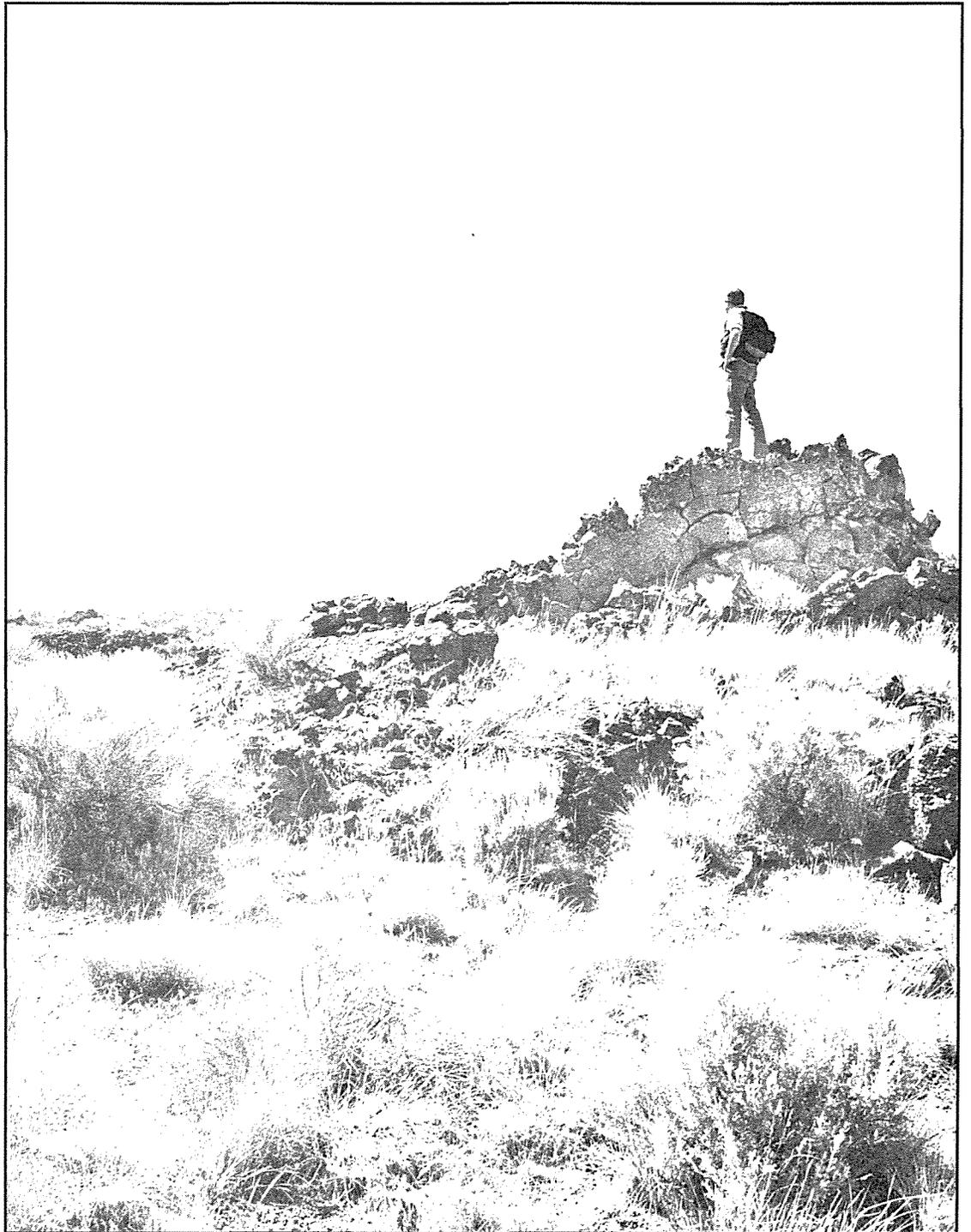


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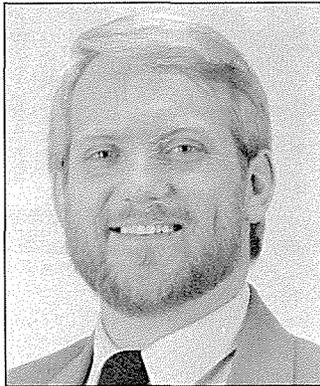
JUNE 1988



The
Magazine
of the
Southern
Oregon
Historical
Society

Commentary

Membership: one word so critically important to the future of this organization. The Southern Oregon Historical Society *is* its membership. The organization depends on the support of its members—both financially and otherwise. As we look to the future well-being of the Society, the role of the membership becomes all the more important.



In this issue of the *Sentinel*, you will read of a proposal to restructure the membership program. The reason is two-fold:

Even with cost cutting and streamlining of the processes necessary to provide membership benefits and opportunities, the program currently costs far more than it brings in to the Society.

In addition, we need to encourage more active membership involvement in the support of the Society. This involvement must come in two ways: financial support for Society programs and increased membership benefits, opportunities and activities which provide enriching experiences to members.

Please give serious consideration to this proposal and let us know what you think. Keep in mind that it is only a proposal to date. In the best interest of the Society, however, we must deal with this issue in the near future. With input and cooperation of the membership, this can and will be done.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Samuel J. Wegner".

Samuel J. Wegner
Executive Director



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Features

4 The Oregon Militia's Modoc War *by Sue Waldron*

Many early Jackson County residents responded to the call for volunteers to subdue the small band of Modoc Indians located near the Oregon-California border. Unprepared for the rugged terrain and the determination of the Indians, the volunteers found the anticipated short skirmish turned into an entire war.

12 The Birdseye Family of Jackson County *by Chuck Sweet*

The Birdseye home, still standing near Rogue River, Oregon, is a monument to the strength and courage of two women who survived and thrived on the rigors of the frontier and the whims of fate.

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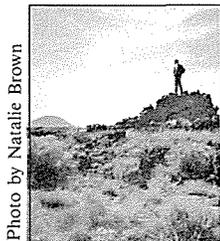


Photo by Natalie Brown

cover: A solitary hiker surveys Schonchin Butte and the rugged lava landscape where one hundred years ago fewer than sixty Modoc Indians fought the U.S. Army and volunteer militia in one of the most expensive Indian wars in this country's history.

The Oregon Militia's Modoc War

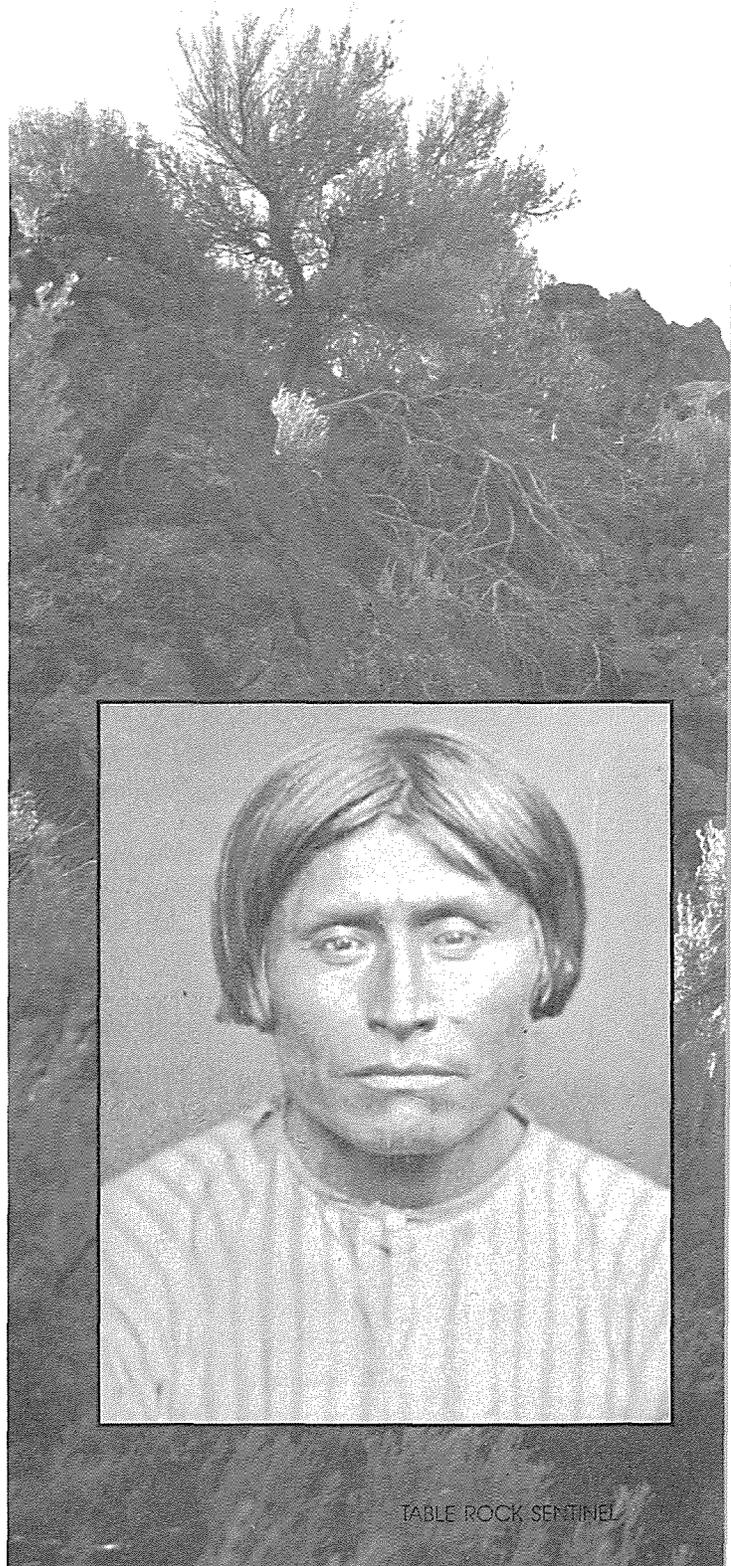
by Sue Waldron

Early in Oregon's history, when a need arose for fighting men and few professional soldiers were available, the territory was given authorization to organize volunteer militia units. Similar to the "Minutemen" organizations in the New England states during the Revolutionary War, these units were made up of soldiers who would answer a call to duty on short notice.

Oregon's Volunteer Militia served the citizens of the Rogue River Valley many times during the early years of the Valley's settlement. Militiamen fought in the Indian wars of 1853 and 1855 and mustered later to protect travelers on the Applegate Trail. During the Civil War they organized local groups to protect the Valley from "insurrection and Indians" and to garrison the various military posts in the state.¹

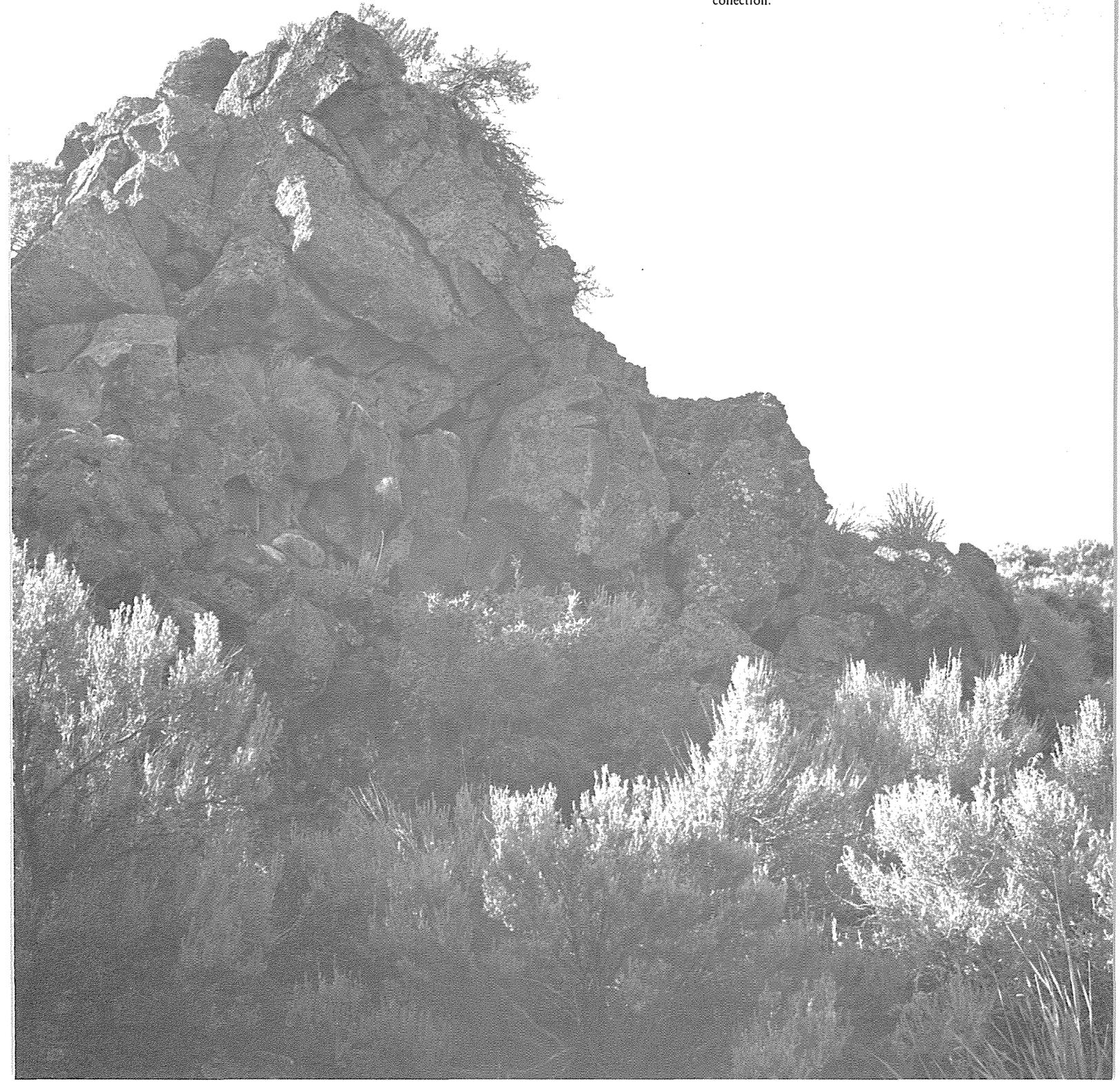
After the war the remaining years of the 1860s were relatively quiet for the local militia. The Rogue Indians were on a reservation in the north and the Klamath and Modoc Indians had signed a treaty in 1864 that set up the Klamath Reservation north of Linkville.

