minnesota. The Prescotts' first home was on Blaine Street in Ashland. Marie's father earned his living as a carpenter and was a member of the Ashland Fire Department.

Marie went to East Side School in Ashland. She was thirteen when her father died and the family moved into the house on B Street where she now lives. Her mother wanted to be at home to care for the children so she took in boarders. For the next several years the house was filled with students, boarders or renters.

Marie was too young to get a teaching certificate upon graduating from Ashland High School, so she went to Monmouth Normal School for one term. When Marie turned eighteen, she taught at Antelope School near Eagle Point for a year and a half and then was able to return to Ashland and attend Normal School.

Evans Valley School was Marie's first teaching position after graduation. She then moved closer to home and taught at the one-room schoolhouse at Neil Creek. Marie taught twenty-eight students in eight grades for one year then moved to a school in Phoenix, Oregon. Returning to Ashland, Marie taught second grade at Washington School and then "I finally taught first grade which was my joy. That was what I wanted to do." Marie taught school for forty-six years, twenty-six of those years at Briscoe Elementary School. In 1964, she was honored as Oregon's Teacher of the Year. Marie retired in 1971 and still lives on B Street in the railroad district of her childhood.

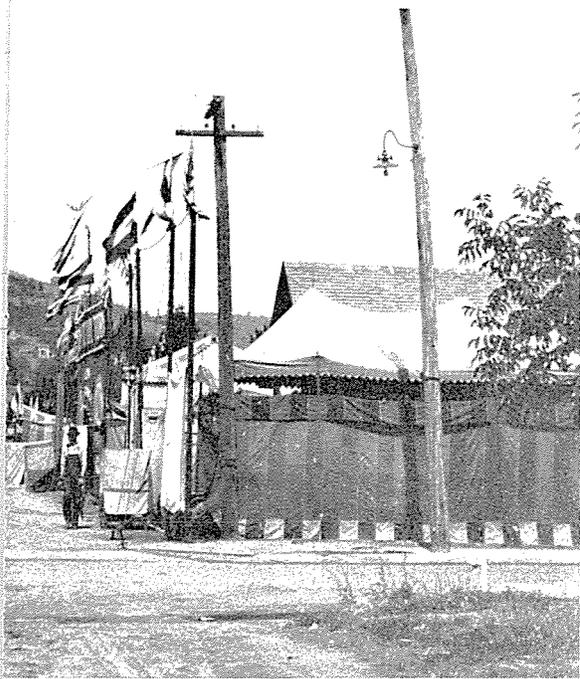


The circus' arrival caused great excitement among the tickets to the shows by hauling water for the animals.

water...buckets and buckets and buckets of water. I couldn't do it because I wasn't big enough...or strong enough...and then we would get tickets into the circus free. It was the most exciting thing you ever saw." The circus would then march up Mountain Street to B Street, go all the way down and cross over to Main Street and come back to where the tents were set up.

Marie remembers July 29, 1917. That was the day the local Oregon National Guard company, assigned to guard the railroad trestles and tunnels around Ashland, was transferred to Ft. Stevens at the mouth of the Columbia River. For weeks before there had been rumors that the company, made up mostly of Ashland men, was to be moved. That Sunday morning at eight o'clock the train headed north. "That was the last time our boys as a group...went about the same time. And I can remember that we all went down early in the morning to see the boys off." When the trains began bringing the men home, Marie says, "They allowed us to come from school and go to the train in case anybody's big brother or uncle or daddy was on the train."¹⁴

The railroad district was a special place in Ashland for forty years. Then the Natron Cut-off was completed in 1927 and rail traffic was routed through Klamath Falls. Suddenly things changed in Ashland. From as many as a dozen trains a day, the schedule dropped to ten or twelve trains a week. Passenger traffic was all local people. The railroad families moved away. "People were so disappointed," Marie remembers. "We felt it. I think it was more of an emotional feeling with us rather than a financial sort of thing because there was a kind of a tradition about the railroad that was special. I know people said 'well, grass will grow in the streets when the



Children growing up in Ashland. Some youngsters earned SOHS #5317

railroad goes,' and it did. There were hollyhocks growing up out of the cracks of Fourth Street."¹⁵

ENDNOTES

1. *Circuit Court Record*, Volume 3, p. 468. Donation Land Claim 42, the Hargadine claim, was sold to Lindsay Applegate, December 19, 1862.
2. *Ashland Daily Tidings*, May 18, 1888.
3. *Southern Oregon Historical Society Oral History 378C*, February 15, 1988, Marie Prescott, untranscribed.
4. *Southern Oregon Historical Society Oral History 431B*, February 15, 1988, Elizabeth Fenger, untranscribed.
5. *Rogue River Courier*, August 25, 1905.
6. *Grants Pass Courier*, April 16, 1915.
7. *Southern Oregon Historical Society Oral History 431A*, November 23, 1987, Elizabeth Fenger.
8. *Southern Oregon Historical Society Oral History 378A*, July 25, 1985, Marie Prescott.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Southern Oregon Historical Society Oral History 431B*, November, 23, 1987, Elizabeth Fenger.
11. *Southern Oregon Historical Society Oral History 378A*, July 25, 1985, Marie Prescott.
12. *Southern Oregon Historical Society Oral History 431A*, November 23, 1987, Elizabeth Fenger.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Southern Oregon Historical Society Oral History 378C*, February 15, 1988, Marie Prescott, untranscribed.
15. *Southern Oregon Historical Society Oral History 378B*, January 1987, Marie Prescott, untranscribed.

"I enjoyed writing this article," says Sue Waldron, Southern Oregon Historical Society researcher. "After working for the last ten months on the railroad exhibit, Making Tracks, writing about young people was fun. Living in the railroad district in the early 1900s must have been exciting."



Elizabeth Carter Fenger

Elizabeth was born into Ashland's noted Carter family. Her great-grandfather, Henry Beech Carter, left Boston, sailed around the Horn, and arrived in Ashland where he went into the banking business. Enthusiastic about Ashland, Carter sent to Mexico City for his son, Frank, who was a paymaster for the Mexican Central Railway. In 1883 Frank, his wife, and three sons came to Ashland where Elizabeth's father, Henry B. Jr., his twin brother, George, and older brother, Fred, grew up.

Henry B. Jr. married Mary Louella Grubb and they moved to Eugene where Henry went into partnership with Fred in an ice cream plant. Eugene is where Elizabeth was born. In 1917 her father brought the family back to Ashland and went to work for the railroad in the roundhouse.

Elizabeth grew up in Ashland and attended Hawthorn School. After graduation from Ashland High School she entered the two-year degree program at Ashland's Normal School. During her first year at the Normal, while she was working at the Lithia Hotel, Elizabeth met David Rosenbaum. He worked for Western Union. A few months later they were married and Elizabeth's traveling life began.

After several years David became a lineman for Union Pacific Railroad and they moved to Omaha, Nebraska. David died in February 1965. In 1967 Elizabeth married Frank Fenger. Growing tired of the winters in Nebraska, Frank and Elizabeth moved to Mountain Home, Arkansas. In 1980 Elizabeth and Frank returned to Ashland.

Elizabeth has worked at the Jacksonville Museum since 1981. She has been involved with the Jacksonville Museum Players, the Jacksonville Museum Quilters and is now a docent at the museum. For the last four summers she has portrayed Mrs. Beekman in the living history program at the Beekman House in Jacksonville.



Pedestrians can still cross the seventy-year-old McKee Bridge which served the travelers and laborers of the Applegate area. In need of repair, the bridge is one of the few covered bridges remaining in Jackson County.

Photo by Douglas R. Smith

The Bridge at McKee's Place

by Mark Wolfe

While the first world war was blazing in Europe and the automobile was taking America by storm, residents of southern Oregon had something more basic on their minds: mud.

Some city streets were paved before 1910, and some heavily used county roads had been surfaced, but a trip in the country in the late teens was no joyride. And in areas where touring cars and horse-drawn farm wagons shared the road with logging trucks and ore wagons the problem was even more acute.

Such an early-day traffic jam was occurring in the Applegate Valley in 1917. South of Ruch, two roads stretched into the virgin timberland of southern Oregon and northern California eventually merging to trace their way up the forested cliffs to the Blue Ledge Copper Mine.

The single road from Ruch south followed the Applegate River along its eastern bank much as it does

today. At Cameron Bridge the road divided into the Eastside Road, which continued on the east side of the Applegate, and the Applegate Road, which ran along the west side of the river until just past Palmer Creek, where it crossed the Applegate to intersect with the Eastside Road and continued on into the communities of Watkins, Copper and Eileen.

The road system connecting the Applegate area to Jacksonville was of major concern to the county commissioners. The Blue Ledge Mining Company had been organized in 1898 after discovery of a copper vein in the mountains some three miles south of the Oregon-California line, south of the present-day Applegate Reservoir. The California mine owners, infused with capital from Washington state investors, were preparing for major development. But transporting ore to the railroad terminal in Jacksonville was a long, difficult and dangerous project. In 1905, New York investor Robert S.

Towne purchased the claims and extensive development began. Although production began to decline after 1909, there were still seventy-five men on the company payroll in November 1917. Two cars of ore were being shipped every week, more than 2,500 tons per year with a value in excess of \$100,000.¹

The timber industry also was picking up and better access to the forests of the upper Applegate was needed.

It is probably fair to say that for the most part the Applegate Road was favored over the Eastside Road. It had an easy, gentle slope. The Eastside Road on the other hand was chiseled into a rocky cliffside. Even today, the Eastside Road requires skill and determination to navigate. But the Applegate Road was impassable during the rainy season because of the mud that sucked down wagons and automobiles alike. The ideal alternative was to redesign the Applegate Road to make it usable year-round. Such a plan would require constructing a bridge across the Applegate River that would be high enough and long enough to stay intact through the floods that occasionally inundated the valley before the Applegate Dam was built.

**Adelbert and Leila
McKee and family**
SOHS #343



On August 15, 1917, the commissioners directed the county clerk to publish a notice for bids to be submitted in accordance with plans and specifications prepared by the state Highway Engineer's Office for construction of a covered bridge across the Applegate River at the McKee Ranch.² The state's specifications had been published in 1916 in an effort to standardize and reduce the cost of bridge design. The *Jacksonville Post* was pleased that the county was taking this initiative.

"The County Court has plans for a new bridge across the Applegate River near Deb McKee's ranch, which when built will eliminate one of the worst hills on the road to the Blue Ledge. Two other bridges farther up the stream are to be built next year."³

The selection of the McKee Ranch as the site for the bridge was certainly based in part on engineering

concerns, but also may have had some basis in the significance of the site in local transportation history. Adelbert McKee, also known as Delber or Deb McKee, was born March 15, 1852, in Dullivan County, Missouri, the eldest son of John and Maryum McKee. He accompanied his family on their journey west in 1853 and settled initially on a donation land claim east of the present site of Medford. John became involved in mining in the Applegate Valley and the family soon settled in Logtown where their thirteen children were born.

Deb McKee did some hydraulic mining on McKee Creek, later called Jackass Creek and now known as Forest Creek. He married Leila Luella DeLong, and during his mining days Mrs. McKee ran a kitchen for the miners. The McKees later purchased a ranch approximately two miles above Star Ranger Station. The location was a strategic one. Being approximately half way between the Blue Ledge mines and Jacksonville, McKee's Ranch became a stopping place for the stages that were running between those points, and presumably for other travelers as well. At first, there were no bridges for vehicular traffic across the Apple-

gate, and such travelers simply unhooked their horses and swam across the river. But even after the Palmer Creek Bridge was built, McKee's Ranch remained a favorite stopping place. Relief horses also were kept there so that those weary from the uphill journey from Jacksonville or the treacherous downhill journey from the Blue Ledge could take a much-deserved rest. The location was a perfect site for the new bridge.

When the county commissioners reviewed the bids on September 17, 1917, only two of the three bids employed the state's specifications. R. I. Stewart and S. T. Howard, Jr., both of Medford, followed the state's specifications and entered bids of \$7,480 and \$6,992.80 respectively. The third man, J. Hartman of Jacksonville, submitted his own plans and specifications together with his winning bid of \$6,482. Hartman also offered to construct an additional transverse frame or "bent" that would strengthen the bridge approach for

an extra \$40.00.⁴ His offer was accepted. The *Jacksonville Post* reported as follows:

“Monday morning the County Court opened the bids for the construction of the new bridge across the Applegate River at Deb McKee’s place. Only three had been filed—one by Jasten Hartman of this city and the others by Medford parties. The Court decided that Mr. Hartman’s bid was best and he was awarded the contract at \$6,300. The timbers for the bridge are ordered and work will be commenced Monday and pushed rapidly to completion as the building of this bridge will obviate the using of a piece of road that is almost impassable in the wintertime.”⁵

been estimated that the cover increased a bridge’s useful life by 500%.⁶

Covered bridges, thought by many to be an East Coast phenomenon, were common in Oregon in the late 1800s and again when the steel shortage caused by World War I was having serious effects. Hartman’s design also employed a shingled roof, narrow vertical weather boarding, narrow daylight windows above the truss tops, and flying buttresses or angled side supports to stabilize the bridge from forces imposed by wind currents and the vibration caused by passing traffic. These features became the Hartmans’ signature and they appear in the Antelope Creek Bridge and the



This photograph from the early years of this century clearly shows the treacherous roads along the Applegate River. SOHS #4400

Hartman, referred to variously as Jasten or Jason, had come to the Rogue Valley from Ohio in the 1890s. In his native state he had been an oil derrick builder, but on his arrival in Oregon he began the construction of barns. Here he married an Eagle Point area schoolteacher, and settled on a 116-acre farm between Coker Butte and Roxy Ann where three sons were born: Wesley, Lyal and Homer. In 1910, the family moved into the Benjamin Dowell house in Jacksonville which is currently being restored by Homer’s son Wesley Hartman and his wife Mona.

Hartman senior taught his three sons the bridge-building trade. Homer eventually moved to Idaho to pursue other opportunities, but Wesley and Lyal continued to build bridges in Jackson County for many years.