The Modoc Indians, though they had signed the treaty, found it difficult to live with their long-time enemies, the Klamaths. In April 1870, the Modoc leader Captain Jack and a group of his followers left the reservation. They traveled south to their ancestral lands in the Lost River area near Tule Lake in northern California. Because the military presence in southern Oregon was not strong enough to force the Modocs back to the reservation, no action was taken against them.



Jagged lava boulders and sagebrush characterize the terrain of the Lava Beds National Monument, Tulelake, California. Modoc leader Kientpoos, or Captain Jack (insert), struggled to preserve the identity of his people against the wishes of the federal government. He was photographed by Louis Heller shortly after his capture while awaiting trial at Fort Klamath.

Photo courtesy of National Park Service, Lava Beds collection.



During the next two years the Modocs were introduced to a new “apocalyptic religion” from the Piutes. The ceremonies included dancing for days. Those who believed “. . . were told that earthquakes were imminent which would destroy all human beings in the western hemisphere, whether they be white or red. The faithful would promptly rise from the dead, however, and the houses and land and stock of the dead white men would then revert to the resurrected Indians.”² The religion preached that Indians should not learn to be like the white man and that they should have nothing to do with the white man’s things.

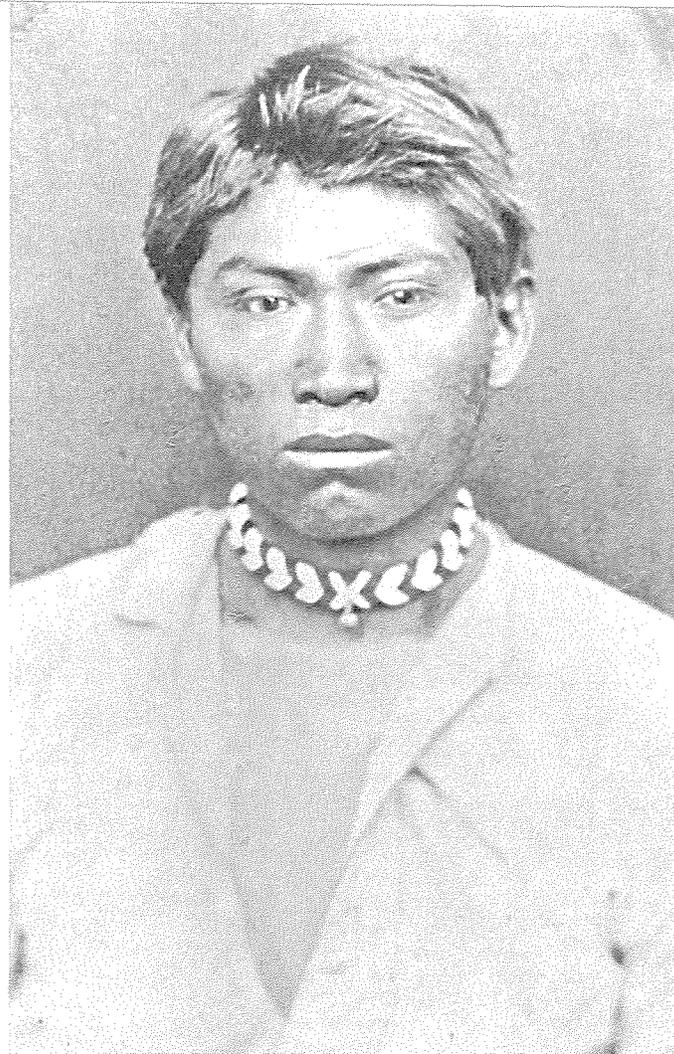
“The faithful would promptly rise from the dead and the houses and land and stock of the dead white men would then revert to the resurrected Indians.”

Early in 1871 a major earthquake shook the northern California region. Sure that the prophecies were soon to be fulfilled, confrontations began to occur between whites and Indians in the Tule Lake area. Becoming alarmed at the lack of restraints on the Modocs, sixty-five white settlers petitioned Oregon’s governor, LaFayette Grover, to be allowed to form a militia unit to take action against the Indians. Legend, experience and history led many of the white settlers to fear “free” Indians.

Governor Grover contacted the superintendent of Indians for Oregon, Alfred B. Meacham, asking for federal troops to protect the settlers. Meacham, waiting for an answer to his request for a separate Modoc reservation, was hesitant to take any military action. However, he did send troops to the Tule Lake area to monitor the Indians’ activities and calm the settlers’ fears.

In April 1872, the Bureau of Indian Affairs decided that the Modocs could not have a separate reservation and that Captain Jack and his band must be moved back to the Yainax Station on the Klamath Reservation. Superintendent Meacham could not support the bureau’s decision. He was replaced by T. B. Odeneal. Worried that the Klamath Indian reservation agent, J. N. High, would not enforce the bureau’s decision, Odeneal replaced agent High with L. S. Dyer. Neither Odeneal nor Dyer had actual knowledge of or experience with the problems at the reservation, but it was thought they would follow bureau instructions.

Ivan D. Applegate was commissary officer at the Yainax Station on the Klamath reservation. Ivan and his brother, Oliver, had assisted their father, Lindsay Applegate, when he was sub-agent for the reservation. Ivan knew the Indians and their problems well, and possessing the characteristic abilities of his prominent family, proved to be a capable administrator of the eastern Indians.³ In May 1872, when asked for advice in dealing with the Modocs, Applegate recommended that they be returned to the reser-



Hooker Jim

courtesy National Park Service, Lava Beds Collection

vation, but that no action be taken to remove them until the early winter months.

Refusing to accept that advice, the bureau sent Dyer and Applegate to talk with Captain Jack. Jack refused to return to the reservation, but promised that he would not harm any of the white settlers. Odeneal was not satisfied with that response and recommended that Captain Jack be arrested and exiled until he agreed to accept reservation life. Noting the small number of federal troops in the area, Army officers advised caution and urged that no action be taken until at least September.

Late in November the military attempted to return Jack to the reservation by force and the Jacksonville *Democratic Times* ran the following story:

The Indian Department having made requisition on the military for troops to force the Modoc Indians to go on the Reservation a company of cavalry was sent from Fort Klamath, Capt. Jackson in command, with instructions to reach the main camp of the Modoc Indians by daylight, if possible, and demand their surrender. The troops, guided by Mr. (Ivan) Applegate, reached the camp soon after daylight, surprised the Indians, and demanded their surrender, which the Indians refused, and commenced getting their arms. After repeated demands on them to surrender and lay down their arms had been rejected, an order was given to Lt. Boutelle to take some men and attempt to arrest the leaders. This was followed by firing on the part of the Indians, then a general engagement ensued.⁴



courtesy National Park Service, Lava Beds Collection

T. B. Odeneal

Later it was learned that one Modoc had been killed and one wounded. The rest of the Indian camp escaped into the Lava Beds. One soldier was killed and seven others were wounded, one of whom died later.

That afternoon, the Modoc Hooker Jim and several followers set out on a retaliatory raid. Moving among the widely scattered settlers, the Indians killed fourteen men and the Modoc Indian War had begun.

On December 1, governor Grover received a telegram informing him of the shootings and of the escape of the Modocs. It also advised that the military forces available were not strong enough to handle the situation. After contacting General E. R. S. Canby, commander at Fort Vancouver, to offer Oregon's assistance in putting down the Modocs, Grover sent out a call for a force of volunteers ". . . to cooperate with the regular troops, sufficient to quell disturbances and to protect the settlements."⁵

In Jacksonville a recruiting office was set up in the U. S. Hotel. More than forty volunteers signed up and left Jacksonville on December 5, and ". . . about as many more left Ashland, Phoenix and other places," reported the *Democratic Times*. "There are still several from all parts of the country volunteering and the redskins will have quite an army to fight, who will make it uncomfortably warm for them."⁶

The volunteers were assigned to Company A under the command of General John E. Ross, the well-known sol-

dier from the Rogue River Indian wars of the 1850s. Dr. J. N. Bell was the company's surgeon; W. A. Owen the adjutant; E. D. Foudray and J. R. Neil served as aides-de-camp. Captain Harrison Kelly, 1st Lt. I. W. Berry and 2nd Lt. Evan Reames were the other officers.

As with many volunteer militia units, Company A was a mixed group of men. General Ross was perhaps the oldest at fifty-four years of age, but there were several others also in their fifties. These seasoned men, who had fought the Indians before, served alongside farmers in their thirties and young men still in their teens. Manuel Marks and Evan Reames were dry goods clerks; Morgan Murphy was a school teacher; James R. Neil was a lawyer; W. Jones and John Louzignaut were carpenters; and Alfred Law was a fifty-year-old cook. All had volunteered for thirty days to help settle the Modoc issue.

The company left Jacksonville on horseback. Though the roads were messy from the previous week of continuous rains, the men reached the Klamath Basin on December 7. The volunteers made camp about ten miles from the mouth of Lost River and a few miles from Jackson's camp at Crawley's ranch.

Another company of volunteers was formed in the Klamath Falls area and led by the twenty-eight-year-old Oliver Applegate. This second company included many reservation Indians, some white men from Linkville and a few from Jacksonville who could not join Company A.

Companies A and B shared a camp and assumed the duties of protecting settlers to the north and east of the stronghold where the Indians holed up in the Lava Beds. The patrols helped occupy the volunteers but much of their time was spent in camp waiting for the military forces to be concentrated for an attack. The volunteers had mustered quickly and were poorly supplied. Soon the Army was providing them with blankets, rations and ammunition.

Odeneal recommended that Captain Jack be arrested and exiled until he agreed to accept reservation life.

By December 19, General Ross had grown impatient with the Indians watching his every move and relocated his volunteers closer to Linkville on the Klamath River. While the move relaxed tensions among the vigilant troops, it also cut off their military rations. ". . . Linkville merchants discovered a bonanza in selling supplies to the poorly equipped army. It was seen that Indian wars were not all blood, mud, sweat, and tears, but profits as well."⁷ This was one of the factors that would make this war one of the most expensive in the Army's history.

The waiting continued while several howitzers were brought in to help blast the Indians out of their stronghold. The winter weather made moving the heavy guns slow and arduous work. The troops filled the time with recon-

naissance missions, and on January 5, fourteen of the volunteers had a skirmish with about twenty Indians. Apparently no one was hurt on either side, but it livened up a rather dull interval in the war.

At the end of the following week governor Grover issued orders ending the volunteers' duty. They had enlisted for thirty days and had fought no battle, so their services apparently were not needed. Grover was playing politics. The Army could not afford to lose more than 100 men just before a battle and requested that they stay. It was finally

“Between the confusing fog and the rough terrain, it was hard to determine who was friend and who was foe.”

agreed that the volunteers would stay, but now provisioning them was a federal responsibility. At the same time the problem of Oregon volunteer troops fighting several miles inside California was settled. Because they were now serving under federal officers, they could fight in California.

With the details settled and the howitzers arriving, orders were issued on January 12. The Oregon volunteers were to march to a bluff southwest of Tule Lake and help prepare a campground for the rest of the Army. All the troops were to be in position on the sixteenth for the battle the next day.

Capt. Harrison Kelly wrote to his wife in Jacksonville, and she allowed the *Oregon Sentinel* to publish the following description of the battle on January 17:

The troops on the west . . . and Gen. John E. Ross' command, consisting of Company A, commanded by Capt. H. Kelly, and Company B, commanded by Capt. O. C. Applegate, and Lieut. W. H. Miller in charge of a section of mounted howitzers proceeded to take a position on the bluff west of the lava bed, which they reached late on the evening of the 16th. Before day on the morning of the 17th all the troops moved into the lava bed—those on the west flanking to the right and those on the east to the left, so as to encircle the Modoc camp and drive in the pickets.

There was a dense fog in the morning which continued during the day. The troops had not proceeded far into the lava bed when the volunteers were fired on. A few minutes later and the firing was heard upon the whole line, which continued until dark. The extent of country over which the Indians were scattered was full of deep holes and frightful chasms, varying from 10 to 100 feet in depth. No human being could imagine such a place, and no one could believe a truthful statement of the explorer without first seeing for himself. Owing to the dense fog and the unevenness of the rock—for there is no ground there—it was next to impossible to keep the line connected.

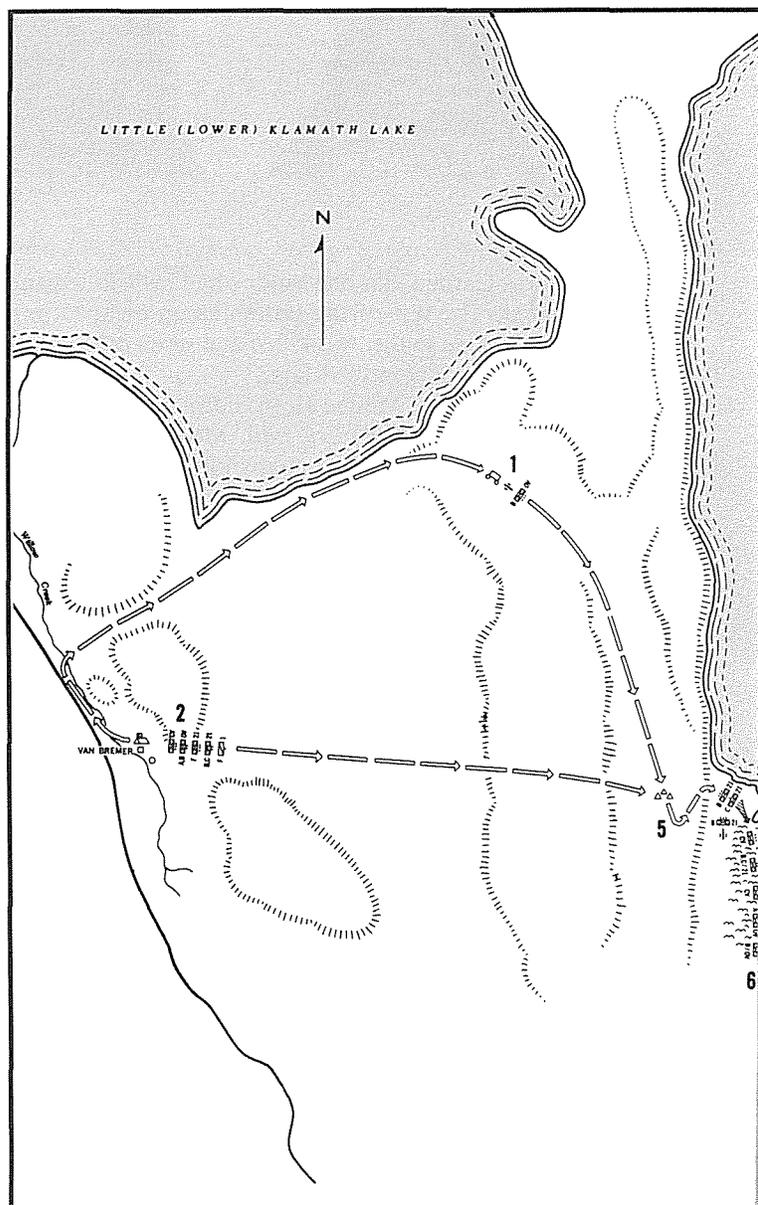
Both the volunteers and regular Army recruits were unprepared for the ruggedness of the terrain and the difficulties it posed. Not only was it impossible to main-

tain planned advances of men and armament, but also rendered difficult the sighting of the enemy and removal of the dead and wounded. Capt. Kelly's letter continues:

The line upon the right was broken early in the morning and Capts. Perry and Applegate's commands, together with a part of Capt. Kelly's command, became detached from Col. Masson's command, but the line was speedily connected by the daring bravery of Lt. Berry, who went back about a quarter mile and entered our lines, being several times shot at by his own men, who mistook him for an Indian. By this feat he succeeded in reuniting the divided forces. This act was regarded as having been one of the most dangerous performed on the field, as the Lieut. was not only in danger of being lost in the fog and captured by the Indians, but was also in danger of being shot by the troops, who were firing at every moving object.

Lieut. Reams of Company A was wounded in the knee early in the morning but refused to leave the field. He kept his place in the ranks and fought bravely until he was called off after dark, notwithstanding the wound was severely painful and would have honorably excused him from further duty of that day.

The volunteers were cool, and manifested a determination to conquer—never faltering, but prompt to charge

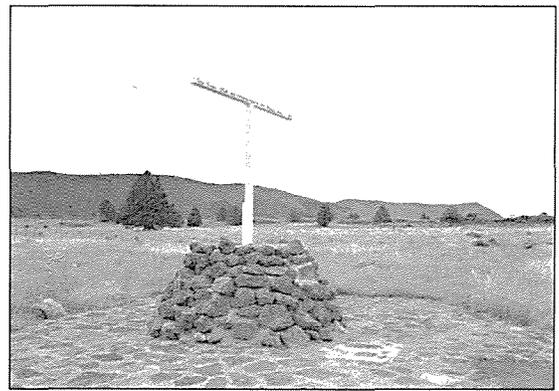


the strongholds of the Indians when ordered. They had many high compliments paid them by the regular officers on that day for their bravery and good behavior. The troops all did well and no fault could be found with either officers or men. No set of men ever fought better together than did the regulars and volunteers, and after the fight was over there was no censuring any one for a fault.

We were all deceived in the character of the ground over which we were compelled to fight and in the number of the enemy. No one who was in the fight pretends to say that the Modoc force numbered less than 200, and some place the number as high as 500.⁸

Despite the figures in Capt. Kelly's letter, there were only about fifty Indians in the fight on the seventeenth. Between the confusing fog and the rough terrain, it was hard to determine who was friend and who was foe. On the Army's side there were 225 regular troops and 104 volunteers. Two of the Oregon volunteers were killed and five others wounded.

The inconclusiveness of the battle on the seventeenth had a bad effect on troop morale. After several days spent recovering, the volunteers began leaving for home. They were officially discharged on January 25 and arrived back



A cross marks the site of General Canby's murder.

The Lava Beds National Monument

The Lava Beds National Monument was created in 1925 and encompasses 72 square miles of desolate, rugged volcanic rock. It is a monument to some of the most recent volcanic activity in the Northwest and to the determination of the Modoc Indians to live on their ancestral lands.

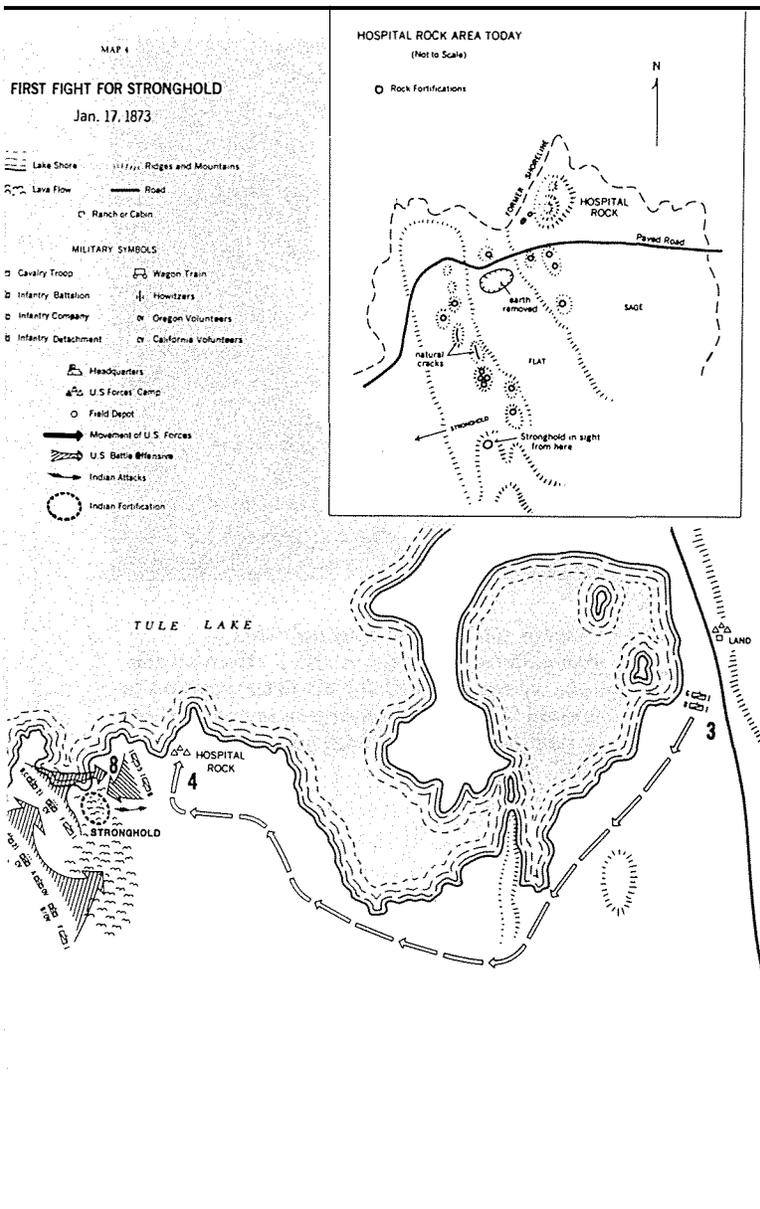
Volcanoes in the area poured forth great volumes of basaltic lava just a few thousand years ago. As the lava flowed over the ground, the surface cooled and hardened while the still-liquid rock underneath flowed on, leaving the caverns and tubes. There are approximately 300 caves within the Monument and dozens of cinder and spatter cones.

When the Modoc Indians escaped into the Lava Beds in 1872, they entered a territory they knew well. The December 21, 1872, *Oregon Sentinel* described the region the Indians were holed up in for its readers:

It is located on the southern shore of Tule Lake, and is situated wholly in California, just south of the Oregon boundary line, containing an area of 10 miles square, all cut up with fissures, deep gulches, and abounding with large caves, the largest being that known as Ben Wright's cave, said to contain fifteen acres of open space under ground, in which there is a good spring, and many openings which a man can crawl through. The main entrance is about the size of a common window. The gulches and crevices range from a few feet to a hundred feet in width and many of them a hundred feet deep. The Indians can travel all through the lava country by trails known only to them and can stand on bluffs over persons 100 feet beneath, where it would require a long journey to go to them. In this lava bed are also small flats, luxuriant with bunch grass.

Once seen the geography of the Lava Beds explains how only about fifty Modoc Indian warriors were able to hold off approximately 1,200 Army soldiers and volunteers.