The design submitted by Hartman employed the use of the Howe truss suggested by the state’s plans. The Howe truss was developed in 1840 by William Howe. It employed steel rods which passed through the wooden truss members to provide needed support. The rods were threaded on each end and secured by bolts that could be adjusted to tighten the truss joints. The bridge was covered to protect the truss members and it has

Wimer Bridge, both constructed by the Hartmans, and in many other bridges that are no longer standing.

Jason Hartman’s plans proposed a 126-foot span and promised completion by January 1, 1918. The contract was signed September 19, 1917, and Hartman posted the necessary \$3,261 bond. In late September the *Jacksonville Post* reported:

“Jasten Hartman is busy as a bee this week getting things shaped up to begin work on the new bridge at McKees.”⁷

On October 4, 1917, a supplemental agreement was signed shortening the span to 112 feet with the end of the main span to rest on “double bents” for extra strength. No change was made in the contract price.

On October 20, the *Post* reported:

“A couple of cars loaded with timbers for the bridge at McKees were unloaded here this week. Contractor Hartman is pushing the construction work as rapidly as possible while the good weather lasts.”⁸

Jasten Hartman served as contractor and foreman of the bridge building crew. His sons Wesley and Lyal assisted. It is not known whether Homer participated. The Hartman sons had worked on other projects with

their father, but later recalled that the McKee Bridge was their first real "man's work." Their equipment included a one-ton, horse-driven pile driving rig and a huge wheel wrench that took four or five men to operate. The wheel wrench was used to tighten the nuts on the steel braces that were a part of the Howe truss. They also used a hand-operated boring tool to drill holes in the timbers for the steel rods and to cut mortise joints.

Jasten Hartman continued to do construction work for Jackson County until 1929. Wesley and Lyal Hartman went on to perform many years of service for their communities. Wesley was elected mayor of Jacksonville in 1929. He became supervisor of the county's Bridge Department and spent forty-four years in county service. Lyal took a job with the county's Road Department in January of 1919 and retired as Jackson County bridge foreman fifty years later. The two brothers estimated that in that period of time they had built about seven hundred bridges for Jackson County.¹⁰ The Medford Main Tribune reported:

"In spite of their swarthy appearance, one couldn't hope to meet any pleasanter chaps than the Hartman brothers, who have made their living by honest, hard work, with a cool head for the rough, sometimes dangerous job they chose as a profession."¹¹

By 1919 ore production at the Blue Ledge mines no longer provided the financial incentive they once had, and as methods of transportation were improved the McKee Ranch probably became less important as a stopping place. But the area continued to serve as a community center for the local residents who built the

Upper Applegate Grange at the bridge about 1935. The bridge itself was commonly referred to as McKee Bridge and it also continued to attract a crowd. It was a natural location for the campground and picnic area constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1937 or 1938. That park rarely has a vacant table during the summer months and many local residents have fond memories of a swing on the rope that hangs from a tall tree above the deepest pool in that part of the river.

The Grange Hall burned in 1950. The McKee house is no more. But the McKee Bridge remains.



ENDNOTES

1. *The Medford Sun*, September 20, 1817, p. 2.
2. *Jackson County Commissioners' Journals*, vol. 6, p.428.
3. *The Jacksonville Post*, August 11, 1917, p. 3.
4. *Jackson County Commissioners' Journals*, vol. 6, p. 450.
5. *The Jacksonville Post*, September 22, 1917, p. 3.
6. Nick and Bill Cockrell, *Roofs Over Rivers: A Guide to Oregon's Covered Bridges* (Beaverton, Oregon, 1978), p. 9.
7. *The Jacksonville Post*, September 29, 1917, p. 3.
8. *The Jacksonville Post*, October 20, 1917, p. 3.
9. *Medford Mail Tribune*, July 19, 1959, p. 12.
10. *Medford Mail Tribune*, June 13, 1980.
11. *Medford Mail Tribune*, July 19, 1959, p. 12.

Mark Wolfe is a Medford attorney with a long-standing interest in historic preservation. In addition to his legal practice with the firm of Robertson, Huyke and Wolfe, Mark researches historic structures and volunteers in the Society research library.

Closed to vehicle traffic in 1956, the McKee Bridge has survived damage by floods, snow storms and wind storms for more than seventy years. It has, however, undergone some structural changes.

The openings on either end appear to have been enlarged at some time, and if other Hartman bridges are any indication the original rounded openings have been squared off. Small windows on the upstream side of the bridge were added in 1951 and enlarged to their present size in 1955. Some maintenance has been done since that time, but once the bridge was closed to vehicle traffic it was a very low-priority item on the county's agenda.

When a three-foot snowfall collapsed a large portion of the bridge's roof in 1965, the county questioned its role in providing funds to repair the damage. The Talisman Lodge, Knights of Pythias, initiated a repair effort and were quickly joined by the Upper

Applegate Grange. With assistance and contributions from a number of local companies and individuals, the bridge was repaired and rededicated on October 17, 1965.

Despite public awareness and appreciation, Oregon's covered bridges are still in danger. In 1936 there were three hundred covered bridges in this state. Now there are approximately fifty-four. As recently as 1959 there were eight covered bridges left in Jackson County. Now there are only four.

McKee Bridge is Jackson County's oldest and longest covered bridge and the fourth oldest in the state. It is the only covered bridge in Jackson County utilizing the Howe truss. Because the McKee Bridge is a historically significant structure, the Southern Oregon Historical Society strongly supports its restoration. But the bridge is in danger of collapse. In late November 1987, temporary repairs made in part with a grant from Southern Oregon Historical

Society funds have stabilized the structure, but more extensive work is required. Two of the floor beams show extreme deterioration and there is decay in other major structural components.

A group of concerned individuals comprised of county employees, service club members and area residents have pledged support of a fund-raising effort to restore the bridge so that it can continue to support foot traffic. Approximately \$50,000 must be raised, or McKee Bridge will join the ranks of the twenty-three other covered bridges this county has lost over the years. Your contributions may be sent to:

Rogue Valley Foundation
304 S. Central Avenue
Medford, OR 97501

Checks should be made payable to the Rogue Valley Foundation with a notation that the contribution is for the McKee Bridge Preservation Project.

Society Update

Bank Supports Society Project

The Society has received a grant for \$2250 from the U.S. National Bank to help print the gallery guide for *Making Tracks: The Impact of Railroading in the Rogue Valley*. This exhibit will open at the Jacksonville Museum on Saturday, March 26 for members, and Sunday, March 27 for the general public.

A business member of the Society, the U.S. National Bank has long maintained an interest in historic preservation in southern Oregon. The bank's support helped complete the 1964 restoration project at the U.S. Hotel. This historic building in downtown Jacksonville houses the Jacksonville branch of the U.S. National Bank, a restored ballroom and two barrooms used for public meetings, exhibits, and programs.

Sponsorship from the business community enables the Society to continue its efforts to preserve, interpret, and promote Jackson County history. The U.S. National Bank has displayed over the years the kind of support that is needed and very much appreciated.

Ashland Awarded Grant

The City of Ashland is the latest recipient of the Southern Oregon Historical Society's grants-in-aid program. The city's Department of Community Development applied for funding to restore the statue of Abraham Lincoln which stood in Lithia Park until 1967.

At its January meeting, the Board of Trustees awarded \$2000 for the statue's restoration. The remaining \$6850 needed to complete the project will be raised through private donations.

The last of four major art pieces donated to the city between 1910 and 1925, the Lincoln statue represents the City Beautiful Movement which was in high gear

throughout the United States at that time. The program included improvements in sanitation, street paving, development of public parks, and the display of public art throughout cities.

During this time, four public art pieces were donated to the city:

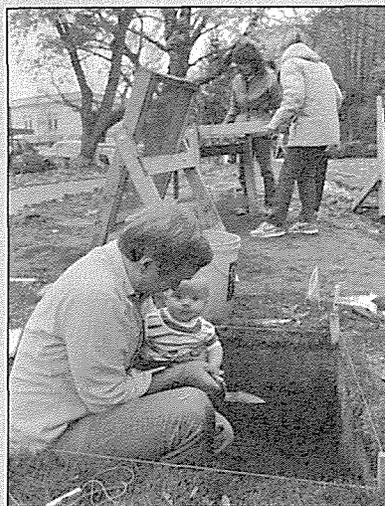


Photo by Natalie Brown

Volunteers of all ages helped at the dig in Lithia Park.

Digging for More History

Community participation is invited for several spring archaeological projects cosponsored by the Society and Southern Oregon State College. Excavations will include a prehistoric rock-shelter near Ashland, the continuation of last autumn's salvage work along Ashland Creek, and an investigation of a possible mammoth kill-site.

The work will take place ten consecutive Saturdays beginning April 2. Participants may volunteer their time through the Society or receive academic credit through SOSOC. No experience is necessary; training will be provided.

For more information, contact Nan Hannon, coordinator of the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, at 488-1341.

the Carter Memorial statue on the Plaza, the Butler-Perozzi fountain and Lincoln statue in the park, and the Mickelson Memorial statue in front of the library. Three of the four have been restored. The last project involves replacing the statue's head (lost to vandals in the 1960s) and returning "Lincoln" to his proper home in Lithia Park.

Contributions to the Lincoln statue project are welcomed and may be sent to the Planning Office, City Hall, Ashland, Oregon 97520.

Bus Tour Season Begins

The 1988 Society Bus Tour Season begins on April 28, 1988, with a trip to Roseburg. Participants should arrive at the Jacksonville Museum by 7:30 a.m. for an 8:00 a.m. departure time.

The first stop will be at Wolf Creek Tavern north of Grants Pass. Hosts Sam and Joy Angelos will serve guests their house specialty—large homemade pecan sweet rolls—and coffee.

Following the morning break, the group will proceed to Roseburg's Douglas County Museum of History and Natural History, where costumed interpreters will lead Society members through the museum's exhibits.

Most of the natural history specimens on display have been prepared in-house using traditional taxidermy and on-site freeze-drying methods. Curator Dennis Rulley will provide a behind-the-scenes look at these fascinating preservation techniques.

Lunch will follow at Tolly's in the historic town of Oakland. Buses should return to Jacksonville by 5:00 p.m.

The cost of the trip will be \$20.00 and includes transportation and the morning coffee break. Please call Susan Cox, membership coordinator, at 899-1847 for reservations.



Gold Diggers Elect New President

The Gold Diggers, an auxiliary organization of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, recently appointed Mary Foster as president. A Society Trustee since July 1987, Foster has served on the Medford Centennial Board of Directors and currently sits on the Medford Historic Commission.

The Gold Diggers have raised over \$20,000 in the last ten years through a variety of fund raising activities. These earnings have fun-

ded a variety of Society projects, including the restoration of the upstairs barroom in the U.S. Hotel and the purchase of draperies for the Britt Room in the Jacksonville Museum and carpeting at the Beekman House. Most recently, the group donated \$2,250 toward the purchase of a stat camera for the Photography Department.

Founded in 1977, the Gold Diggers today has fifty members who help promote activities of the Southern Oregon Historical Society. Through their time, energy, and support, the Society has been able to complete numerous projects and offer many educational services to the citizens of Jackson County.

“Jeopardy” Material?

Stacey Williams, coordinator of the Children’s Museum, recently shared this delightful story which illustrates just how useful the *Table Rock Sentinel* can be:

A few weeks ago my husband and I were watching the popular television show Jeopardy. We tune

in occasionally and marvel at the speed and accuracy of the contestants as we scramble to give the correct responses ourselves.

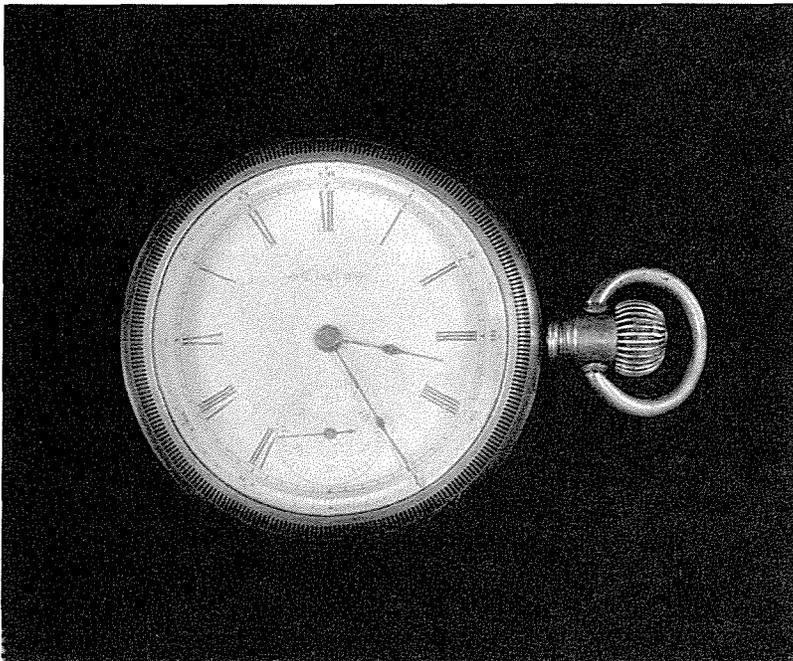
On this particular evening, under the category “U.S. History,” this answer appeared: “It was taken to Allentown, PA, before the invasion of Philadelphia in 1777.” The contestants seemed stumped, but my husband was quick to respond—in a more than confident tone—“What is the Liberty Bell?!”

He jumped and shouted as if he just had won the grand prize. Before I could ask how he knew the question, he cheerfully explained, “I read it in the *Table Rock Sentinel!*”

Thank You

The Society would like to extend its gratitude to the family and friends of Ella Cameron for their generous and thoughtful memorial gifts to the Society. Contributions of this type help the Society to provide services and educational opportunities for the citizens of Jackson County.

From the Collections



Along with the railroad engineer, the conductor has become part of railroading folklore. It was the conductor’s job to keep the trains running on schedule, and he did so by keeping a close eye on his watch.