Today, a system of roads and short trails lead to points of historic and geographic interest within the Lava Beds. Longer trails reach into the wilderness portion of the Monument, where grasslands and sagebrush give away to ponderosa pine forests at higher elevations.



in Jacksonville on the twenty-eighth. The *Oregon Sentinel* described their return:

The boys presented quite a martial appearance as they passed up the street, reminding one very much of the return of a scouting party during the war. Although apparently the worse for wear they still looked hearty and were in the best of spirits. They are certainly entitled to great credit, not only for their promptness in responding to the call for troops, but also for their liberality in remaining so long after their term of enlistment had expired. Their courage and soldierly conduct won for them high compliments, not only from their own officers but from the officers of the regular forces with whom they were associated.⁹

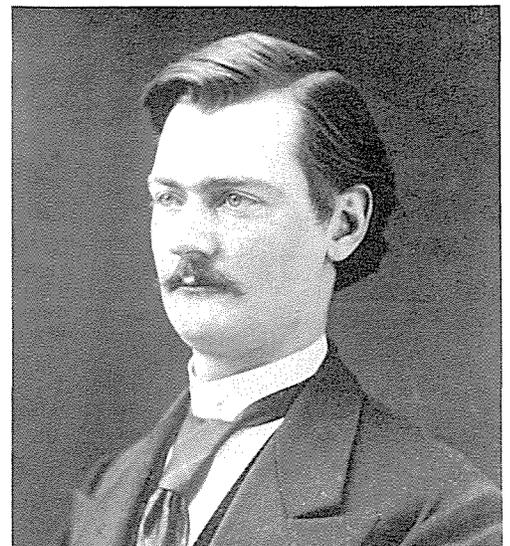
The Modoc Indian War continued with skirmishes off and on over the next several months. On April 11, General Canby and Dr. Thomas were killed during a peace conference with Captain Jack. Everyone was outraged at the murders. Dyer sent a telegram to Washington, D. C., saying "Peace cannot be made with these men." Meacham, recovering from the wounds he also received during the peace conference ambush, wrote, "We believe that complete subjugation by the military is the only method by which to deal with these Indians."¹⁰

The Army renewed the attack on the area called the

Stronghold on April 15. Fierce fighting continued into the next day with little progress. During the night of April 16, the Modocs' water shortage became critical and they decided to leave the Stronghold. While the men directed diversionary fire and verbal challenges at the Army troops, the women and children in the Stronghold escaped through a low depression. It was eleven o'clock the next morning before the escape was discovered. Troops were rallied and sent in pursuit of the fleeing Indians. It was May 10 before the Army won any decisive action against the Modocs. In that fight the Modocs lost one of their best-loved braves, most of their military stores and many horses. The war was becoming very discouraging for the Indians.

Governor Grover was alarmed at the Army's failure to capture the Modocs after they left the Stronghold. He put forward his plan to recall the volunteers that had been discharged in January, stating, ". . . that the only people who evidently knew how to fight Indians were the settlers, and the Oregonians had allowed about all the time they dared for the Army to defeat the Indians and capture the murderers."¹²

By mid-May, three volunteer militia companies were back in the field: Company C, sixty-five men from Jacksonville and Roseburg led by Joseph H. Hyzer; Company D, forty-



Veteran soldier John England Ross commanded Company A (left). Evan Reams (above) was honored for his determination to remain in the battle despite receiving a knee wound early in the engagement.

SOHS #480 and 11346

three men from Goose Lake country and west to Klamath Lake, under the command of Thomas Mullholland; and Company E, forty-one men from the Willamette Valley, led by George R. Rogers.

The second group of volunteers did not reach the Lava Beds in time for any of the later battles, but did help with the final roundup of the Modocs. The militia, again under the command of General Ross, headquartered in the Langell Valley. They were able to capture a dozen Modocs.

“The Modoc War was ended by the Oregon Volunteers at 12 o’clock last night.”

Hyzer delivered the prisoners to General Ross and wired Grover with characteristic frontier modesty, “The Modoc War was ended by the Oregon Volunteers at 12 o’clock last night.”¹³

The war was over, though maybe not quite the way the militia told the story. The Modocs were taken to Fort Klamath, where six of the leaders were placed on trial July 5. At the conclusion of the trial, the six defendants were sentenced to hang on October 3. In September the sentences of two of the defendants were commuted to life imprisonment at Alcatraz Island. On October 3 at 10:25 a.m. the four condemned Modoc Indians were hanged.

The remaining 153 Modoc captives were taken by wagon to the railroad station at Redding, California. After several stops they were finally settled at Seneca Springs on the Quapaw Agency in Oklahoma.

The members of the volunteer militia returned to their civilian lives, proud of the part they had played in quelling the disturbances and protecting the settlements—and, of course, ending the Modoc War.



ENDNOTES

1. Marjorie O’Harra, *Ashland: The First 130 Years* (Jacksonville: Southern Oregon Historical Society, 1981) p. 15.
2. Keith A. Murray, *The Modocs and Their War* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), p. 63.
3. Erwin N. Thompson, *Modoc War, Its Military History and Topography* (Sacramento: Argus Books, 1971), p. 7.
4. *Democratic Times*, December 7, 1872, 3:3.
5. *The Modocs and Their War*, p. 95.
6. *Democratic Times*, 3:1.
7. *The Modocs and Their War*, p. 105.
8. *The Modocs and Their War*, p. 105.
9. *Oregon Sentinel*, January 25, 1873, 2:2.
10. *Oregon Sentinel*, February 1, 1873, 3:2.
11. *The Mocos and Their War*, p. 202.
12. *The Modocs and Their War*, p. 240.
13. *The Modocs and Their War*, p. 273.

Sue Waldron is a Southern Oregon Historical Society research assistant and contributing writer to the **Table Rock Sentinel**.

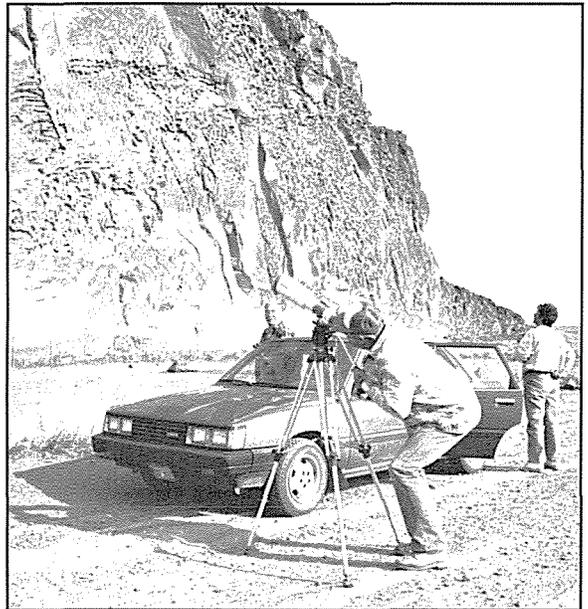


photo by Natalie Brown

The lava beds offer unique glimpses of the geography, history and natural history of the area.

Society to Tour Lava Beds

If this article on the Lava Beds has captured your interest, you are invited to explore the national monument more closely by joining the Society’s tour on Thursday, July 7.

The bus will leave the Jacksonville Museum at 8:00 a.m. for the journey to the site where Modoc leader Captain Jack and his warriors defended their position against the U. S. Army and the Oregon Volunteer Militia. National Park Service interpreters will lead the group on a guided tour through this “stronghold.” Participants also will have an opportunity to explore a couple of the lava tube caves found in the national monument.

Lunch will be on the grounds of the park headquarters. Participants should bring their own brown bag picnic as no food or concessions are available at the Lava Beds National Monument. Furthermore, paths across ancient volcanic surfaces can be very rugged; appropriate clothing should include **very good walking shoes** or hiking boots, long pants, and a hat to shield the sun. Of course, cameras and binoculars are welcome.

The cost of the trip will be \$21 per member, \$36 for non-members. (The extra \$15 equals the cost of an individual membership in the Society. Once paid, it’s good for a year!) Cancellations after July 1 are non-refundable.

For more information, call Susan Cox, membership coordinator, at (503) 899-1847.

Next trip: Crescent City on August 11. The trip will include interpretive walks along the beach and through the Redwoods, lunch at the Grotto in Crescent City, and a visit to Crescent Harbor (Art) Gallery. And keep your calendars open for September 8 and 9 for an overnight trip to the Oregon Caves.



Young Victor Birdseye is dwarfed by a large black oak tree on the Birdseye farm. SOHS #3989

THE BIRDSEYE FAMILY of Jackson County

by Chuck Sweet

Much of the family history related in this story must be credited to the book "Clarissa—Her Family and Her Home" authored by Nita Birdseye and based largely upon the record kept by Clarissa's daughter-in-law (and Nita's mother-in-law), Effie Birdseye. The book is recommended reading for those who desire to know more about this fascinating pioneer family.

Few, if any, of the pioneer dwellings still to be seen in Oregon's Rogue River Valley have as engrossing a story to tell as the 132-year-old Birdseye House. Located on a bend in the Rogue River between today's towns of Gold Hill and Rogue River, members of the fifth and sixth generations of Birdseyes presently occupy this house.

Each generation of this family has produced men and women who led interesting lives and left substantial imprints upon the history of southern Oregon. Not only the pioneer men conquered the West; the women also played important roles. And in no instance was this more true than in the story of the Birdseye family.

The history of the Birdseye house and farm has been dominated by two forceful women who were members of the family only by marriage.

The first Birdseye to settle in the Rogue Valley was David Nelson Birdseye. Born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, on July 11, 1827, he was a direct descendant of John Birdseye, who arrived in America from England in 1636. David was educated in Connecticut but was teaching school in Ohio when

he decided to seek his fortune in the California gold fields. His uncle, Charles Birdseye, also had gone west and in 1852 the two men opened a trading post in the mining camp that was to become Jacksonville, Oregon.

At first, Charles ran the store, known as the Birdseye Mercantile Company, while David operated pack trains hauling goods from the Columbia River to their store. Soon after Charles got settled, he sent to Ohio for his wife Mattie (Matt to her family and friends). Matt was unhappy living under the primitive conditions in the mining camp. Consequently, her husband bought a house in Portland, moved Matt up there and hired a maid for her. He visited his wife whenever he could get away. Mrs. Birdseye's residence was also a place where David could stay when he went north to pick up supplies arriving by boat or to do business with incoming wagon trains. It was on one of these trips that David was to meet his future wife, Clarissa Stein "Clara" Fleming.



Clara Birdseye SOHS #278

The Flemings had been a prominent Virginia family since colonial days. Clarissa's father, James Fleming, was a harness maker living in Wellsburg, Virginia (now West Virginia), when he began hearing tales about the opportunities to be found on the Pacific Coast. In 1848 he decided to head west with a friend, Gus Hesselman, who had just returned from the Oregon Territory. James leased his shop and bade goodbye to his wife Catherine (Kitty) and their six children. Traveling by sea and across the Isthmus of Panama, he arrived in California just as the gold rush started. He found some gold, not enough to make him rich, but still a nice little nest egg for his family. When he returned home in a couple of years, he discovered that his three youngest children were dead and that Catherine was suffering from severe depression.

During the time that James had been gone, the scourge of scarlet fever had swept through Wellsburg leaving many of the children in town, including the Flemings' youngest, buried in the Methodist Church graveyard. Daughter Clara, her sister Jane and her brother Wells escaped the disease.

By now the two teenage girls were attending a boarding school and both had acquired beaux. Clara's suitor was Wesley Hobbs. When James observed the condition of his wife and the tragedy that had struck the family in his absence, he concluded that they should join a wagon train and emigrate to Oregon. All of the Flemings except Clara acquiesced to his plan, but she had no intention of leaving Wesley. However, when young Hobbs asked James for his daughter's hand, James refused to let Clara marry him and remain in Wellsburg. The young lovers therefore set upon a plan to outwit Mr. Fleming.

Their scheme called for Clarissa to start out with the rest of the family and stay with them until they reached St. Joseph, Missouri. Here, her father would have to take time to acquire a wagon, oxen and supplies for the journey over the Oregon Trail. Wes was to time his departure from Wellsburg so as to arrive at St. Joseph about the time the Fleming's wagon train would be pulling out. At this point the couple expected to elope and catch the next riverboat back to Virginia.

Plans went amiss when the wagon train with the Flemings started over the Oregon Trail before Wes arrived.

The 300-mile journey south started right after the wedding breakfast, with Clara's wedding dress packed in one of her saddlebags.

Another westward-bound family had been forced to abandon their outfit and James immediately purchased the equipment and stock that he needed, making it possible for an earlier departure than anticipated. Clara felt humiliated when her sweetheart didn't show up and throughout the long journey she nursed her anger and resentment. The rest of the family were not very sympathetic to her misfortune and her sole source of comfort on the trip was the family dog, Trimmer. Later Clara learned that Hobbs had reached St. Joseph on the date he said he would, only to find that she had been gone several days.

Arriving at the Dalles on the Columbia River in the fall of 1852, the wagon train was met by traders who were anxious to sell goods to the travelers or to buy any excess items the emigrants were willing or forced to part with. James observed that most of these traders were rough, unkempt and poorly educated, however, one young man, David Birdseye, seemed a cut above the rest. The Flemings stayed in a hotel while waiting for a boat to take them down the river. One evening James invited David to the hotel for dinner and to meet the family. The three Fleming ladies were favorably impressed with the young trader, and even Clara came out of her shell a bit to talk to him. David told them about his work and described the beauties of southern Oregon.