An important tool, the conductor’s watch was often well-made. This particular timepiece, manufactured in 1898, is a seven-jeweled Elgin watch with a silver case. It has “Seely Hall” engraved on the inside of the back cover. (Hall was a prominent Medford aviator.)

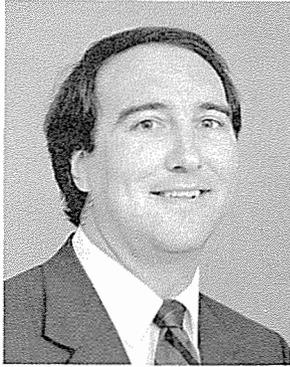
Like modern wristwatches, conductor’s watches had the stem near 3 o’clock instead of the pocket watch’s usual 12 o’clock position. This convenience made the timepiece much easier for the conductor to handle and read.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society houses numerous objects that, owing to limited exhibit space, are not often seen by visitors. We hope that featuring an item each month in this column will provide an enjoyable and educational view of the scope of the Society’s collections.

Meet the Candidates

The Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees has nominated the following candidates for election to the Board for three-year terms beginning July 1, 1988. Please review each statement and exercise your right as a member to vote in the upcoming election. Ballots will be mailed the first week of May.

Other Society members can be nominated for election by petition with at least 15 signatures of members in good standing. These petitions will be available April 1 from the Society's membership department. They must be returned no later than April 15, 1988, to: Susan Cox, Membership Coordinator, P.O. Box 480, 420 East D Street, Jacksonville, Oregon 97530-0480.



William R. Bagley, Medford: BS, Oregon State University

Bill is currently a member of the Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees and is a candidate for reelection. An accountant, Bill has served on the Medford School District Transportation Committee and the Medford Chamber of Commerce Education and Leadership committees. He is a past president of the American Cancer Society and the Rogue Valley Art Association. Bill has served as treasurer of the Society's Board of Trustees since May 1986, and recently chaired the Budget Committee. Bill's family has lived in the Rogue Valley for more than 70 years.

"The best way I can continue to serve the Southern Oregon Historical Society is in using my accounting and financial background to help the Society stay financially responsible."

Bill is an Oregon native whose great-great grandfather Joseph Lane was among the early settlers of the Oregon Territory and became Oregon's first territorial governor. Bill has lived in the Rogue Valley for twenty-three years and is founder and publisher of Gable & Gray Publishing, Inc., an Oregon-based company that publishes a series of travel guides. He has resided in Portland and Redmond, Oregon, and San Francisco. He is a member of the Medford Chamber of Commerce and the Gold Hill Depot Task Force.

"Of primary concern is the historical preservation of southern Oregon through the Historical Society's self-promotion in order to stimulate more local support and public interest."



Thomas W. Pickering, Jacksonville: BA, University of Iowa,

Tom is president and chief executive officer of Crater Bank. During his 24-year banking career, he has been involved extensively with a broad range of community activities and is currently a member of Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc.; Jacksonville, Medford and Central Point Chambers of Commerce; and Central Point Rotary. He also serves on the Government

Relations Committee for the Oregon Bankers Association.

"We must work together to increase public awareness of the wonderful and unique history here in southern Oregon."



William A. Faubion, Gold Hill: BA and MBA, Portland State University



Jean M. Smith, Central Point: BA and MLS, Indiana University,

additional graduate studies,
University of Chicago

A resident of Central Point since 1971, Jean recently retired as director of the Josephine County Library System. She served as president of the Southern Oregon Library Federation, is an honorary life member of the Oregon Library Association, past-president of Zonta International of Grants Pass, and former member of the Josephine County Historical Society. Jean has established regional history libraries in several communities and conducted workshops and seminars in the mid-west, Wyoming, Nevada and Oregon. Jean and her husband, Hardin, are members of the Congregational Church in Medford.

"The Southern Oregon Historical Society has a unique and timely opportunity to bring an appreciation of the past into the present in order to help all the people of Jackson County plan and prepare for the future of our area."

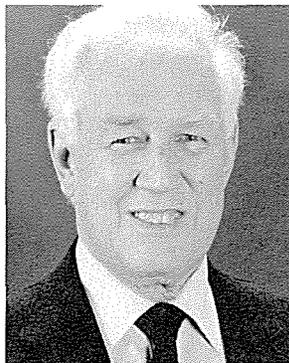


James K. Sours, Medford: BA, Wichita State University, MPA and PhD, Harvard

Jim is currently a member of the Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees and is a candidate for reelection. Although semi-retired, Jim is a consultant in institutional planning and development. He was president of Southern Oregon State College from 1969 to 1979 and develop-

ment director for the Oregon Shakespearean Festival Association from 1980 to 1985. He was a member of the Oregon American Bicentennial Commission and a board member of the Jackson County Chapter of the American Red cross. Currently he is a member of the Governor's Commission of Foreign Languages and serves on the boards of the Ashland Community Hospital Foundation and the Carpenter Foundation. Jim was appointed to the Society's Board of Trustees in March 1987, chaired the Long Range Planning committee, and is currently chairing the Development Committee.

"I believe that the recently-adopted Long Range Plan gives the Society new purpose and direction that will enable the Society to serve all citizens of Jackson County."

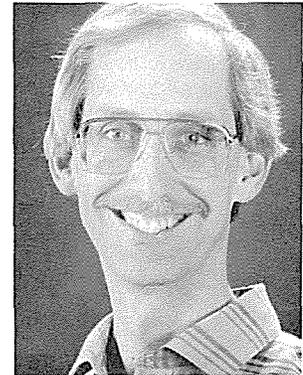


Paul H. Wallwork, Medford: University of Oregon

Paul is a native Oregonian. He had a private architectural practice in Portland from 1952 to 1967 and during that time contracted with the State Department on projects in Asia and South America. He was a building official for Jackson County from 1974 until "retiring" in 1988 at which time he re-established his architectural practice in Medford. A past-president of the Southern Oregon Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Paul currently serves as

secretary. He is a member of the Rogue Gallery and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

"I think I can assist the Society in my knowledge of architecture and knowledge of structures."



Mark Wolfe, Medford: BA, University of Oregon; JD, University of Oregon School of Law

Mark is currently a member of the Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees and is a candidate for reelection. A native Oregonian, Mark has a long-standing interest in local history and historic preservation. He is a member of the Jackson County and Oregon State Bar Associations. Mark is currently serving as President of the Kiwanis Club of Medford and has worked as a volunteer in the Southern Oregon Historical Society research library for the past three years. He was a member of the Society Board's ad hoc committee to investigate alternatives for the preservation and interpretation of the Fort Lane site and was appointed to the Board of Trustees in October 1987. He is currently serving the board as a member of its Grants-in-Aid, Development, and Properties committees.

"Our Historical Society needs the support of all of Jackson County's residents, and I believe that I can help it to maintain that support on a county-wide basis."

Welcome New Members

JR. HISTORIAN

Eric Peterson, *Medford*

SENIOR

Leonard Bradshaw, *Eagle Point*
 Ruth Callender, *Central Point*
 Reed Charley, *Medford*
 Genevieve Cox, *Grants Pass*
 Alice Hornbuckle, *Roseburg*
 Daniel Johnston, *Ashland*
 Fern McCauley, *Yarnell, AZ*
 Margaret Powell, *Medford*
 Bessie Short, *Macdoel, CA*
 Kaaren Worth, *Central Point*
 Veva Zamzow, *Sacramento, CA*

INDIVIDUAL

Mary Barton, *White City*
 Margaret Carey, *Halsey*
 Lou Ann Christie, *Jacksonville*
 Rick Fisher, *Jacksonville*
 Alex Hamilton, Jr., *Newport*
 L.E. Hoyt, *Applegate*
 Don Later, *Medford*
 Martha I. Turner, *Ashland*

FAMILY

Bob & Caroline Bessey, *Medford*
 Robert Christie, Jr., *Medford*
 Donald Fitzgerald, *Eagle Point*
 Dave & Linda Kornstad, *Central Point*

Doug & Beth Ness, *Trail*
 Alexander & Kathryn Rabchuk, *Medford*
 Jerry Scherzinger, *Central Point*
 Steve, Kathy, Dyan Straughan, *Gold Hill*

CONTRIBUTOR

Burke Raymond, *Ashland*

BUSINESS

Gable & Gray, Inc., *Medford*
 Laurel Communications, *Medford*
 Pulver & Leever Real Estate, *Medford*

Renewing Members

SENIOR

Ruth Acord, *Medford*
 Roy Ayers, *Medford*
 Clifford Bailey, *Central Point*
 Mary Ballard, *Reno, NV*
 David Barker, *Monmouth*
 Mrs. Beth Bernheisel, *Coquille*
 Nancy Bjorge, *Jacksonville*
 Leonard Bradshaw, *Eagle Point*
 Elmer Carlquist, *Medford*
 Majorie Carlquist, *Medford*
 Trudi Christ, *Medford*

Fay Christianson, *Medford*
 Bernice Curler, *Sacramento, CA*
 Mrs. Ray Drumm, *Duquoin, IL*
 Marie Eicher, *Medford*
 Anne Finley, *Medford*
 Dale Flowers, *Medford*
 L. Jeanne Frost, *Phoenix*
 Emma Jane Graham, *Medford*
 Lela Greenwood, *Grants Pass*
 Henry Halvorsen, *Medford*
 Fred Horn, *Sacramento, CA*
 Harriet Hudspeth, *Shady Cove*
 Bessie Johnston, *Medford*

George Kennedy, *Medford*
 Miss Agnes Kieling, *Ashland*
 Clyde Knight, *Medford*
 William Leever, *Medford*
 C.H. Lindsay, *Ashland*
 Caroline Loveness, *Medford*
 Frank Mee, *Ashland*
 Charles Parlier, *Medford*
 Dorothy Pierson, *Klamath Falls*
 Frank Richard, *Phoenix*
 Leah Ritchey, *Medford*
 Maurice Ritchey, *Medford*
 Leona Salyer, *Union City, CA*

Discover the history of Jackson County and the southern Oregon/northern California region.

Enjoy the lively magazine, the *Table Rock Sentinel*, and the numerous programs, exhibits and publications of the Southern Oregon Historical Society.

Join today! Fill out this form and mail with check or money order to:

Southern Oregon Historical Society
 Membership Coordinator
 P.O. Box 480
 Jacksonville, OR 97530-0480

Please check category desired.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$8 Jr. Historian (18 & under) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$12 Senior (65 & over) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Donor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Sponsor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Benefactor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Contributor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Grantor |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5000 Lifetime |

Welcome!

name _____

address _____

city, state _____ zip _____

Telephone: _____

amount enclosed: _____

8-3

Levon Sargent, *Prospect*
 Regina Schroeder, *Medford*
 Vera Sherman, *Medford*
 Mrs. F.W. Sooner, *Central Point*
 Lea Stringer, *Ashland*
 Ruth Sutherlin, *Medford*
 Shirley Thompson, *Medford*
 Iris E. Waters, *Chico, CA*
 Frances Weaver, *Medford*
 Bert Webber, *Central Point*
 Eugene K. Willims, *Idleyld Park, CA*
 Dorothy Wilson, *Medford*
 Dorothy Wolf, *Medford*

INDIVIDUAL

Julia Bailey, M.D., *South Pasadena, CA*
 Doris Cearley, *Medford*
 Mary Delsman, *Riverside, CA*
 Judith Drais, *Medford*
 Marcie Engberg, *Philomath*
 Kay Fitzgerald, *Central Point*
 Hank Hart, *Kailue-Kona, HI*
 Ruth Herman, *Medford*
 Leslie Hopkins, *Portland*
 Judson Hyatt, *Ashland*
 Pamela Jester, *Berkeley, CA*
 Franklyn Mahar, *Arcata, CA*
 Emmy Lou Merriman, *Central Point*
 Patrick Miller, *Saugus, CA*
 Robert Joseph Milts, *Medford*
 Richard G. Morgan, *Medford*
 Carolyn Moyer, *Medford*
 Marjorie Pitts, *Medford*
 Mrs. J.R. Reid, *Central Point*
 Wally Skyrman, *Central Point*
 Steven Thomas, *Medford*
 Joan Williams, *Medford*

FAMILY

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 John R. Ferguson, *Medford*
 Dr. & Mrs. Rupert Fixott, *Medford*
 R.A. & W.J. Herndobler, *Ashland*
 Mr. & Mrs. Russ Jamison, *Medford*
 Ken & Henrietta Kugler, *Medford*
 Virgil & Ruby Lacy, *Ashland*
 Mr. & Mrs. Nelson Leonard, III, *Eagle Point*
 Frank & Ruth Peston, *Jacksonville*
 Mr. & Mrs. Hayes Rossman, *Medford*
 Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Sage, *Syracuse, NY*
 Mr. & Mrs. Elbert Sherrouse, *Medford*
 William & Judith Shrader, *Medford*
 Stan & Tommie Smith, *Shady Cove*
 Stephan & Elizabeth Smith, *Gold Hill*
 Dr. & Mrs. Darrell Weinman, *Central Point*

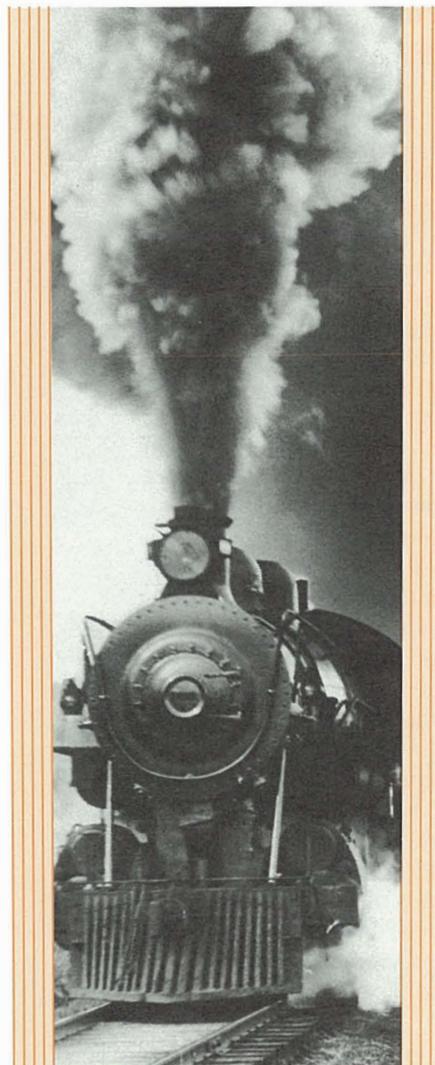
CONTRIBUTOR

Gold Diggers Guild of Southern Oregon
 Historical Society, *Medford*
 Gerald & Lois Latham, *Medford*

BUSINESS

Jackson County Federal Savings & Loan,
Jacksonville
 Molatore, Gerbert, P.C., *Medford*
 Rogue Valley Optometric Clinic, *Medford*
 Rogue Valley Physicians Service, *Medford*

MAKING TRACKS



The Impact of Railroading in the Rogue Valley

An exhibition
 presented by the Southern Oregon Historical Society

Members-only wine and cheese reception
 March 26, 6-9 p.m.
 Jacksonville Museum

Public opening reception
 March 27, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Jacksonville Museum

Activities and demonstrations for the whole family!

Free admission

Regional Digest

Crater Lake Lodge Saved!

The National Park Service has decided to preserve the historic Crater Lake Lodge owing, in part, to an overwhelming response from the general public to save the 75-year-old structure. Park Service Regional Director Charles Odegaard announced this decision on Thursday, February 25, following a series of public hearings.

Plans now require congressional approval for financing. The \$33 million project incorporates several components of the alternatives presented at the public hearings. The historic lodge will be renovated to include 82 bedrooms with baths and a restaurant. It will close during the winter months due to the difficulty of clearing snow.

A new 60-unit lodge will be built back from the lake's rim in the Rim Village area. The existing cafeteria and gift shop will be removed and all vehicular activity pulled away from the rim as well.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society applauds the Park Service's decision and looks forward to the day when the lodge resumes its original purpose as shelter for Crater Lake's visitors.

Emigrant Reunion Planned

Emigrants traveling to Oregon Territory 135 years ago arrived in Lane County after a circuitous route across the Oregon desert and a near-fatal journey across the Cascade Mountains. To commemorate this expedition, the Lane County Historical Museum is planning a reunion of the descendants of these pioneer families.

The event will be held September 24, 1988, in the museum courtyard. Descendants interested in attending should contact: LWT, c/o Lane County Museum, 740 West 13th St., Eugene, Oregon 97402, or call Marty West at (503)687-4239 for more information.



photo by Douglas R. Smith

Numerous examples of interesting gravestones can be found in this area.

Gravestone Group Seeks Members

The Association for Gravestone Studies (AGS) is a national, non-profit organization with concern for the appreciation, preservation, and protection of all gravemarkers, especially historic ones. Through its publications, conferences, special programs, and exhibits, AGS hopes to encourage local groups to record and preserve historic gravestones, promote research into all aspects of gravestone studies, and expand public awareness.

Members encompass a range of interest from scientific research on stone repair techniques and materials to many other areas of research involving genealogy, folklore, archaeology, sociology, and history. For membership informa-

tion, contact: The Association of Gravestone Studies, 46 Plymouth Road, Needham, MA 02192.

In a related topic, the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) recently published a new book, *A Gravestone Preservation Primer*, for anyone interested in practical approaches for cemetery preservation. Author Lynette Strangstad directs her advice to nonprofessionals involved in small-to mid-sized projects who are having difficulty getting started because of lack of staff or resources.

Copies are available for \$13.95 each (\$12.95 for AASLH members) from: AASLH, 172 Second Avenue N.W., Suite 102, Nashville, Tennessee 37201.

Annual Historic Preservation Awards

Each year during National Preservation Week, the Southern Oregon Historical Society gives special recognition to specific projects, persons, or organizations that promote historic preservation in Jackson County. Restorations of specific structures or districts, educational events or projects that foster public understanding of preservation, and individuals or organizations who have worked to promote preserva-

tion issues are eligible for the awards.

The Society is seeking nominations from the public for its 1987 awards. If you know of a worthy candidate, please fill out the nomination form and return it to the Society no later than Friday, April 15, 1988. Award winners will be announced during National Preservation Week, May 8-14.

Preservation Week Award Nomination Form

I believe the following project/event/organization/individual demonstrates excellence in the promotion of historic preservation:

Project/event/organization/individual _____

Contact person _____

Contact person's address _____
mailing address

city state zip Telephone _____

Description of project/event/organization:

Briefly explain how this project/event/organization/individual demonstrates excellence in the promotion of historic preservation.

Please return this form together with any supplemental materials to:

Southern Oregon Historical Society
205 North Fifth Street, P.O. Box 480
Jacksonville, OR 97530
All nominations must be received by April 15, 1988.

Calendar of Events

Through

March 1988 "Ashland's Railroad Centennial," an exhibit celebrating the completion near Ashland of the circuit of railway around the United States is open at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, 990 Siskiyou Blvd., Ashland, from 1-5 p.m., Tuesdays-Saturdays.

March 24 "Workin' on the Railroad," a children's workshop, will be held from 1-4 p.m. at the Eagle Point Library, 158 West Main, Eagle Point. Youngsters, ages 7-12, will construct a small scale model of the O & C Railroad using boxes and other materials. Each child will build a portion of the train. When finished the sections will be assembled and displayed in the Children's Museum in Jacksonville. Participants also will sing railroad songs and become part of a "human train," using such props as a conductor's cap, luggage, whistles, and imagination! Admission is free.

March 26 *Making Tracks: The Impact of Railroading in the Rogue Valley.* **Members Only** wine and cheese reception from 6-9 p.m.. Come celebrate the opening of the first major exhibit in the Jacksonville Museum's courtroom since the mid-1970s! This is your opportunity to be the first to view *Making Tracks* before it opens to the public. Admission is free.

March 27 *Making Tracks: The Impact of Railroading in the Rogue Valley.* Opening Reception from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. for the general public. The whole family is invited to participate in day-long activities, including model railroad demonstrations by the Southern Oregon Live Steamers Club and the Rogue Valley Model Railroad Club, sending telegraph messages with the Medford Chapter of the Morse Telegraph Club, and much, much more! Admission is free.

March 29 The Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees will hold its monthly meeting in the conference room of the Jackson Educational Service District building, 101 N. Grape Street, Medford, at 7:30 p.m. Members and the general public are invited.

All offices and departments of the **Southern Oregon Historical Society**, except the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, may be reached by calling (503) 899-1847. The Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum's telephone number is (503) 488-1341.

Administrative offices, Armstrong House, 375 East California St., Jacksonville. Open Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Jacksonville Museum, 205 North 5th Street, Jacksonville. Open Tues.-Sun., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Children's Museum, 206 North 5th Street, Jacksonville. Open Tues.-Sun., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, 990 Siskiyou Boulevard, Ashland. Open Tues.-Sat., 1-5 p.m.

Research Library in the Jacksonville Museum, 205 North 5th Street, Jacksonville. Open Tues.-Fri., 1-5 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.



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TABLE ROCK

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SENTINEL



APRIL 1988



The
Magazine
of the
Southern
Oregon
Historical
Society

Commentary



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Richard Lethaby (1857–1931), English architect and historian, once wrote of historic buildings:

“Monumental history is a stirring, vital thing: it can be touched and history that can be seen and touched is a strong and stimulating soul-food, entirely different from vague and weary written history.”



May 8–14, 1988 is National Historic Preservation Week. This issue of the *Table Rock Sentinel* focuses on historic preservation with two articles: one featuring an article from *Old House Journal* on researching the history of your home, and another on the Oakdale Avenue area—Medford's first historic district on the National Register of Historic Places.

In its broadest sense “historic preservation” tries to preserve all of history—in whatever form we find it. But National Historic Preservation Week honors a more closely defined aspect: the preservation of historic properties and buildings. The desire to preserve a historic building—the old Jackson County Courthouse in Jacksonville—brought about the creation of the Southern Oregon Historical Society in 1946. Further efforts in Jacksonville, throughout Jackson County and all across the southern Oregon region have resulted in the preservation and on-going use of numerous buildings and historic properties important to our region's past. We invite you to join with us in celebration of National Historic Preservation Week.

* * *

In the February 1988 issue of the *Sentinel* I reported to you on the Board's approval to conduct a survey of the membership and of the general public. By the time you read this you should have received your survey in the mail. I cannot emphasize how important it is that you complete and return it by the May 1 deadline to the Southern Oregon Regional Services Institute. We need to hear from you. Help us determine the Society's future.

Samuel J. Wegner
Executive Director

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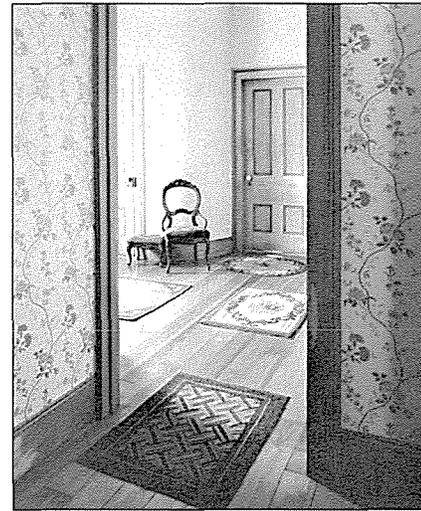
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p. 4



p. 12

Features

4 Saving the Street, Saving the Stories: Medford's South Oakdale Historic District *by Vicki Anne Bryden*

While trying to protect their tree-lined street, South Oakdale residents unearthed the lives and legends of some of Medford's influential past citizens.

12 Researching Your House History *by David Baker*

Numerous clues such as titles, business transactions, photographs, postcards and memoirs can lead a persistent researcher to the history of his home and its former occupants.

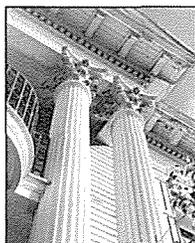
Departments

16 Society Update

22 Regional Digest

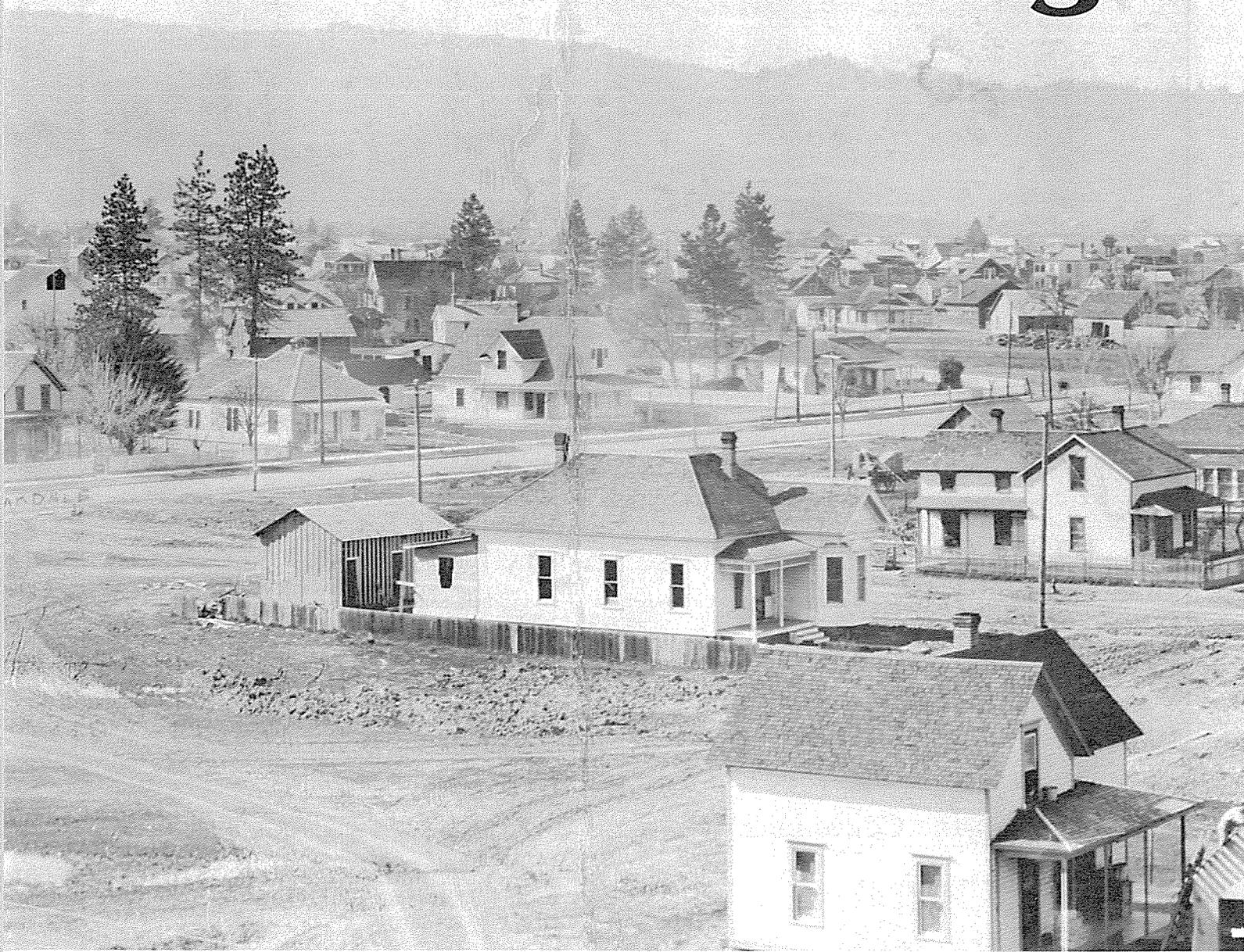
22 From the Collections

24 Calendar of Events



cover: This photograph documents a lovely architectural detail from the Vawter House which once stood on the corner of 8th and Ivy streets, Medford. The building was razed in 1973.
SOHS #11133.