After disposing of their wagon, oxen and surplus possessions, the family proceeded down river to Portland where they took rooms in a residential hotel. The Flemings discovered that Portland was still a frontier town with unpaved streets and no sidewalks. Heavy rains that winter required them to wade through a great deal of mud when they went shopping. Catherine and the girls first had to buy suitable shoes, for they were almost barefoot after walking many miles over the Oregon Trail during the five-month journey. While the ladies shopped, James sought a business in which to invest and soon purchased a residential hotel for upper- and middle-class patrons. He named it the Willamette House.

David soon left for Jacksonville with his pack train. But before leaving, he introduced James to his aunt, Mrs. Charles Birdseye. Shortly thereafter, Catherine and her daughters received an invitation from Mattie to attend a four o'clock tea at the Birdseye home. From then on the three Fleming ladies became a part of the social life of Portland. The two girls were much in demand at parties and it was not long until Jane was engaged to Nat Lane, a young widower with two children. Nat's father was General Joseph Lane, the first governor of the Oregon Territory.

She observed drunken men on the board sidewalks and saw a few women that she suspected were streetwalkers.

In the meantime, David Birdseye called on Clara every time he came north with his pack train and the two managed to spend many hours together while he was in Portland. By now Clara's father was suffering from the malaria he may have contracted while crossing Panama on his first trip west. Wells Fleming was now old enough to help his mother manage the hotel. The Willamette House had a ballroom for dances and parties. Clara seemed to schedule a party whenever David was expected to show up. On one of his trips north in the spring of 1853, David took Clara and a group of their friends on a riverboat excursion up the Willamette River. Enroute the young people were invited to a tea at the Oregon City home of Dr. John McLoughlin, the former chief factor of the Hudsons Bay Company and one of the most prominent figures in the Northwest. The McLoughlins were gracious hosts and left Clara greatly impressed to learn that her escort had such influential friends.

On the return journey down river, David asked Clara to marry him and she readily accepted, although she still hadn't been able to completely forget her first love, Wesley Hobbs. At first her father objected to the marriage because David was a Yankee. But James finally relented and gave his approval. The wedding was held in the Willamette House parlor on June 18, 1853. The 18-year-old bride's wedding gown was a pale green and white checked taffeta, but her going-away outfit was a divided skirt made for rid-

ing side-saddle. They spent their honeymoon traveling horseback to David's 360-acre donation land claim located along the Rogue River. The 300-mile journey south started right after the wedding breakfast, with Clara's wedding dress packed in one of her saddlebags. In a second bag she packed cuttings of plants brought from Wellsburg, including roots of a Virginia creeper and a wild rose. Pack animals carried her other possessions. As the newlyweds rode out of Portland, they joined David's men and the pack train on the outskirts of Portland.

The riders were on the trail for about two weeks and slept on fir boughs laid on the ground every night but one. That particular night, the pack train had reached a small tavern in one of the canyons they crossed. By then Clara was so stiff and sore that David thought she should sleep in a comfortable bed overnight. They spent the night in the tavern's only bed, the one usually occupied by the proprietors. The bed turned out to be far from comfortable and they discovered the next morning that they had shared it with bedbugs. There were to be several more nights sleeping on fir boughs. Clara would remember those nights for many years to come whenever she caught the spicy fragrance of fir trees.

When the pack train finally reached David's crude, one-room log cabin on the Rogue River, he decided that it would be unsafe to stay there because the Indians were once more harassing white settlers. They were greeted at the cabin by David's all-around helper, Bob Milligan, who ran the farm in his employer's absence. After a meal of venison stew and Indian bread prepared by Bob, the Birdseys rode the twenty miles to Jacksonville. Until cessation of Indian hostilities, they stayed with David's friends, the Overbecks, who had a furnished home on the north edge of town. Clara was now near exhaustion from the arduous journey but had recuperated by the next morning after enjoying her first bath with warm water in two weeks and sleeping between clean sheets in a good bed. One of the first items she unpacked from the saddlebags was her beautiful taffeta wedding gown and she was heartbroken to find it covered with mildew.

That first afternoon in Jacksonville, Sarah Overbeck took Clara on a tour around the little settlement, stopping to visit the Birdseye Mercantile Company trading post. Although frontier Portland had left a lot to be desired by a girl with Clara's upbringing, she had found it far superior to the crude mining town in which she was now residing. She noticed that the sides of all the commercial buildings were constructed of rough boards standing on end and that the relatively few small window openings were covered with oiled paper to let in a little light. Clara even thought that the Birdseye store was smelly and in considerable disarray. To make matters worse, she observed drunken men on the board sidewalks and saw a few women that she suspected were streetwalkers.

After a couple of days Clara informed her husband that she would prefer living at the ranch cabin regardless of the danger from Indian attacks. Besides, she was anxious to have something to do and wanted to plant vegetables for winter. David agreed to this but pointed out that she prob-



David Birdseye SOHS #1788

One morning when he informed Clara that he was going to Grants Pass, she asked him to bring home some seed corn for spring planting. David brought back the corn; the only trouble was that three years had elapsed before he returned.

ably would be lonely during those periods when he was away on his pack trips. Clara wasn't as concerned about the possibility of loneliness as she was about never having learned to cook. In addition, she soon discovered she was pregnant.

One of the terms of the 1853 treaty provided that land north of the Rogue River was to be granted to the Indians for a reservation. This meant that the Birdseyes would lose their acreage across the river. However, David compensated for this loss by acquiring more land on the south side of the river and along Birdseye Creek. The uneasy truce with the Indians lasted almost two years. But in October 1853, David concluded that it would be prudent to build a stockade around his log cabin. About this same time, his brother Fred arrived from Ohio and was helping out at the Birdseye trading post. Fred soon filed for a claim on Birdseye Creek, then offered to supervise construction on the stockade, which became known as Fort Birdseye. Prior to starting work on the stockade, the builders added additional rooms to the cabin to provide sleeping quarters for those seeking shelter at the fort. They also excavated a deep trench around the cabin, with large logs standing on end in the ditch. Once the ditch was backfilled, the logs stuck about fourteen feet above ground level. At intervals, small openings were left as gun ports. During construction, many of the neighbors pitched in to work on the fort. For a brief period during the Indian wars, U. S. Army regulars and volunteers were stationed at Fort Birdseye.

As Clara's time drew near, she had very little fear of giving birth in the wilderness and was comforted by the knowledge that Dr. Miller lived nearby. However, to provide a companion for her and to assume some of the more demanding tasks on the farm, David brought a young woman named Rhoda to live at the fort. Rhoda had come to Jacksonville with her parents and soon proved her worth at the farm, especially after the baby arrived. James Gould Birdseye* was born at the fort on April 15, 1854, reportedly the third white child to be born in Jackson County.

That September, the Indians were observed holding a pow wow across the river. This and other incidents in the Rogue Valley resulted in rising tensions among the settlers. The Savage family, who lived four miles down river, were the first to seek shelter at the fort. Edwin Magruder and his two sons soon followed.** Despite the threat of renewed

*James Gould learned the blacksmith's trade in his youth, mined gold for several years, served six years as Jackson County constable, and was the sheriff four years. He married Kate Ruch in 1882, but she died within five years following a serious cart accident. In 1890 James married Fannie Johnson, a widow. He retired to his farm located nine miles north of Jacksonville in 1892 and died four years later.

**Edwin Magruder owned about 1,000 acres along the Rogue River. Late in 1856, he married Clara Birdseye's widowed mother, Catherine Fleming. The Magruders moved into the house that Edwin had built in Jacksonville. The house still may be seen today just east of the Presbyterian Church on California Street.

Indian troubles, David Birdseye took this occasion to start building a house to replace the crude log cabin. The house was located about 200 feet in front of the fort, and he hoped to have it finished before their second child was born. However, the building was still incompleting when Adelaide arrived on January 28, 1856, the second child born at Fort Birdseye.***

back of the house, an arbor may be seen covered with the grapevine Clara planted about 1860 after one of her visits to Jacksonville. She had ridden her horse Prince into town and when she was ready to return, Prince was reluctant to move. Granville Sears, who operated a winery, observed Mrs. Birdseye's problem and handed her a switch that he cut from one of his Blue Mission grapevines. With the

In 1974, the Birdseye family home was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. A year later, Gregg Olson supervised the restoration of the 1856 structure, which can be viewed today along Rogue River Highway.

SOHS #3987



The Birdseye house was built of hand-hewn logs harvested from a grove of pine trees along Birdseye Creek. Sam Steckel was hired to hew the logs and dovetail the timbers, hand-forged nails being too expensive. Once the timbers were ready, neighbors came from miles around for the house-raising. After the walls were up, a daubing mixture of lime, sand, animal hair and milk was tamped into the cracks. James Campbell, who later became a Grants Pass banker, made the doors, window frames and some of the furniture still to be seen in the house today. The downstairs consisted of a kitchen, dining room, living room, master bedroom and children's bedroom. The second floor was divided in half, with two rooms each. One half was reached by a stairway leading from the master bedroom, the other half by stairs from the living room. Children, hired hands or travelers slept upstairs.

Throughout the years, Clara continued to make improvements on the house and grounds. One of her first acts was to set out the plants she had brought from Virginia. The wild rose bushes in time became more of a nuisance than a blessing when the bushes began springing up in the farmers' pastures and grain fields. Even today, the flat-stone path leading from Highway 99 to the front porch passes through the flower beds and shrubs that she planted. In

switch she had no further trouble getting the horse to return home. The following day she stuck the grape cutting in the ground and that vine is still growing and producing grapes more than 125 years later.

A week before Christmas, 1861, the Birdseyes' second daughter was born. Named for David's cousin Theodora, she was called Dode by the family. It was about this same period that David became involved in promoting a scheme for recovering gold from the bottom of the river. The proposal called for construction of a diversion dam in the Rogue River. Then, when the stream had been diverted, the promoters would collect any gold they found in the stream bed. David had no trouble getting financial backers for the project, and work began in the spring. The dam was nearly completed by the fall when disaster struck. Early fall rains set in that year, and two weeks before the water was to be diverted, the river rose. Within a few days the dam and the investors' dreams were washed away. Some investors had mortgaged their homes and possessions hoping to become rich. David had to sell his store and packing business and would never recover from this financial setback, although in time he was able to pay back the investors.

David's drinking problem also had become very apparent. One morning when he informed Clara that he was going to Grants Pass, she asked him to bring home some seed corn for spring planting. David brought back the corn; the only trouble was that three years had elapsed before he returned. His explanation to the family was that he had gone to Montana after hearing of some

***Adelaide Birdseye and William Mason Colvig were married in front of the fireplace at the Birdseye house on June 18, 1879. William (later called Judge Colvig) managed David and Clara's farm for a few years after the wedding. The Colvig's first two children were born on the farm. (The story of the Colvig family appeared in the September 1986 *Table Rock Sentinel*.)

silver strikes in that state. During her errant husband's long absence, Clara continued to manage the farm with some help from young James. She had a bay window built on the east side of the house and added some small buildings to shelter the baby pigs and lambs on the farm. She even found the time to go into Jacksonville and participate in social or political affairs.

In 1866, on Adelaide's tenth birthday, her father bought her a lovely rosewood piano. The piano had been ordered from Chickering in Boston (along with another one for Rose Haymond who lived at Rock Point) by Major Glenn, an army officer stationed in Jackson County. The pianos were shipped around Cape Horn, and David Birdseye had contracted to haul them from Crescent City to their destinations. Before the shipment arrived, the major was transferred to San Francisco and David bought his piano. The beautiful instrument has gone through five generations of Birdseyes with scarcely a scratch and still occupies a prominent place in the living room of the old log house.

Clara's fourth child was born January 30, 1872. She named him Frederick Fleming Birdseye, calling him Fred after David's brother, who she had always liked and admired as a true friend. Nine years later when she was forty-six, she gave birth to her last child: Victor Wesley Birdseye, born May 1, 1881. Remembering her first love, Clara had chosen this name and called him "Wes," probably to annoy her husband. David would always refer to the boy as "Jack." Young Fred was never a robust child, but Victor Wesley was a healthy, active boy and frequently up to some mischief. The two brothers had one thing in common, however, their love of music. Both played the violin and Fred showed real talent as a musician. He enjoyed fiddling at square dances, whereas Wes preferred either dancing or calling the dances.