Saving the Saving th



Medford's South Oak

Street, e Stories

This photograph is cropped from a 1910 panorama of the South Oakdale and neighboring residential areas. SOHS #8852

by Vicki Bryden

Historic preservation doesn't always begin with a noble endeavor to preserve an architectural wonder. It can also be the result of other concerns—a bonus that results while solving other problems.

In the mid-1970s, a young architecture student from the University of Oregon knocked on a few doors on South Oakdale and essentially said, "You have something special here. There are ways you can preserve your neighborhood." A Medford native with a life-long interest in its history, Scott Clay was learning about the new historic preservation laws and saw a chance to apply them in Medford. The residents were flattered, held a neighborhood meeting and listened to some of his ideas and information, but no action was taken at that time.

A year or so later, the late Esther Jensen alerted some of her South Oakdale neighbors to information she had gleaned while attending meetings of the Citizen Planning Advisory Committee. City of Medford maps of proposed arterial street plans showed tree-lined, two-lane, South Oakdale as a four-lane arterial street. Two or three residents made trips to the City Planning Department to get evasive, placating non-answers to their questions: neither yes nor no—just vague talk about progress.

Residents on South Oakdale were angry. Why should they give up the livability of their neighborhood so that someone living out of town could drive home faster? The city councilman for their ward didn't help much either when he met with them. He advised planting any new trees farther back in yards just in case parking strip trees had to be removed at some time in the future. It was this lack of concern for the people residing in the neighborhood that provided the impetus needed to get the neighborhood organized.

South Oakdale Historic District

In the spring of 1976 the intersection of 11th and Oakdale was widened at the loss of two huge, wonderful old trees. Neighbors rallied for a protest walk to City Hall. This time, real action was needed; residents feared waking up to chain saws some morning. The question was, how do we make an impact upon city hall?

Investigating once again the pros and cons of forming an historic district, residents learned that any project that included federal monies must be reviewed at a national level if it impacted a registered historic district. At that time most street projects included federal money as part of the package. Saving trees and the ambience of the neighborhood was the end, and historic preservation suddenly seemed to be the means.

Residents held the first of several neighborhood meetings in April 1978. They invited State Historic Preservation Officer Elizabeth Potter to review the area for its potential as an historic district. Her positive response gave the residents of South Oakdale the green light to proceed. The state office provided both the paperwork and some of the support on how to file an application.

How does an area meet criteria to qualify for listing on the National Historic Register? In the case of South Oakdale, several historic structures would qualify on their own, but many others would not. Filing as a district, however, the structures all had historic value as a group. That value includes the visual impact of the large lawns and the tunnel of trees. The buildings are also representative of the development of popular architectural styles—including 1890 Colonial Revival, the bungalows of 1905–1920s, with Queen Anne and Tudor Revival and builder's styles. Primarily residential, it also includes a major church and rectory, a high school and some professional offices. This was one of the oldest still-intact areas of Medford.

Along with the structures, the neighborhood also had significance because the early inhabitants of South Oakdale played key roles in the development of Medford as a new and growing community. The people building fine new homes in the area were also the ones helping to build the town at large—its business, politics and social life.

Sketching some of the characters who played major roles in the development of South Oakdale and Medford can get complicated. Many were involved in several aspects of the community's financial and cultural growth. In the glimpses that follow, the house numbers of some of these citizens' South Oakdale homes are in parentheses after their names.

The wheeling and dealing of land speculation brought many of the first residents to the neighborhoods. J. H. Stewart (1113) owned vast areas from the east side of Oakdale to the tracks. F. K. Deuel (1018) owned much of the area on the west side. Both had extensive orchards bordering the street. In 1908, Stewart sold to George Marshall, who was responsible for subdividing the east side over many years. A few blocks closer to town, Harry Wortman* (912) acted as a developer, along with Barr (410), Dodge (610), Tuttle (706), Whitman (707) and Warner (519), who all owned large parcels of property.

Neighborhood residents' investments also affected the downtown commercial core. Porter Neff (516 Belmont) was an attorney, and a partner in the Cooley building and the Jackson and Holland hotels. He also played a part in the agreement that Medco be left outside the city limits for tax purposes, an arrangement later to haunt the city of Medford. Captain Nash (822) remodeled the building at Main and Front into the well-known Nash Hotel. Emil Mohr (610) built the Medford Hotel in 1910, then moved to Oakdale to walk to work daily.

Realtor Walter Leverette (611) built his house as a model home of the modern life, featured in a 1928 *Medford Mail Tribune* story. He was a partner in the Holly Theater and the Leverette building on Main among other commercial ventures.

"The" architect for Medford from around 1910 until the early 1940s was Frank Clark. He designed and built nine or ten homes within the district as well as the high school in 1931. He is credited for having a major regional influence on the shape of the valley.

**Along with the structures,
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significance because the early
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played key roles in the develop-
ment of Medford as a new and
growing community.**

Along with land development, early entrepreneurs focused on the budding orchard industry. The first commercial acreage in the valley was put into production by Stewart (1113) and Whitman (707) in 1885. Stewart sold out by 1908 to George Marshall, but remained a major influence on later orchardists, having shipped the first carload of fruit out of the valley in 1890. Whitman helped start the Southern Oregon Fair Association.

Many from South Oakdale practiced other professions, but according to the city directory listings, they also dabbled in the orchard business. Included were Deuel (1018), Porter (1010), Patterson (1009), Bardwell (1002), Drury (620, then 1009) and Maurice Spatz (912), who founded Crystal Springs Packing Company. The Naumes family built the unique rock house at 1001 South Oakdale in 1937. It was designed by Frank Clark and built by Frank Applegate with Joe Naumes hauling rocks from all over the country.

*While on the city council, Harry Wortman asked the city to rename 7th to Main and J. St. to Oakdale to correspond to streets where he had lived in Rockford, Indiana. The large stands of native oaks made his request a logical one.



J. H. Stewart built this two-story Queen Anne style home in 1895. In 1908 he sold the home and surrounding acreage to orchardist George Marshall, who later subdivided much of the district. SOHS #4583

Every new community needs financial institutions and the men of South Oakdale again were in the forefront of early Medford banking. The Medford Bank was founded in 1899 with Stewart as president. The First National Bank was incorporated in 1905 with Deuel as a director and later with Charles English (1006) as its vice president. The Farmer's and Fruit Grower's Bank was established in 1909 by owner DelRoy Getchell, who built the home at 1121 South Oakdale in 1916. L. B. Warner (519) was president and director of Jackson County Federal Savings and Loan. He also had the distinction of being postmaster for several years and served in that role at the time of the infamous D'Autremont train robbery.

Merchants from South Oakdale included Wortman (912) as partner in a meat and grocery store. Deuel (1018) was a major dry goods operator. Jewelers included Dr. Reddy (800) and Larry Schade (989). D. V. Myers (609) operated a local auto dealership. A. A. Davis (517 W. 10th) came in 1889 and built the only flouring mill. He was the

founder of the short-lived Crater Lake Railroad Co. hoping to link Eagle Point with the north-south transcontinental railroad line.

In the 1920s, brothers-in-law A. B. Cunningham (616) and O. O. Alendorfer (718) owned People's Electric, until selling to employee Ben Trowbridge, Sr. Bert Theirolf (907) was a lumber broker who owned Big Pines Lumber Co. Hal Deuel (1018 and 1100) and his brother-in-law owned Valley Fuel.

Many neighborhood residents were well-educated professional men coming from the East to find their fortunes. Most came with well-lined pockets, able to build

Noteworthy among South Oakdale's residents was Earl Fehl, who rocked the community with one of its biggest scandals.

fine homes. Attorneys included Porter Neff (516 Belmont) and Yale graduate Stuart Patterson (1009), who rented from W. J. Roberts, a civil engineer whose work took him away from the new home he had built.

Dr. E. H. Porter (1010) represented the medical profession. He built the Medford Sanitorium, the first hospital after Catholic Sacred Heart. At retirement he remodeled it in 1921 into Carghill Court Apartments. Dentist Dr. Riddell (1114) sold his home to another dentist, Dr. Elliot.

Two of Medford's best-remembered educators lived on South Oakdale, their influence touching thousands of students. E. H. Hedrick (503) lived on the street the thirty years he was the popular Medford schools superintendent from 1925 to 1955. Lester Harris (707) came to Medford to live just steps away from where he worked as principal of Medford Senior High, from 1944 to 1965. The district building now located at 517 W. 10th was originally the 1884 school built on Oakdale and Main.

The literary arts were well represented by products of South Oakdale homes. Edison Marshall (raised 1113, lived 1009) gained national recognition as a novelist. He wrote his early works in Medford, but later left for his wife's native Georgia. A prolific contributor to *Good Housekeeping*, and author of more than forty novels, five of them made into films, he was remembered fondly as one of Medford's more flamboyant citizens.

Another colorful figure is Dick Applegate (raised 615) who began his journalism career at the *Mail Tribune*. Applegate renamed the Medford High Tigers the Black Tornado. Leaving Medford behind, he moved up through United Press International to become bureau chief in Singapore and Saigon and then an NBC correspondent in Hong Kong. While there sailing, he strayed into Communist Chinese waters, was captured and held for eight-

een months. Medford citizens rallied to gather thousands of signatures to present the secretary of state to help secure his release.

Another literary connection was Alice Applegate Sargent (800), who wrote a short history of the Rogue Valley and a book, *Following the Flag*. John Reddy (raised 800) became an editor at *Reader's Digest*.

Thomas Williams (625) retired from the Indian Service in 1903 and became the city park supervisor. He planned and planted Library Park, now Alba Park. After he died, the Frank Applegate family bought his home and remained in it for more than seventy years.

Noteworthy among South Oakdale's residents was Earl Fehl, who rocked the community with one of its biggest scandals. A carpenter, Fehl bought 504 South Oakdale in 1914. From 1919 to 1933 he published the *Pacific Record Herald*. His editorials violently attacked the government and he soon joined forces with a similar paper, *The Daily News*, owned by Llewelyn Banks. They formed an organization called the Good Government Congress.

Together, the two masterminded a plan to control the county government, electing Fehl county judge. The losing sheriff, however, filed suit demanding a recount. Front page headlines in *The Medford Mail Tribune* uncovered the story over six to eight months, telling of ballot theft, arrests and convictions. The coverage earned the *Tribune* the coveted Pulitzer Prize. Fehl ended up serving time in prison, and returned to a life of dejection on South Oakdale.



Electa and Earl Fehl, SOHS #6751

Politicians of lesser notoriety included Circuit Judge Norton (408), Judge Cruz (707) and Wm. Warner's father-in-law, Judge Colvig (519). Serving as mayors were Dr. Reddy (800) in 1907-1908, Alendorfer (718) in 1927-1928 and Hal Deuel (1940-1942).

In a more pleasant vein, the social life of South Oakdale residents flourished through activity in city clubs and societies as well as entertaining at home. Many of the men belonged to the University Club, considered a "must." Ladies were also organized. Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Warner were charter members of the Lewis and Clark Club, which later evolved into the Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Wort-

man, and undoubtedly others, belonged to the Ladies' Improvement Society, donating trees to be planted in Library Park.

Memories of the young people of the time are of parties and car rides. Tennis was popular, and there was more than one court in the district. Eastern ways brought west included calling cards and servants. Formal dress dinner parties were common. Families were close and in many cases the vacant land adjacent to family homes often was used to build homes for newly married family members. The every-other-lot pattern of older and newer homes still can be traced through parts of the district.

the message that historic preservation is valid and good business. The new Comprehensive Land Use Plan adopted in 1986 included provisions for historic properties and the recently established Medford Historic Commission is planning its first public event May 15 during Historic Preservation Week: a tour of the South Oakdale Historic District.



SOURCE MATERIAL

Aldrich, William W. *After 62 Years Still Going Strong, Rogue River Valley University Club; A History 1910-1973*. Medford: University Club members.



**The DelRoy
Getchell
House,
built in 1916
SOHS #4584**

Against this surprisingly rich architectural and sociological background, a core group of neighborhood volunteers spent the summer of 1978 researching all possible sources for any information pertaining to Oakdale history. County tax records yielded dates and names. Scott Clay again aided in identifying architectural details with the correct terminology. Old-timers from the neighborhood repeated their remembrances for tape recorders. Microfilms of old *Medford Mail Tribunes* gave up a host of data.

The more the group dug out information the more intrigued they became about the people and the structures that made the district "historical." In seeking to save trees and a neighborhood's livability, the desire for historic preservation of the area had matured.

The author completed the formal application for historic district status. Mailed to the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office on August 31, 1978, state and national approval was granted March 15, 1979. The district to be entered on the National Register of Historic places was to consist of sixty individual structures between West 10th and Stewart Avenue. The neighborhood held a celebration party in the 1895 home of J. H. Stewart (1113) with a real feeling of accomplishment.

Ten years ago, the city of Medford was very reluctant to join in any efforts on behalf of historic preservation. Yet in the intervening years, a handful of persevering citizens from all around Medford have continued to carry

Cordy, C. B. *History of the Rogue Valley Fruit Industry*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Extension Service, 1977.

Contemporary Authors, vol. 9-10. Detroit: Gale Research Company Book Tower. 1964.

Kellow, Ferne. *History of the Rogue Valley Pear Industry*. (Southern Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Jacksonville, OR) 1938.

Polk City Directory, City of Medford. 1911-14, 1930-50.

Polk City Directory, Jackson County. 1911-14.

Portrait and Biographical Record of Western Oregon. Chicago: Chapman Publishing Company, 1904.

Snedicor, Jan. *History of Medford*. (Southern Oregon Historical Society Research Library) 1935.

Southern Oregon Historical Society Oral History 100. Bertha Bardwell, 1978.