With each passing year, David's drinking problem became worse. Back in 1853, when Clara began dating him, his Aunt Mattie had said to her, "David is a charmer and knows very well what he's about. I just wonder if he'll ever love anyone more than he does his brandy." At the time Clara couldn't believe that her future husband was much of a drinker, and it was a number of years before she realized the truth of Mattie's observation. As their son Fred's health deteriorated, David no longer confined his drinking to his visits to Jacksonville's Bella Union saloon and was seldom sober at home. Matters got so bad that Clara finally issued an ultimatum to him: either quit drinking or get out. The result was that he took her best farmhand and moved across the creek to live in the house that he had built for Bill and Addie Colvig back in 1879. Very little is known today about David Nelson Birdseye's last years except that he eventually returned home because of illness and died on February 11, 1898. The following year his son Fred died at age twenty-seven.

The Birdseyes' youngest son, Victor Wesley, was seventeen at the time of his father's death and by then was doing a large share of the farming. However, his mother was aware that Wes, like his father, couldn't stay away from the bottle at times. Probably because of this, nothing he did seemed to please his mother and they quarreled frequently. As a result, Wes would occasionally leave home and get jobs in the mines or driving the stage between Grants Pass

and Crescent City. Then, one night at the Woodville Saturday dance, he met a pretty and vivacious young lady and discovered that he no longer had a desire to be very far from home. The girl was Effie Cameron and she was destined to play a significant role in the history of the Birdseye family.



The second and final part of "The Birdseye Family of Jackson County" will continue in the July 1988 issue of the Table Rock Sentinel.



courtesy of Nita Birdseye

Over a hundred years later, Clara's grape switch has grown into an enormous grapevine.

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Chuck Sweet is a Medford resident who has found numerous outlets for his interest in history. In addition to writing articles for the Table Rock Sentinel, he has participated as researcher and greeter for the Society's living history program and currently volunteers as docent in the Jacksonville Museum.

Society Update

Society Recognizes Preservation Projects

Each year during National Historic Preservation Week, the Society gives special recognition to specific projects, persons, or organizations that promote preservation in Jackson County.

Restorations of structures or districts, educational events or projects that foster public understanding of preservation, and individuals or organizations who have worked to promote preservation issues are eligible for the Society's Historic Preservation Awards.

This year the Society has chosen three projects for special recognition:

The community of Eagle Point (representing the support and assistance of all contributors to the project) for the preservation and adaptive use of the Antelope Covered Bridge. This historically significant Jackson County landmark was relocated and restored in 1987 as a pedestrian walkway over Little Butte Creek in Eagle Point.

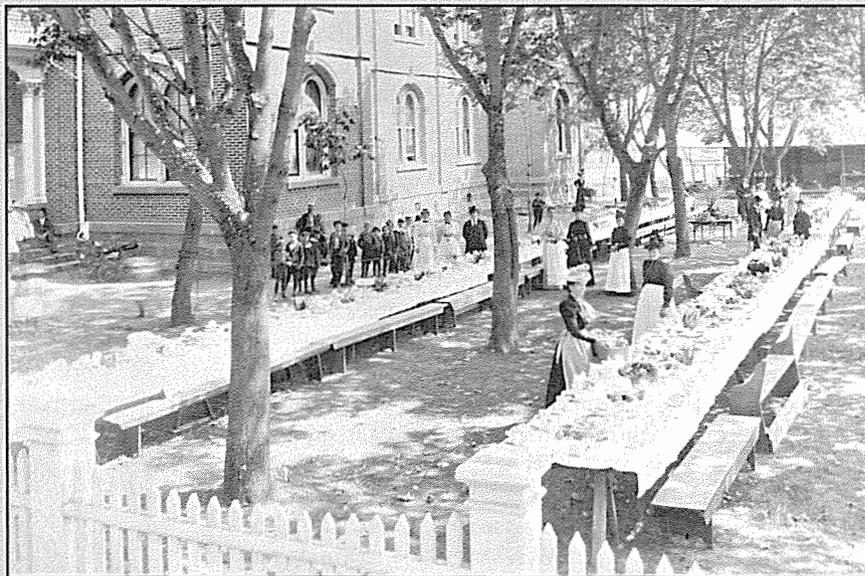
The First Presbyterian Church in Jacksonville for the renovation of the church's exterior and seeking professional expertise for maintaining consistent historic preservation standards with regard to the carpentry work and stained glass windows. The church was built in 1881.

Ms. Pam Burkholder and Mr. Gary Turner, owners of a c.1918 Craftsman-style bungalow at 108 2nd Street in Ashland, for their contribution to maintaining the architectural integrity of Ashland's Railroad District and insuring the sensitive balance between the residential and commercial areas of the District.

The recipients will receive the certificates at the Southern Oregon Historical Society's annual meeting on Saturday, June 25, on the grounds of the Jacksonville Museum.

Quilters Schedule Show

The Jacksonville Museum Quilters will present their latest creative works at the "Tenth Annual Quilt Show" in the ballroom of the U. S. Hotel in downtown Jacksonville. Over 40



Society Members to Meet

Re-creating the old-fashioned pioneer picnics once held on the lawn of the old Jackson County Courthouse, the Society's annual meeting is certain to be a special treat this year. Mark your calendars now for Saturday, June 25 when we will gather under the shade trees on the lawn of the Jacksonville Museum for our informal get-together.

The half hour between 6:00-6:30 p.m. is reserved for a "social gathering," a time to meet or reacquaint ourselves with each other while enjoying refreshments, the sounds of Dixieland jazz performed by Lyle Ames' "Dixie Dudes" (members of the Southern Oregon Traditional Jazz Society), and possibly an old-

fashioned game of croquet or two!

Dinner, consisting of elegant boxed lunches from Soup to Nuts Catering in Ashland, will begin at 6:30. Three main courses are offered this year: real southern-fried chicken, fresh Oregon fruit and cheese plate, and ham and cheese puff pastry tart. Each meal includes new potato salad with peas, fresh Applegate asparagus with honey lime mayo, Oregon strawberry shortcake, and beverage.

Following dinner, the Society will conduct its annual business meeting. Oregon Secretary of State Barbara Roberts will be our guest speaker.

This event is sure to be a very special evening for our members. We hope to see you all there!

hand-quilted pieces will be displayed July 16-24, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily.

This year each member of the group will have on display an example of her work. These small wall hangings, many with curved pieced or applique surfaces, illustrate the skills of each creator. Curved surfaces are the most difficult to handle but are

quite attractive when combined with straight line stitching. The group's announcement of the show includes a quote by Mae West that reflects the quilters' interest in this particular style: "A straight line is the shortest distance between two points, but a curve is the most beautiful."

A \$1.00 admission is charged at the door with seniors admitted free.

Dear Members:

Membership in the Southern Oregon Historical Society has always played an important role in the organization's ability to fulfill its mission statement. However, in the Society's entire forty-two-year history, the size of the membership has remained relatively small with membership dues playing a significantly small role in the financial viability of the organization.

To date, the approximate 1,720 Society memberships bring in about \$26,000 per year. This averages out to approximately \$15 per membership per year. On the other hand, the cost of providing that membership, including salaries, supplies, and services, comes to approximately \$50 per membership per year, or an average net loss of \$35 per membership annually to the Society. Obviously, this cannot continue. This cost is based on figures derived after the change in the format and appearance of the *Table Rock Sentinel*. It is important to note that with these changes the costs of producing the *Sentinel* have actually gone down due to a streamlining of operations and production costs. However, the simple fact of the matter is that the Society is losing money on its membership program. As part of the effort to deal with this problem, the Society's Development Committee has recommended to the Board of Trustees that the *Table Rock Sentinel* be changed to a bimonthly magazine to be supplemented by, and to alternate with, a bimonthly newsletter.

The Long Range Plan and the upcoming Society budget call for major expansion in the membership base for the organization. At the same time, the Society must come up with a solution to the perplexing problem of the membership program costing far more than it is financially helping the organization. We feel it is feasible to restructure the membership program to continue to provide significant benefits to the membership while reducing the cost of the membership program to an average of approximately \$20 per membership.

In order for the Society rightfully to expect a major increase in the size of its membership, and to improve that source of financial support, the Society must provide membership opportunities sufficient to attract interested persons to all levels of categories. I am sure you are aware that at present all membership categories receive the same benefits regardless of the amount paid annually in membership dues. Consequently there is no incentive to enroll in a higher membership category.

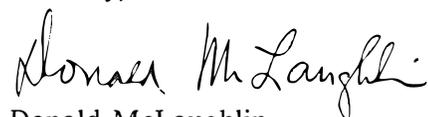
The Society's Development Committee has been working on the membership question for the past several months in an attempt to come up with a recommendation which will increase the attractiveness of membership in the Society and provide additional benefits and incentives for existing members to enroll in a higher membership category. Using membership categories of several local nonprofit organizations such as the Britt Festivals, Schneider Museum of Art, the Oregon Shakespearean Festival and other historical societies in Oregon and throughout the region, the Development Committee has recommended a restructuring of the membership program. This proposal is affordable and manageable for the Society. It should also be more appealing to the existing membership as well as to members who will be recruited in the future.

This proposal was recommended to the Board of Trustees at the May 24 board meeting. A change in membership categories would require an amendment of the Bylaws. The Board has directed that the membership be notified and be requested to comment on the change in categories and also on proposed benefits and dues prior to action being taken at the July 1988 meeting.

The Board acknowledges that the proposed changes are significant. However, when the Society's reorganization took place about two years ago, it was recognized that changing times and demands required realistic policies and administration. We believe the proposed changes reflect that recognition.

The Board of Trustees urges you to give careful consideration to the proposal. In order to guarantee proper consideration of all responses I ask that you provide comments **in writing** to the Development Committee no later than July 1, 1988. The committee will carefully review all comments and suggestions before the matter is taken up at the July board meeting.

Sincerely,



Donald McLaughlin
Society President

Current Membership Program

Category & Dues

Jr. Historian (18 & under)	\$ 8
Senior (65 & over)	12
Individual	15
Family	20
Contributor	30
Business	50
Donor	75
Sponsor	100
Benefactor	250
Grantor	500
Lifetime	5,000

Benefits (available to all categories)

- Free subscription to the *Table Rock Sentinel*
- Right to vote for Society trustees (except Jr. Historian category)
- Right to attend the annual meeting
- 20% discount on Oregon Historical Society membership
- 15% discount in Society gift shops
- Invitations to Society events
- Free or reduced admission to Society events
- Participation in Society bus tours
- Free annual calendar
- 15% discount on Society publications

The Society's Development Committee has been examining the high cost of the current membership program. They have proposed to the Board of Trustees a new structure. For additional information, see the letter from Society President Donald McLaughlin on the preceding page.

Benefit	Jr. Historian (15 & under) \$5
Jr. Historian badge	●
Jr. Historian newsletter	●
Special Jr. Historian events	●
Bimonthly <i>Sentinel</i>	
Bimonthly newsletter	
Vote for Society trustees	
Attend annual meeting	
20% discount on Oregon Historical Society membership	
15% discount in Society gift shops	
Invitations to special events	
Reduced admission to special events & activities	
Discounts on Society bus tours	
15% discount on annual calendar	
15% discount on Society publications	
15% disc. on reprints of historic photographs from Society collections	
15% discount on research assistance in Research Library	
Free historic photograph reprint	
Special members-only workshops	
Free annual calendar	
25% discount in Society gift shops	
25% disc. on reprints of historic photographs from Society collections	
Public recognition in the History Center	
Framed membership certificate	
"Behind the scenes" tour	
Free admission to all Society events	
Invitation to exclusive special events	
Invitation to President's Dinner	
One free U. S. Hotel meeting room rental	
Up to five free <i>Sentinel</i> subscriptions	
One free Society bus trip for two people	

Weekends at The Willows

The Hanley Farm, known traditionally as The Willows, will open again to the public this summer from 1-4 p.m. on July 16-17 and August 20-21 .

Named for the weeping willow growing near the springhouse, The Willows represents over one hundred years of farming tradition in the Rogue Valley, spanning three generations of the Hanley family.

In 1857 Michael and Martha Hanley purchased the property from the original donation land claim owners. They lived in a log house until the 1870s when they built their own Classic Revival home. This house still stands today with some of the origi-

nal wall treatments and furniture on display.

By 1890 both Michael and Martha had died, leaving the main portion of the farm to their daughter, Alice. When she died in 1940, her niece, Claire, who had grown up at The Willows, inherited the farm. Along with her sisters, Mary and Martha, Claire Hanley managed the farm operations. In 1982 the last surviving sister, Mary, generously gave The Willows to the Society to be preserved for the public's enjoyment and education.

Tours of the home are available for \$1.00 per person age 13 and over, 50 cents for Society members **with their membership cards** and children 6-12. Tickets may be purchased at the main

house on the farm property.

As there is no parking at The Willows, the Society will provide shuttle bus transportation to the farm between 1:00 and 3:30 p.m. For August 20-21, visitors should park and meet the bus near Courthouse Square in Jacksonville.

Sunday, July 17 is "Farm Day" at The Willows. Visitors to the historic farm may view or participate in demonstrations of traditional farm equipment and activities, including butter churning, field plowing, blacksmithing, and much more! On that day and Saturday, July 16, busses will depart from the Britt parking lot, corner of D and Oregon Streets, Jacksonville.

Children's Heritage Fair Fun

The Society's third annual Children's Heritage Fair, held May 3-7 on the grounds of the Jacksonville and Children's Museums, provided area fourth graders with many opportunities to discover what life was like for the early settlers of the Rogue Valley. Over 857 students (accompanied by 47 adults) took part in this year's fair. During the following weeks, thank you letters from the participants flooded the mailbox of Coordinator of Children's Programming, Stacey Williams. In their own words, here is a sample of the students' comments:

I really like the panning for gold. I loved it. It was really fun. If you want to no are teacher made us do this. I would like to come back.

Jason McNair
Little Butte Intermediate
Eagle Point, Oregon

Thank you for the demonstration in "Pioneer Chores." I enjoyed it a lot. Churning in the Children's Heritage Fair was fun but doing it as a regular chore would be awful! I have always wanted to have lived in the pioneer days but I just want to live there 2 weeks now. Making yarn is along process. I'll just buy it, thank you.

Andrea Castaneda
Prospect Elementary
Prospect, Oregon

Thank you for having us. Thank you Southern Oregon Historical Society to. I had a fun time and hope we can go again some day. My favorite part was the dance, and making the dolls. I like getting interviewed the most. I hope that you had fun to with us.

Vicki D.
Applegate School
Applegate, Oregon

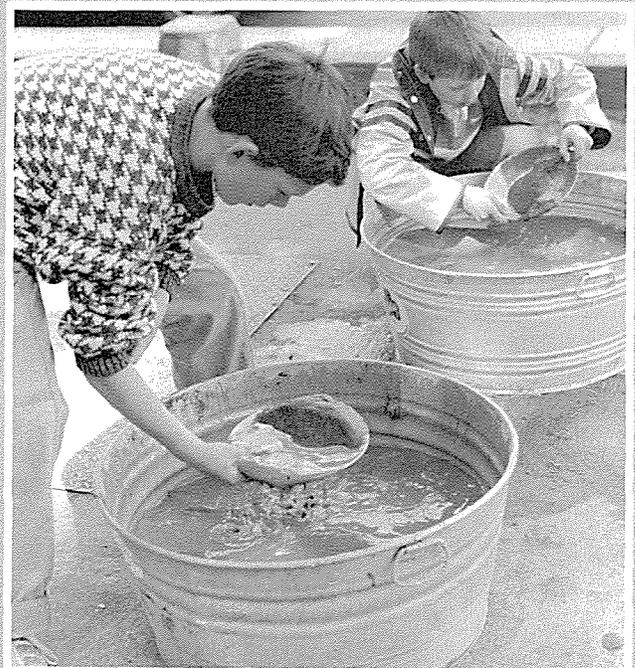


photo by Natalie Brown

Fourth graders from throughout the county learned the art of panning for gold at the Children's Heritage Fair.

Thank you for letting me come to your museum. I liked the childrens museum a ot. My favorite parts were the kitchen, the operator booth, and the train. I also liked the furniture and things on display. The washing clothes, churning butter, grinding coffe grounds and making yarn was neat. But we could not have done it wit out t e docent.

Sauna Bryan
Evans Valley School
Rogue Valley, Oregon

Regional Digest

Tour to Highlight Ashland Homes

The Ashland Heritage Committee is sponsoring a self-guided tour of five historic Ashland homes, a sculptor's studio, and an antique doll collection on Saturday, June 25.

From 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., sculptor Jeffrey Bernard will open his studio at 139½ Granite Street. Bernard will be working on the restoration of the marble statue of Abraham Lincoln soon to return to Lithia Park.

Between 1-4 p.m., early Ashland homes at 117 N. Main St., 125 N. Main St., 131 N. Main St., 94 Bush St., and the early 20th century Methodist Church parsonage at 165 N. Main St. will be open to the public for viewing. The antique doll collection of Blanche Chick may be seen while visiting 117 N. Main.

The cost of the tour is \$3 per person, \$2 for Southern Oregon Historical Society members with their

membership cards. Children under 12 may participate for free with an accompanying adult. Proceeds will be used to help finance the Ashland Historical Commission's project to restore the Lincoln statue and Ashland Heritage Committee activities.

Tickets are available for advance purchase between June 15-25 at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, City Farmhouse, Hanson Howard Galleries, and Patricia Sprague Real Estate office, all in Ashland.

Local Histories Published

The history of the upper Rogue River region is the focus of two new publications: *Unforgettable Pioneers* by Barbara Hegne and *Gold Hill and Its Neighbors Along the River* by Linda Genaw.

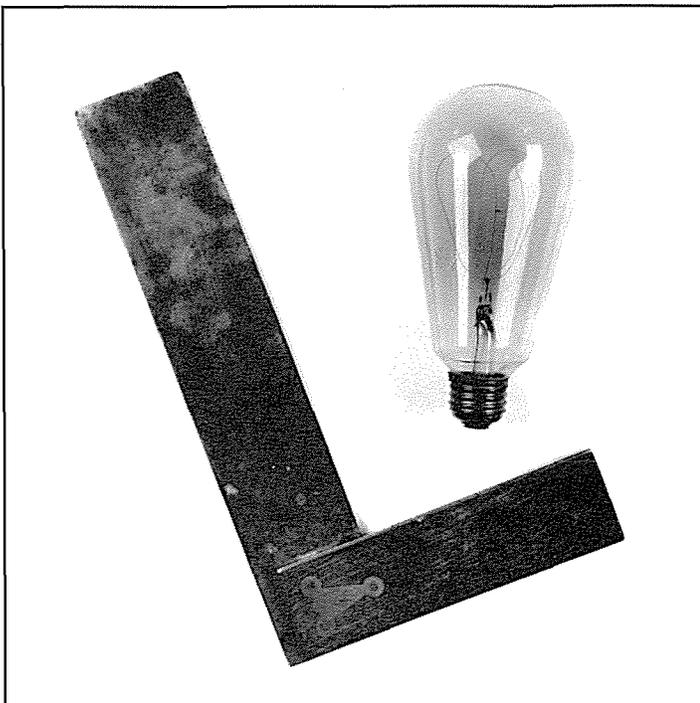
A Butte Falls native (now living in Nevada) Hegne concentrates on the

early settlement of the Eagle Point, Butte Falls, and Shady Cove-Trail areas. Her book weaves together the stories of the rugged pioneers, the problems encountered in a new land as well as the lighter side of pioneer life.

In her book, Genaw, currently president of the Gold Hill Historical Society, focuses more specifically on the city of Gold Hill and its environs: Dardanelles, Foothills Creek, Galls Creek, Sardine Creek, Rock Point, Sams Valley, and others. Filled with facts long forgotten such as how certain areas were named and the cost of peddler, saloon, or photographer licenses, the book traces the development of Gold Hill from its mining days through much of the twentieth century.

Unforgettable Pioneers costs \$10; *Gold Hill and Its Neighbors Along the River*, \$9.95. Both are available through Genaw at 7477 Maple Lane, Central Point, Oregon 97502.

From the Collections



This summer at the Beekman House, visitors may meet and chat with handyman John Renault. A Civil War veteran, Renault may be found "fixing" something in or around the house. The observant guest even may catch a glimpse of an early light bulb and a carpenter's square in John's tool kit.

Electricity came to Jacksonville in 1905. In a letter dated March 24, 1906, to her sister Florence, Mrs. Beekman writes, "We are all torn up, carpets up, and general disorder prevails. We have had the house wired for electric lights. Have sent for the fixtures, and hope to get them completed in two weeks . . . Jacksonville is coming to the front. All the business houses are lighted and many dwellings. Electric cars are talked of between here and Medford . . ." This light bulb is an original Beekman House object. Known as a carbon-loop filament Edison bulb, it was made before 1909.

The carpenter's square dates to the same period or earlier. Martin Purkeypile, a Civil War veteran who came West after the war, probably used it while working as a bridge carpenter for the railroad. His son, F. C. Purkeypile, donated the item to the Society in 1963.

Calendar of Events

June 25 Southern Oregon Historical Society Annual Meeting See "Society Update" inside for details.

June 27 A Step In Time: In cooperation with the Ashland Public Library, the Society will sponsor a children's program featuring African drummer and dancer Chata Addy and storyteller J. B. Phillips on the lawn of the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum. From 2-3 p.m. Free.

June 28 The Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees will hold its monthly meeting in the conference room of Jackson Education Service District building, 101 N. Grape, Medford, at 6:30 p.m. Members and the general public are invited.

June 30 Can You See What I See?!: Kids, ages 7-12, are invited to join us for a program featuring a look at a variety of old-fashioned optical toys: stereoscopes, kaleidoscopes, and a magic mirror. Participants will learn the techniques of casting "hand shadows" on the wall and create their own magical kaleidoscope to take home with them. From 1-4 p.m. at the Children's Museum in Jacksonville. Free.

July 17 Farm Day at The Willows: A popular annual event, join us at the historic Hanley Farm for an afternoon sure to please young and old alike. See "Society Update" inside for more information.

July 7 Workin' On the Railroad: At this workshop, children, ages 7-12, can become "railroad engineers" as they construct a small scale model of the O & C Railroad out of boxes and other materials. Participants also will sing railroad songs and create a "human train" using such props as a conductor's cap, luggage, whistles, and lots of imagination! From 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Children's Museum. A \$2 fee per child will cover costs.

Storytime: In cooperation with the Ashland Public Library, the Society will present a children's program with storyteller Carolyn Myers on the grounds of the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum. 2:00 p.m. Free.

July 10 Who Done It? Tour: Ashland author Kay Atwood will lead a walking tour of the area where Dr. David Sisson was murdered a century ago. This unsolved mystery is the focus of Atwood's recent book, *Mill Creek Journal*. Limited to 15; reservations required. Call the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum at (503) 488-1341. Free.

July 16-24 Tenth Annual Quilt Show: The Jacksonville Museum Quilters will display over 40 handmade quilts in the ballroom of the U. S. Hotel in downtown Jacksonville. See "Society Update" inside for details.



P.O. Box 480, Jacksonville, Oregon 97530-0480

The
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Southern Oregon
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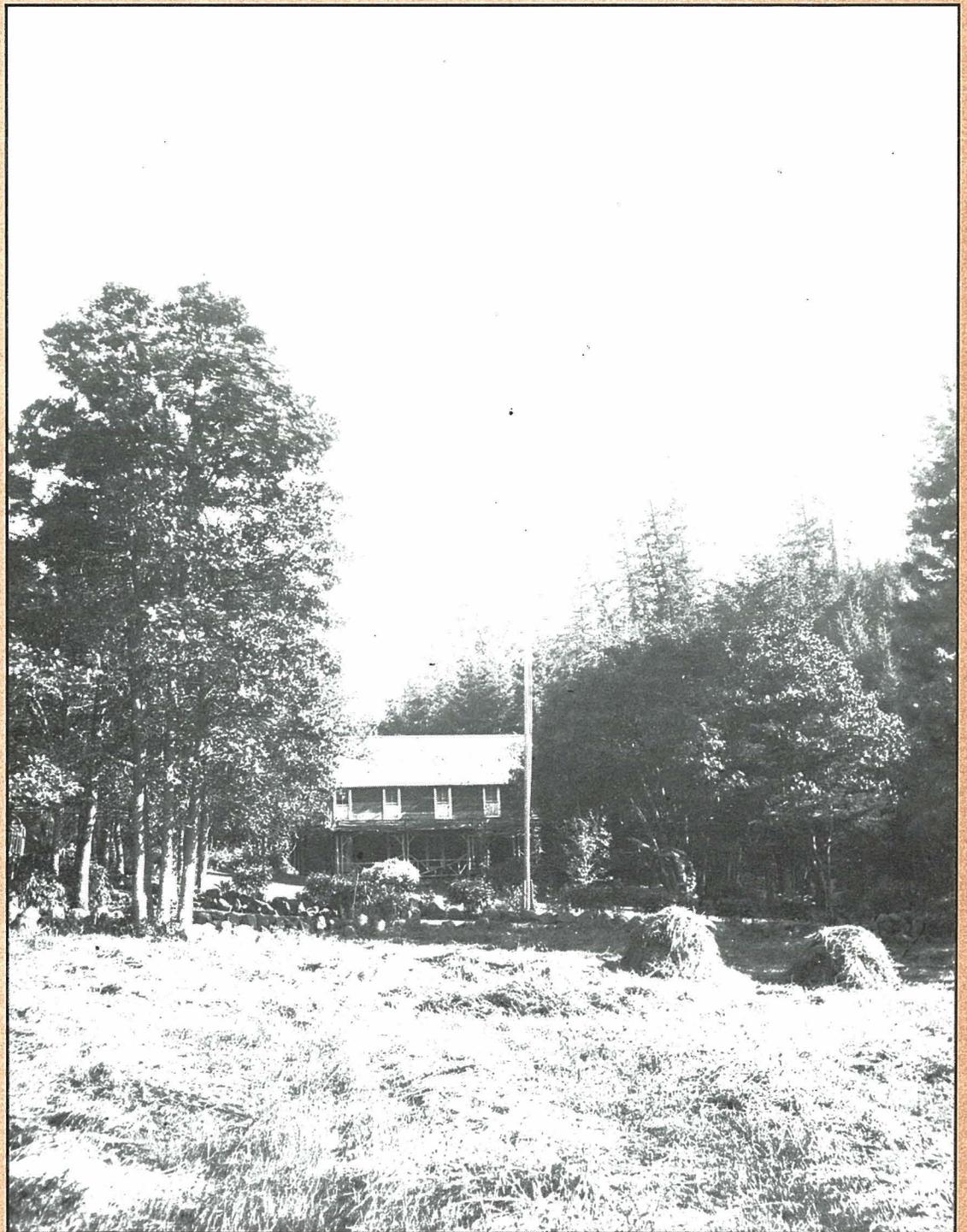
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SENTINEL