Oral interviews with the following Medford residents were conducted during the summer of 1978:

Elizabeth Applegate Barry	Helen Leavens
Perle Fehl Coverdale	Liberta Lennox
F. K. Deuel, Jr.	Genivieve Wortman McCorkle
Col. Bob Emmens	Joe Naumes
Otto Frohnmayer	Louise Clark Patterson
Calista Handweg	Laura Drury Porter
Sammye Harris	Norris Porter
Bob Keeney	Susan Deuel Robinson
Jerry Latham	Ruth Warner

Vicki Bryden has been on the board of trustees of the Southern Oregon Historical Society for the past six years. Besides writing the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the South Oakdale district, Vicki and her husband, Bruce, bought and restored the Wilkinson-Swem building in Medford.



Photo by Natalie Brown

Ken and Almeda Edwards and other vintage car owners will display their historic automobiles along South Oakdale during the home tours.

South Oakdale Home Tours Offered

If Vicki Bryden's article has brought the South Oakdale Historic District alive for you, you won't want to miss an upcoming tour of more than a dozen significant homes in the graceful old neighborhood.

Organized by the Medford Historic Commission, the historic home tour is scheduled for Sunday, May 15, from 1 to 4 p.m. Cost is \$1.00 per person or \$.75 for Southern Oregon Historical Society members with membership cards.

Tour-goers will park at South Medford High School, where self-guiding brochures will lead them through fifteen homes dating from 1910 to 1947.

Homeowners will be there to greet visitors, point out special features and answer questions about the residences, some in original condition, some in transition, some fully restored.

South Oakdale between Stewart Avenue and 11th Street will be

blocked off for the afternoon's event. Vintage vehicles owned by members of the Horseless Carriage Car Club of America and the Rogue Valley Old Timers Car Club will line the avenue, and members will be present in period costumes. Through traffic will be rerouted to Dakota.

Included among the homes opened to the public will be those once owned by:

- Judge Earl Fehl (504 South Oakdale)
- William Warner (511)
- Beeson (608)
- John Dodge (610, also residence of Emil Mohr, builder of the Medford Hotel)
- Walter Leverette (611)
- Lida Applegate (615)
- Walter Quisenberry (715)
- O. O. Alendorfer (718)
- Ralph Bardwell (1002)
- Dr. Elias Porter (1010)

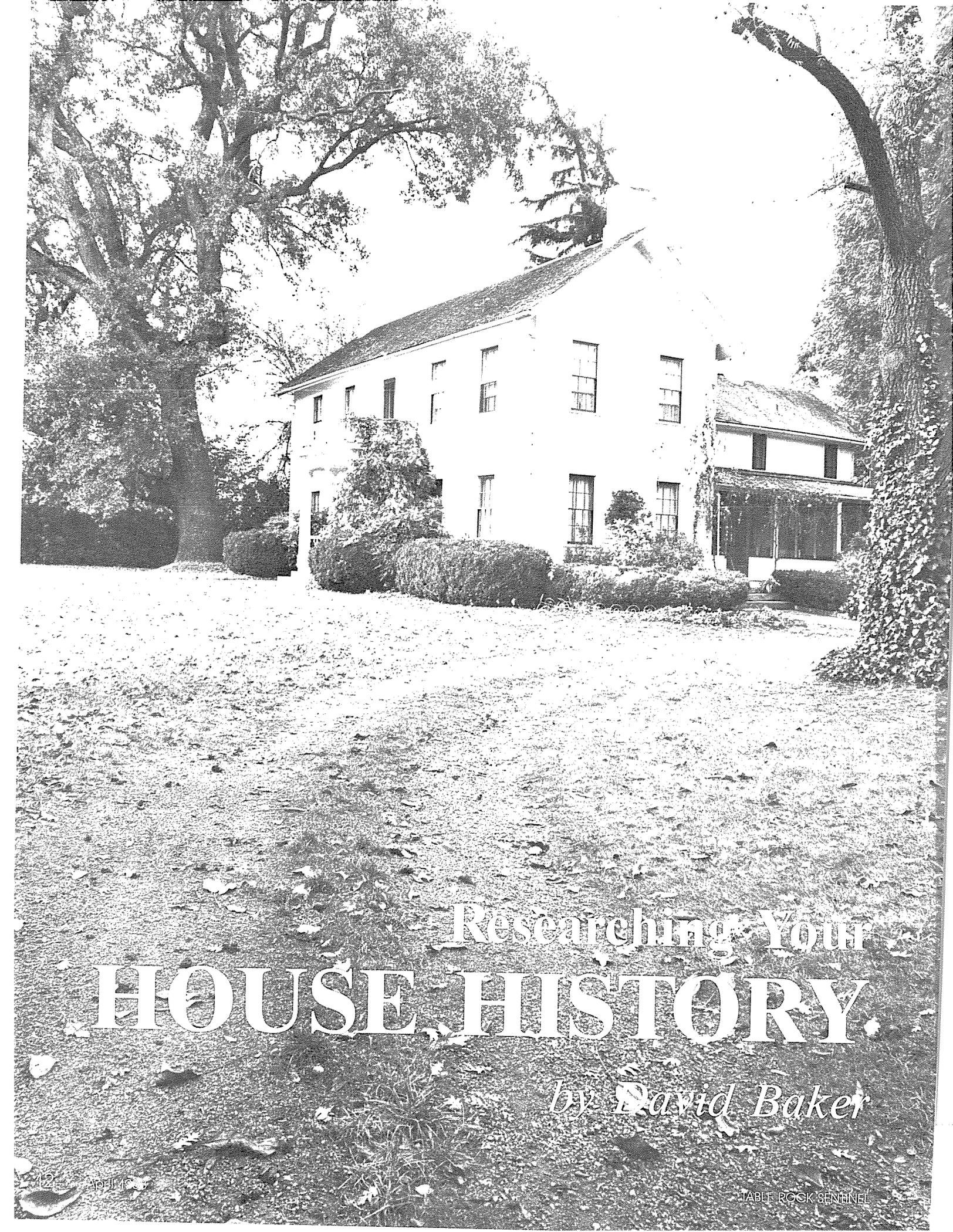
- Thomas Bradley (1108)
- Dr. E. G. Riddell (1114)
- DelRoy Getchell (1121)

The visitor's brochure also will list other historic homes in the district, along with further information on the history of the neighborhood and many of its colorful early residents. Present-day South Oakdale resident Amy Bryden produced the brochure for her senior project at South Medford High.

The Medford City Council appointed the Medford Historic Commission to identify, review and preserve historic properties in Medford. Members include Larry Horton, Merrill Haggard, William Dames, Linda Steinhardt and Mary Foster.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society and Mountain Title are underwriting this project on behalf of the people of Jackson County.

For additional information, contact Mary Foster at 773-7711.



Researching Your
HOUSE HISTORY.

by David Baker

The Willows, formally owned by the Hanley family, has a history that goes back to the early settlement and growth of the Rogue Valley. SOHS #3585

Anyone can trace the history of a house. It is often a complicated jigsaw puzzle; but with equal quantities of luck and patience, the pieces can be assembled.

And when the research is done, you may know both who owned your house and what it looked like in the past — which can mean a more accurate restoration. There are many resources available to the amateur house historian: local museums and historical societies, old magazines and newspapers, physical artifacts, and city maps, to name a few. But your first step should be a title search in the local real estate transaction records. The search will enable you to plot the “chain of title” to your house: when it was built, by whom, who owned it and for how long, how much it sold for over the years. All transactions, whether mortgage, sale, or conveyance by inheritance, are recorded and accessible (as long as the records still exist).

Every community has a Recorder’s Office or Deed Office. It stores the permanent records of all transactions involving real property. You’ll have to unravel the idiosyncracies of the local filing system for yourself, but you can be certain of two things: The office is open to the public, and its information is indexed according to the names of both buyers and sellers of property.

If you know either end of the chain of title, either the current or the original owner, you can recreate the chain of title using what is known as the “grantee” (buyer) and “grantor” (seller) index. You certainly know one end of the chain: your own name, when you bought the house, and from whom.

Start the search with the grantee index for the year in which you bought the property, and go backwards through each year of indexes. Look for the name of the people who sold you the house, to find out when they

bought the house and from whom. When you find their name, read the actual deed to be sure it refers to your property. Take the name of the seller (“grantor”) from that deed and use the grantee index to find out who sold *them* the house, and so on.

If by chance you’re doing this from the original owner on, use grantor indexes to determine who sold the house each time, and then go forward to find out who that person sold to, and so on. Keep in mind that indexes, especially for earlier years, are not bound individually but rather in groups of years.

Each of these transactions can provide valuable clues to the early life of your house. A sizable increase in price, for example from \$1200 in 1860 to \$8000 in 1865, suggests a capital improvement like a new building. A mortgage on a property may coincide with the construction of a new wing or outbuilding. You can often confirm your guesses with a visit to the Building Department in your town. Building and alteration permit files may include the owner’s name, date of construction, architect, builder, cost of construction, roof covering, dates of alterations, plans, even working drawings.

The Office of Taxation, or comparable municipal department in your area, may also yield clues. Increases in tax assessments from year to year may indicate improvements on the property. Be cautious, however, in making assumptions based on these increases. A city-wide re-assessment may have doubled everyone’s taxes in one year. Inflation, real estate booms, and other factors affect property values as well, so it is important to know something about the economic history of your town.

Before tackling the vagaries of the grantee-grantor index system, my wife and I visited our city museum and were fortunate to learn something of our house’s beginnings. The curator told us that our Victorian house in Alameda, California, was built in 1896 for one Max J. Brandenstein at a cost of \$2350, and that Max had sold the house that same year.

Several months later, while drinking coffee at a local restaurant, I spied an old coffee can on display. The label proclaimed the manufacturer’s name: it was none other than M. J. Brandenstein. It was not difficult to verify that this was the same M. J. Brandenstein who built our house. We surmised that Max had speculated in real estate with coffee money.

The longer we lived in the house, the more we came to feel that its design problems as well as its virtues stemmed from a get-rich-quick past. The fashionable architectural features — the façade, front porch, front hall, parlors — are beautifully crafted. But the living quarters left much to be desired: there was a minuscule bathroom and no closets. At first we assumed all Victorians had these glaring design defects, but this is not the case in houses of similar vintage we’ve seen, ones not built on speculation. Max and his contractors had obviously built the house for a quick sale, not for a lifetime of comfortable living.

Armed with the information about our original owner and anxious to learn more, I approached the grantor index for the 1890s, certain I would quickly determine the chain

of title from Max all the way to the present. It did not take long to discover one of the pitfalls of title searching: the older the records, the poorer the indexing. It took an hour to check one year of the 1890s index.

After six hours of examining column after column of handwritten names, I abandoned my attempt to go from past to present, and decided to work backwards from the present. In five minutes I scanned the entries for the 1960s and soon found an entry involving the party from whom my wife and I bought the house. Although this entry did not identify the next link in the chain, it was extremely valuable. It indicated that our previous owner had bought the house from a title company, and that there had been a conveyance.

A reconveyance means that someone is giving back an interest in land. Translated, this generally means that the owner of a piece of property has paid off the mortgage. A reconveyance also allows the house historian to skip many years of indexes.

Make sure you examine the reconveyance document itself. These documents are usually housed in the same building as the grantor-grantee indexes. The reconveyance will refer to the deed or mortgage it is extinguishing. The year in which the deed or mortgage was executed is crucial. In my case, the reconveyance occurred in 1950 and the deed was executed in 1944. Thus I was able to skip the indexes for 1944 to 1950 since I knew the property was held by the same owner in this period.

The reconveyance led me directly to the next link in the chain of title. In 1944, the people we bought from purchased the house. But it was not an ordinary sale: the entry indicated that there had been an "order of sale," and referred to a court file number.

The term "order of sale" (or "decree of distribution") means that the owner died, and the house was sold following legal proceedings known as "probate." The documents contained in probate files frequently offer the house historian a fascinating detour and can provide useful clues for restoration. A will may indicate which family member inherited a lot, a house, or a piece of property. With luck, descendants can be found who might have old photographs. If the property was not willed, the administrator's records will show if the house was sold to pay expenses; often these records include correspondence or affidavits that afford insights into the personality and

activities of the deceased. The file may also include inventories of personal property drawn up when the estate was divided or sold. Lists of possessions and home furnishings can assist researchers in piecing together the life and circumstances of property owner and his family.

In our case the probate office was located in the same building as the recorder's office. The file revealed that the house was sold in 1944 for the same price it was purchased for in 1896, a measure of the neglect it had endured. There was a list of the descendants of the deceased owner, one of whom had an unusual name (giving us hope that we could use local telephone books to track down descendants). The will was lost, unfortunately, and we could find

no records that indicated the contents of the house.

Had the transaction occurred in the late 1800s or early 1900s, a city directory might have given us more information about the owners and their descendants. Directories at the time often listed the occupations of residents, along with their business and home addresses. Public libraries and historical societies maintain these directories.

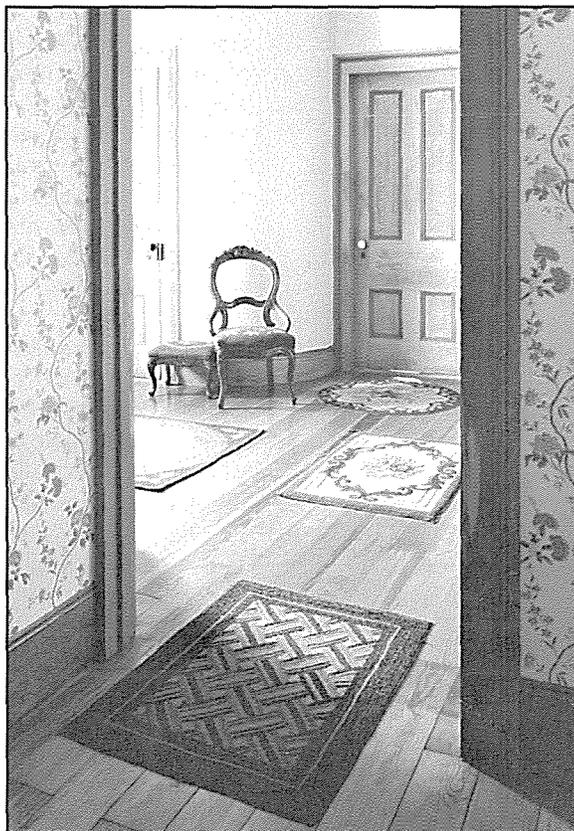
Federal census information is available for years prior to 1880. Your nearest center that houses federal archives may have questionnaires filled out by people who lived in your house.

Our probate file also explained the child's primer we found in our attic. Published in the 1890s, the book was inscribed with a girl's name. According to the file, the girl was the daughter of the deceased owner, and had the misfortune of spending

much of her life in a mental institution.

With the name of the deceased owner, whom we will call "the widow," I returned to the grantee indexes to complete the chain of title back to Max J. Brandenstein. I was aided by a series of reconveyances. From 1930 to 1919, the widow refinanced the same debt four times, graphic evidence of financial distress (each refinancing, we later learned, coincided with some improvement to the house: a new water heater, the house's first wiring). Unhappily (for me), the reconveyances ended in 1919, and I was confronted again with the abysmal indexing of the earlier volumes. This time, rather than going blind examining handwritten columns, I took a calculated risk that resulted in an important shortcut.

The widow had the same last name as the individual to whom Brandenstein had originally sold the house. I made two assumptions: that these people were related,



Interior of Hanley House

Photo by Douglas R. Smith

more specifically that they were husband and wife, and that the house had passed between them at a probate proceeding. This allowed me to use probate indexes rather than grantor-grantee indexes.

A probate index is organized like a telephone directory. By looking up the name of the person who has died, you can determine whether there was a probate proceeding on his or her estate. If such a proceeding took place, the index will list a court file number.

In my case, a five-minute search of the probate index produced the desired result: a 1904 probate proceeding indicating that title to the house passed from the gentleman who purchased from Max J. Brandenstein to his widow. I had completed the chain of title.

Title searching is not simply a technical exercise. The 1904 probate proceeding that completed our chain of title also rounded out the history of the house's first inhabitants, and changed our feelings about its four walls. For nearly 50 years one family conducted life in our home. When her husband died in 1904, the widow was left to cope with meagre financial resources and a daughter with severe emotional problems. Perhaps our widow wanted to keep the house exactly as her husband left it. Perhaps she steadfastly refused the entreaties of hucksters who would clothe the exterior with asbestos siding, put in lowered ceilings, or destroy her beautiful mahogany mantel.

Once you have immersed yourself in the history of your home, it takes on a new personality. Often the desire to remodel diminishes and the wish to restore increases; it becomes more and more difficult to make dramatic changes in a house that has meant so much to so many. I believe our house still bears the dignity of the widow's struggle.

Over the years we continued to learn about the house. We found the widow's obituary in a local newspaper, and it mentions the cemetery where she was buried. Visiting that cemetery, we found records indicating how the deceased buried there had been related — meaning we knew more possible names of descendants. After checking the state death registry (available at the county seat) and probate records that named heirs, we tracked down living descendants. Ironically, the poor widow's relatives were, and their descendants still are, among San Francisco's richest families.

We were excited to learn that one of the widow's relatives had been a photography buff who had taken quantities of pictures. At least one, we were sure, was of our house. Unfortunately, his heirs told us, "We threw them all away." Your experience with living descendants may prove more fruitful.

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OTHER SOURCES

The following sources may help you learn more about your vintage house.

■ Oral history simply means talking to anyone who may know anything about your house: former owners, their descendants and friends; neighbors; an elderly local builder; anyone who's watched the town or neighborhood change. Local telephone directories may list owners or relatives who live nearby. With luck you might find photos (see hints below), or at least stories: how rooms were used, what kinds of additions and improvements were made, how the house was painted or decorated, or how holidays were celebrated, and the like.

■ Photographs are, of course, the most accurate record of how your house looked: how furniture was arranged and walls decorated; how families dressed, planted their gardens. Look for background clues: office signs that would indicate tenants, or any outbuildings behind the house. Along with the "oral history" sources cited above, local libraries and historical societies are

your most likely sources.

■ Paintings, watercolors, sketches, prints, notecards, stationery, and postcards also give information. Beware, though, of artistic liberties.

■ Periodicals are likely resources too. If your original owners were prominent citizens, detailed obituaries may have appeared when they died. Special issues of local papers, used to promote a town, often featured street scenes, or photos of citizens and their homes. If your house is elaborate, an architect may have designed it, in which case an architectural magazine may have written about it. These publications are available at research libraries, including New York Public Library and the Library of Congress; check issues from the year or two around your house's construction date.

■ Business records, if you know the name of the architect or contractor, can sometimes be tracked down. Local historical societies or libraries may have these papers; for more recent buildings, the actual firms may

still be in business. Remember that, unlike law firms, architecture firms change their names when partners die; check old telephone directories to see if you can trace the firm's evolution.

■ In addition to these sources, you also may wish to contact the following organizations for information on historic preservation:

National Trust for Historic Preservation
1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036-9979
(202) 673-4000
\$15 Individual Membership

Historic Preservation League of Oregon
P.O. Box 40053
Portland, OR 97240
(503) 243-1923
\$15 Individual Membership

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
525 Trade Street Southeast
Salem, OR 97310
(503) 378-5001

Old House Journal
69A Seventh Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11217
(718) 636-4514
\$18 Annual Subscription

Society Update

Chappell-Swedenburg to Open New Exhibit

Staff at the Society's Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum in Ashland are busy preparing for the mid-May opening of a new exhibit titled "Home Entertainment."

According to guest curator Nancy Krieg, a student at SOSOC, home entertainment is defined as what people do to amuse themselves within the home. Before the advent of mass media, such pursuits might have included playing games and music, reading, and story-telling.

In America, activities have changed over the last century from active participation in family- and group-oriented pursuits to passive participation in individual pastimes. This change is reflected in our material culture—the things we have in our homes that illustrate what we enjoy doing: televisions, stereos, photographic equipment, and so on.

The exhibit, scheduled to remain on display through 1988, will contrast the types of activities pre-dating the advent of the mass media in 1910–1920 with the popular culture of the following decades. From prehistoric to modern times, it will trace the evolution of cultural values placed on home entertainment. Numerous artifacts and photographs of great variety and ingenuity will help tell the story.

What's in Store

The Southern Oregon Historical Society Gift Shop in the Jacksonville Museum has in stock many unusual items relating to railroad history. Railroad books, engineer caps, even train whistles will delight young and old alike! And remember, members receive 15% off any purchase as a membership benefit. Stop in today to see "what's in store."



photo by Natalie Brown

Children from throughout Jackson County discovered the delights of the traditional Maypole dance at last year's Children's Heritage Fair.

Children's Heritage Fair Scheduled

The Society is planning another history-filled week for area fourth graders. The third annual "Children's Heritage Fair" will be held May 3–6, with Saturday, May 7, set aside for the general public.

This year the Society has expanded the event to accommodate forty-four individual classes from throughout Jackson County. Students will re-create traditional skills and crafts such as butter churning, paper weaving, handkerchief doll-making, and "gold" panning. A Maypole Dance and a visit to the

Jacksonville and Children's museums are included in the day's activities.

On Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., the public is welcome to join the festivities. Visitors of all ages may participate in the above activities while enjoying traditional folk music, wood carving, wool spinning and weaving demonstrations, plus much more! The event is free. Plan now to join us in Jacksonville for this rare opportunity to experience the past!

Society Bus Tour Season Scheduled

The Society is in the process of developing the 1988 bus tour season. This month's adventure is already set with a trip to the Douglas County Museum of History and Natural History on April 28.

On Friday, May 27, join Society staff for an adventure! The destination? Only the tour guide, bus driver, and host will know. All members need is the spirit of adventure, a camera and comfortable clothing.

(This is *not* a repeat of last year's mystery tour.)

Participants will depart Jacksonville at 9:00 a.m. and return around 3:00 p.m. Cost will be \$17.50 and includes transportation and lunch; scenery compliments of southern Oregon. Reservations required and may be obtained by calling Susan Cox, membership coordinator, at 899-1847.

Details on future tours are yet to follow, but for those who like to

plan ahead, here is the proposed schedule. Keep in mind that, because all arrangements are not finalized, several of the tours and dates are tentative at this time.

July 7 Lava Beds (tentative)
August 11 Crescent City (tentative)
September 8-9 . . Oregon Caves (overnight)
October 6 To be determined

More information will follow in later issues of the *Sentinel*.

Members to Consider Changes in Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation

At the annual meeting in June, members will be asked to approve changes in the Society's Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation.

The change in the Bylaws is a result of the Society's Long Range Plan which outlined the need for the Board to consider a restatement of the Society's mission. At the March meeting, the Board of Trustees passed a resolution to change Sections 2 and 3 of Article II of the Bylaws to read as follows:

Section 2:

The Society shall maintain affiliation with the Oregon Historical Society. The purpose of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, in accordance with the Oregon Revised Statutes, Chapter 358, is as follows:

- a. The acquisition and preservation of historical objects, real and personal property of historical interest, and other relevant records, materials and data.
- b. The primary focus of this Society will be on the history, objects, and historical properties of Jackson County and southwestern Oregon.

Section 3:

In addition to these basic responsibilities, the Southern Oregon Historical Society shall:

- a. Cause to be placed on public display objects of historical interest, with appropriate interpretation and background information;
- b. Encourage public attention toward the history of this county, region, state and nation;
- c. Make a public accounting of the Society's acquisition and conservator rules and regulations, and of the safeguards established for the collections;
- d. Conduct educational programs within its fields of competence, and publish and issue appropriate books, newsletters and other material in furtherance of the Society's purpose; and
- e. Encourage the continuation of current tax support from Jackson County, and undertake additional fundraising, earned and contributed, necessary to guarantee the future endurance and excellence of Society programs.

Finally, the Society acknowledges an interest in the history of the entire southwestern Oregon region. However, it also acknowledges its major responsibility to, and the support of, the people of Jackson County. Therefore, it will maintain appropriate county-wide representation in the governance of the organization.

* * *

The membership adopted the restated articles of incorporation at last year's annual meeting. Before the document could be submitted, however, a new provision of the Oregon Revised Statutes — ORS 61.311(h) — which became effective July 1, 1987, says that articles of incorporation filed after July 1 must state the manner of electing or appointing subsequent directors and their terms of office. Hence, the Board of Trustees resolved at the March meeting the following restated articles to be approved by the membership at June's annual meeting.

Continued next page

Restated Articles of Incorporation of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, Inc.

The SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC., an Oregon nonprofit corporation, adopts these restated Articles of Incorporation pursuant to the Oregon Non-profit Corporation Act. These Restated Articles of Incorporation supersede all prior Articles of Incorporation and all amendments thereof, of the SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

ARTICLE I

The name of this corporation is the SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. and its duration is perpetual.

ARTICLE II

The purposes for which this corporation is organized are:

- a. This corporation is organized and shall be operated solely for charitable purposes.
- b. Specifically and primarily, this corporation is formed to operate museums in Jackson County, Oregon; to collect, preserve, exhibit and publish material, personal property and real property of an historical character, especially relating to the history of Southern Oregon and Oregon; to encourage and develop the study of such history.
- c. In general this corporation is formed to engage in any lawful activity, not for profit, in which corporations are authorized to engage under Chapter 61 of the Oregon Revised Statutes, provided, however, that it will not engage, except to an insubstantial degree, in any activity not in furtherance of the specific and primary purposes set forth in clause "b" above.
- d. No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall inure to the benefit of any private individual or entity.
- e. No substantial part of the activities of this corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign (including the publishing or distributing of statements) on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- f. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Article II, this corporation shall engage only in activities which are permitted to be engaged in by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code ("The Code") by a corporation to which contributions are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of The Code and by a public charity described in Section 509(a)(1), (2) or (3) of The Code.

ARTICLE III

This corporation shall have one or more classes of members as specified in the corporate bylaws. The qualifications and rights of the members of each class shall be set forth in the bylaws.

ARTICLE IV

This corporation shall have a board of trustees as provided in its bylaws. Each trustee shall hold office for a term not to exceed three (3) years. Trustees shall be elected and vacancies filled in accordance with the following procedure:

- a. Approximately one-third of the Trustees shall be elected each year, subject to adjustment to cover resignations or other premature terminations of Trustees.
- b. The election of Trustees shall be by letter ballot to be cast by members of the Society.
- c. The Board of Trustees shall, at least 60 days prior to the election, publish in a publication of general circulation, the names of members nominated as Trustees by the nominating committee as approved by the Board. The number of candidates presented in this fashion shall exceed the number of positions to be filled by two. The published notice shall also include a reminder that any other member of the Society may also be nominated by petition.
- d. A member of the Society may be nominated by petition signed by 15 other Society members. Such petition(s) must be provided by the secretary not less than 45 days before the election and returned to the secretary not less than 30 days before the election, so that nominees can be included and identified as candidates on the ballot.
- e. The secretary shall, not less than 15 days before the date of election, mail to each member an election notice which also includes a suitable ballot listing the names of members nominated as Trustees, and a brief curriculum vitae on each candidate.
- f. Each member of the Southern Oregon Historical Society may vote for any such nominees, provided that the number of votes cast by any member shall not exceed the number of Board vacancies. Any ballot exceeding that number will be declared invalid.
- g. All ballots must be marked and returned to the secretary by the day specified in the election notice. To insure secrecy, each member is to seal the marked ballot in one envelope (to be provided) having no identification, and to enclose it in another envelope bearing the member's signature for identification. The secretary shall check the signature on the outer envelope to establish that the individual is entitled to vote. The inner envelopes are to be given to tellers to tabulate.
- h. Any vacancy on the Board shall be filled for the unexpired term by a vote of the remaining Trustees within two regular Board meetings after the vacancy occurs.

ARTICLE V

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II hereof. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from the federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (and similar provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

ARTICLE VI

All of the properties, monies and other assets of this corporation are irrevocably dedicated to charitable, scientific and educational purposes and shall not inure to the benefit of any private individual. In the event that this corporation shall be dissolved or terminated at any time, then all of the properties, monies and other assets of this corporation shall be transferred exclusively to and become the property of a nonprofit fund, foundation or corporation as selected and designated by the Board of Trustees of this corporation and which shall at that time qualify as exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of The Code as that section exists or may subsequently be amended.

Welcome New Members

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Elizabeth Applegate Barry, *Hubbard*
Otto & Virginia Bohnert, *Central Point*
Gladys H. Crowley, *Medford*
Mrs. K. G. Johnson, *Medford*
Dr. & Mrs. Fred Lorish, *Medford*
John & Ilse Nicholson, *Ashland*
Mr. & Mrs. James Patterson, *Medford*
Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Potter, *Medford*
John Purves, *Reseda, CA*
Mrs. H. M. Richards, *Seattle, WA*
Charline Serat, *Medford*
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Zirkle, *Central Point*

BUSINESS

KTVL Television, *Medford*
Medford Canned Foods, *Medford*
Medford Mail Tribune, *Medford*
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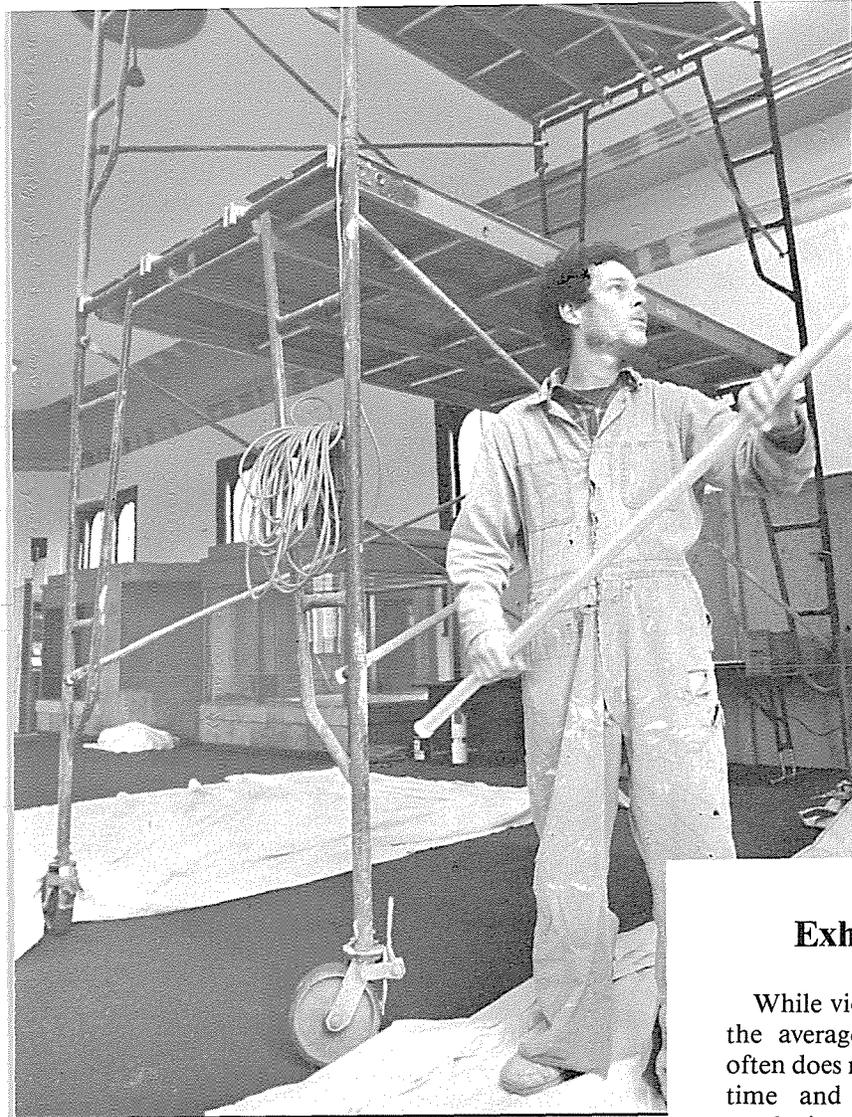


Photo by Bill McClain

Gene Gwin and the maintenance crew completed the enormous job of patching and painting the courtroom as well as later construction and electrical work.

Curator of Collections Marc Pence carefully protects artifacts during exhibit installation.

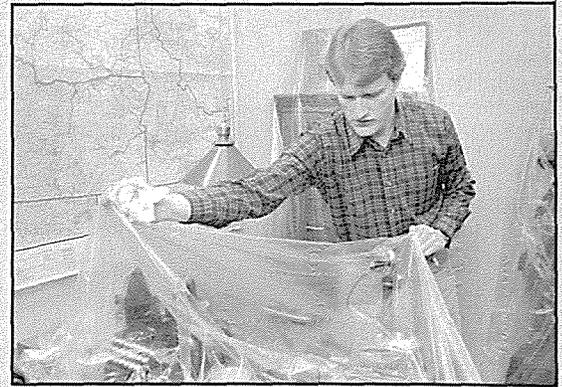


Photo by Natalie Brown

Exhibits: Not an Overnight Accomplishment

While viewing the final product, the average visitor to a museum often does not realize the amount of time and work that goes into producing major exhibitions. At many large museums throughout the United States, it can take staff five or more years to complete the process from conceptualization to opening reception.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society's newest exhibit, *"Making Tracks: The Impact of Railroading in the Rogue Valley,"* began in January 1987, when the theme and educational objectives were developed, and research and data collection got underway.

In September, staff began writing the script and preparing the exhibit design.

November saw the closing of the Jacksonville Museum's courtroom for needed repairs, painting, and carpet cleaning. Meanwhile, artifacts were gathered from the Society's collections and cleaned for their eventual placement in exhibit cases.

Once March arrived, efforts from the entire staff helped to pull the project together. Exhibit cases had to be painted and cleaned, photographs copied, labels produced, exhibit furniture built, track lighting installed, and everything in its proper place for the big opening reception on March 26. And afterward—on Monday, March 28—a sigh of relief for a job well done!

Coordinator of Exhibits Jime Matoush artfully designed and arranged exhibit cases.

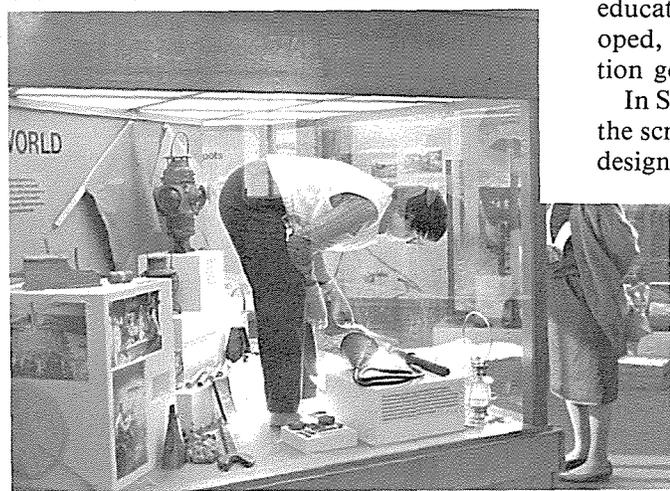


Photo by Natalie Brown

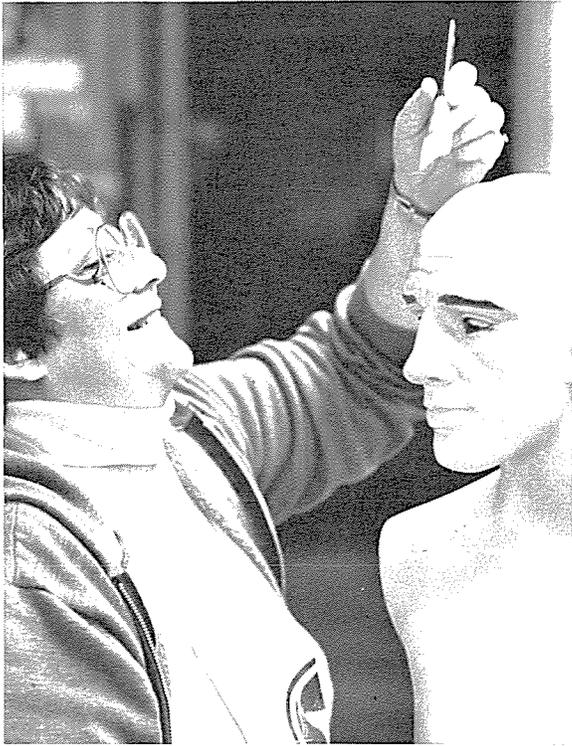
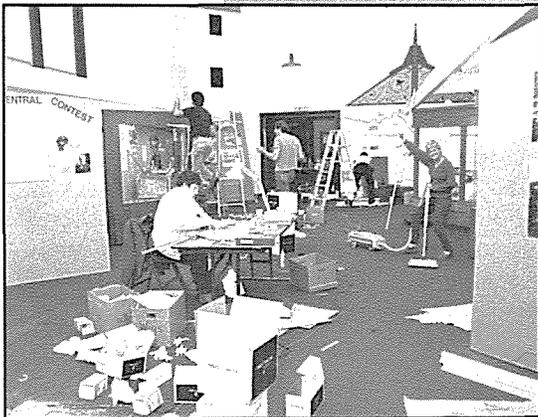


Photo by Bill McClain

(left) Volunteer Carol Rose painted and prepared mannequins.
(below) Children of all ages enjoyed the model trains and activities during the exhibit opening celebrations.



Photo by Natalie Brown



(above) Dozens of staff and volunteers installed the exhibit and did the final cleaning in time for the opening reception *(right)*



Photo by Natalie Brown

Regional Digest

Stealing Oregon's Past

Late nineteenth-century rare books and manuscripts documenting Oregon history and worth more than \$200,000 have been stolen from the Special Collections of the University of Oregon Library.

The theft of 13 rare books and 9,000 to 10,000 letters, overland diaries, railroad records, stock certificates, and Indian treaties was discovered December 29 when a library patron requested to see some of the materials. Police officers believe the theft occurred over a period of time beginning in the fall and continuing through the end of 1987.

"More crushing than the monetary loss, which is substantial, is the obvious blow to Oregon's cultural history," says George Bynon, assistant University librarian. "Unfor-

tunately, there exists a market for the type of materials that were taken. We're hoping that any individual who comes across these materials or has any other information that will help us recover these irreplaceable pieces of Oregon history will come forward."

A few of the missing items may have been marked as the property of the University of Oregon Library, but individual letters and other manuscripts were not marked. About the only way to identify them is by their subject, author, and age. The documents date from the 1700s to the 1880s, but most are from the 1850s and later.

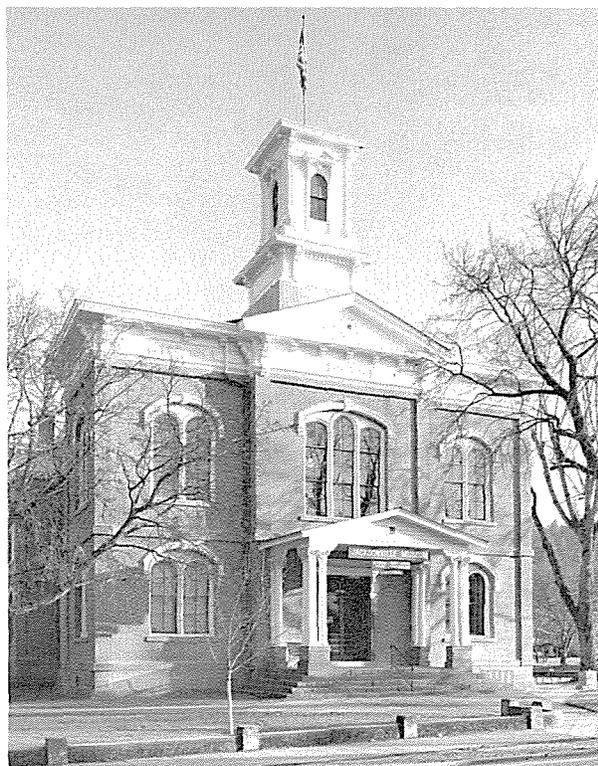
Gold Hill Historical Society Keeps Busy

The Gold Hill Historical Society recently completed stage one in its

efforts to index the Gold Hill city records. In the past year and a half, members worked on an inventory of all records dating up to 1976. They indexed and marked over 200 maps, schematics, and plans for the city that date back as far as the early 1900s. The next step will be to categorize, organize, and store the records in acid-free boxes to preserve them. (Money to purchase the boxes came from a \$866 grant from the Southern Oregon Historical Society's Grants-in-Aid program.)

Students from Hanby Junior High and Patrick Elementary have met with members of the Gold Hill Historical Society to learn more about the city's past. In fact, students from Hanby recently conducted a history project on Gold Hill and offered a presentation on their findings at the Society's monthly meeting on April 19.

From the Collections



In recent issues of the *Table Rock Sentinel*, we featured items from the Society's collection that, owing to exhibit space limitations, are not often seen by visitors. However, in keeping with this issue's theme of historic preservation, we thought we would highlight something often seen but not often viewed as an artifact—the Jacksonville Museum.

Jacksonville, recognized in 1853 as the county seat, was the center for all farming and commercial activities in Jackson County. This important position dictated that the community have a prominent building to serve as its courthouse.

In 1883-1884, the old Jackson County Courthouse was built, replacing a frame structure on the same site. Typical of the Italianate architectural style, the building features a heavy wooden entablature under the low hip roof, Corinthian columns, arched windows with stone sills, and a triangular pediment over the roof which represents the Greek influence on Roman culture. The belvedere, a prominent feature on many Italian villas, sits atop the building.

Historic properties are valued in communities with a deep appreciation of the past. The general public—from tourists to Hollywood film crews to local citizens—benefit from the foresight and determination of those who work to preserve these unique sites.