JULY 1988



The
Magazine
of the
Southern
Oregon
Historical
Society

Commentary

The Society's four decades as steward of our region's cultural heritage have ensured history of a prominent role in the exceptional quality of life we enjoy in southern Oregon. And yet, this work has gone largely unnoticed by the general public.

When talking with people throughout the region about the Society, I find the majority of residents have little or no idea how many services and programs the Society offers, how many museums and historic sites it manages, how many history-related programs and projects it supports, or that membership is available and open to all.

We have our work cut out for us. All of us—Society members, trustees, and staff—must join together to raise public awareness of what the Society mission is and how that mission is being accomplished.

As it is true that the most effective means of getting the word out is by word of mouth, I ask you to assist us. I ask that you seek opportunities to tell friends and acquaintances about the Society; about its mission to preserve, interpret, and promote the region's history; and about the benefits and opportunities of membership.

If you have any questions before or after you talk with people, please let us know so we can provide you with answers. The better informed you are, the more effective you can be to explain the Society and extol its virtues to someone else.

I also would welcome any comments and suggestions you receive from those with whom you talk. All public input is valued and appreciated.

The Society will be doing more in the future to provide greater public understanding of itself and its mission, as well as offering more activities and benefits to members and the general public alike. Together, we can foster a better understanding of the Southern Oregon Historical Society and, at the same time, a deeper appreciation of our region's heritage.



Samuel J. Wegner
Executive Director



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Features

4 Trouble with Healing Waters: The Turbulent History of Buckhorn Springs *by Roger Love*

A place of idyllic beauty and vitalizing vapors, Buckhorn Springs has served as a site of spiritual renewal, resort, and chiropractic clinic. Now it awaits restoration and an appreciation for its part in the diversity of local endeavor.

14 The Birdseye Family of Jackson County *by Chuck Sweet*

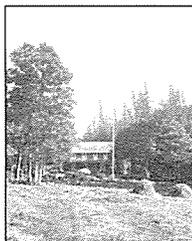
In this second and final part of the Birdseye story, two strong and courageous women stand as testimonies to the survival of a family and personification of the Oregon pioneer spirit.

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cover: Buckhorn Lodge once served as a resort retreat for visitors wishing to enjoy the magnificent scenery and vitalizing vapors.
Photo courtesy of Lawrence Powell



Photo courtesy of Terry Skibby

Trouble with HEALING WATERS

The Turbulent History of Buckhorn Springs

by Roger Love

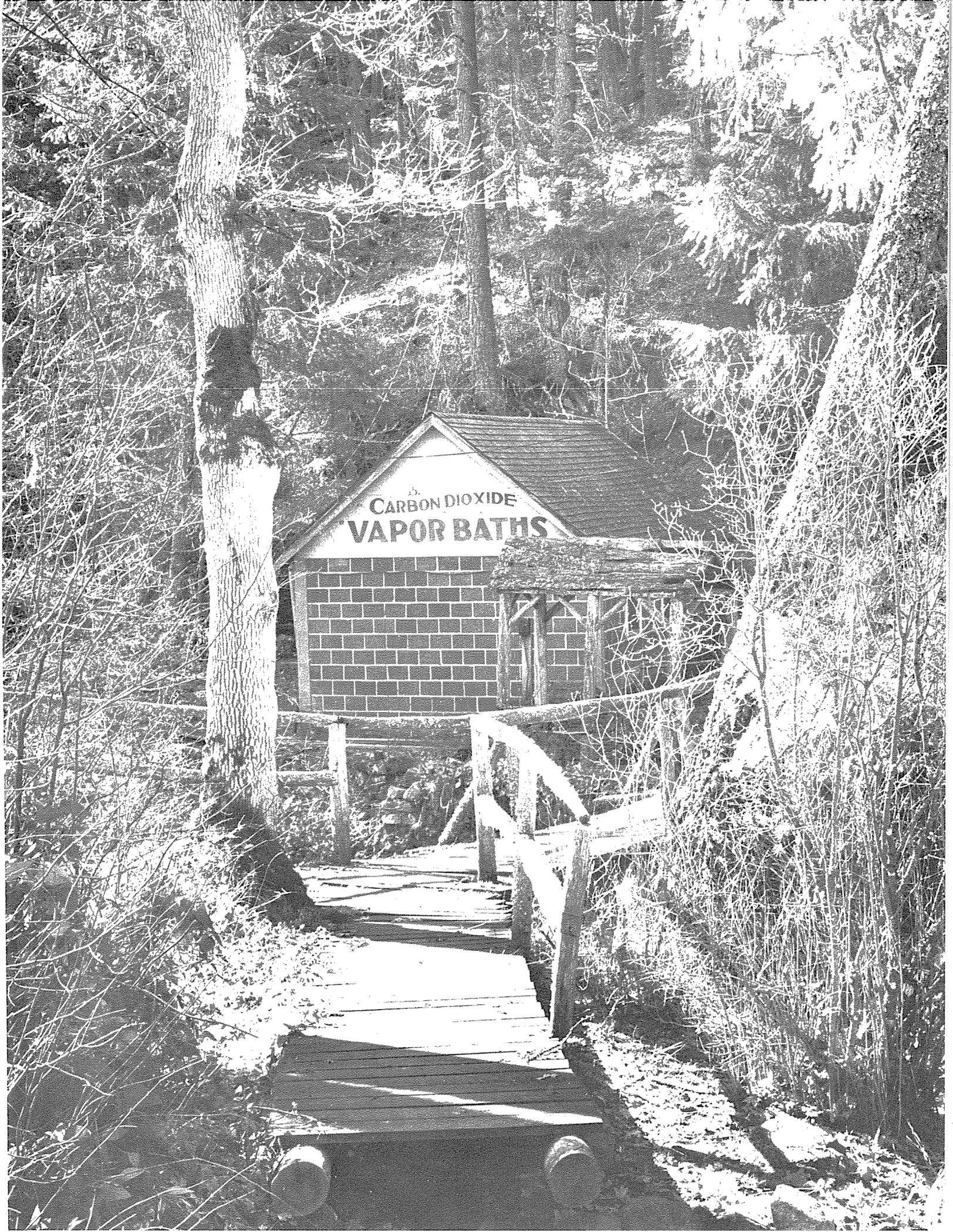
Nestled among trees along the creek (*opposite*), the vapor baths still offer visitors the vitalizing sensations once thought to provide spiritual or medicinal benefits. Buckhorn Lodge (*above*) served social, residential and commercial functions during its long history. Today it awaits restoration.

For what ails you, you can still seek a cure at Buckhorn Mineral Springs. The owners might even let you make your way across the fragile wooden bridge to the mineral water gazebo where you may grab a paper cup and draw a drink of the water from the old hand pump. You might even want to take a carbon dioxide “vapor bath” in the bathhouse next to the well.

More than 150 years ago the Klamath and the Rogue River Indians did just this to cure their sick, although without such “modern” conveniences as hand pumps and bathhouses. And 100 years ago, white Rogue Valley residents also discovered the curative properties of the springs. Even as late as 1962, a local chiropractor maintained a sanitarium at Buckhorn Springs for patients perhaps not entirely convinced of the value of more modern medical treatment.

Today, Buckhorn’s reputation as a health spa may be as decayed as the buildings which once housed the sanitarium, but it remains a centerpiece of sorts in the history of southern Oregon’s soda and mineral water springs. We see in Buckhorn the development and use of the springs. We see a story about ourselves.

CARBON DIOXIDE
VAPOR BATHS



No one knows when or how the Indians found the springs. Maybe it was all the dead insects and animals bunched around a depression in the ground next to the creek. Or maybe it was the bubbles rising mysteriously from the creek bottom. We do know that the Indians in southern Oregon considered Buckhorn Springs more than any other mineral springs in the area to be sacred for its water's medicinal properties.¹

Buckhorn Springs, located about ten miles southeast of Ashland on Emigrant Creek, is one of many soda or mineral springs in Oregon. At these springs, naturally occurring carbon dioxide gas escapes from the ground, mingling at varying degrees of concentration with spring water

Today, Buckhorn's reputation as a health spa may be as decayed as the buildings which once housed the sanitarium, but it remains a centerpiece of sorts in the history of southern Oregon's soda and mineral water springs.

to create natural carbonation. The water at Buckhorn, though, is not highly carbonated like that at nearby Wagner's Soda Springs. As a result, Buckhorn's mineral water was prized less for its taste and more for its therapeutic value as a bathing water. The source of the carbon dioxide at Buckhorn is thought to be volcanic, as it is with most mineral springs. Two major faults intersect near the springs area.²

The free gas discharge at Buckhorn is constant and often is more vigorous than at any other known site in the state.³ Carbon dioxide is a colorless, inert, tasteless, nonflammable gas. Commonly used in fire extinguishers and refrigeration systems, carbon dioxide in its solid state, forms dry ice. In fact, at several spots near Buckhorn Springs, a company called Gas-Ice produced dry ice from the gas coming from within the earth. There was an attempt to do the same at Buckhorn, but when the well reached 300 feet and struck a good pocket of carbon dioxide, the drillers decided to go a bit deeper to achieve an even greater volume of carbon dioxide. Instead they hit water, dooming the project.

Being heavier than air, carbon dioxide tends to collect in depressions in the ground and displaces all the oxygen if it is not dissipated into the atmosphere by a breeze. Thus, when an animal or insect encounters such a pocket of gas, it cannot breathe and will die quickly unless it is able to escape.

This phenomenon probably explains how the Indians discovered the spot we know as Buckhorn Mineral Springs today. Insects and animals would blunder into these pockets



Photo courtesy of Terry Skibby

of carbon dioxide. Most would react quickly enough to escape the dense, unbreathable gas, but some would die by asphyxiation. Even today, one can find dead birds and motionless butterflies next to the vapor baths along the bank of Emigrant Creek. Certainly, hundreds of years ago, passing Indians noticed this too. Following the creeks, white trappers came across the remains of these unfortunate birds, rabbits and squirrels. But they wrongly assumed the animals had stopped for a drink and had been poisoned by something in the water. As a result, many mineral and soda springs, especially Buckhorn, came to be known as "poison waters" to the whites.⁴

The Indians reacted differently. Perhaps because their culture tended to explain nature in mystical terms rather than scientific terms, the Indians did not immediately assume the animals they saw sprawled in the carbon dioxide had been poisoned. They saw this, instead, as a manifestation of the "Great Spirit," and thus assigned to these places a great healing power.⁵



Cabins at
Buckhorn Mineral Springs
Near Ashland Ore.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries found several tribes of Indians living in southern Oregon, among them the Rogue or Dagelima Indians, in whose territory most of the mineral springs lay, Buckhorn included. East of the Cascade Range, in the country known as the “Land of Many Lakes,” lived the Klamath and Modoc tribes. All three tribes were often in conflict with each other, at least until the mid-nineteenth century when the Rogue Indian Wars greatly depleted that tribe’s numbers. Despite their history of intertribal conflict, however, the tribes did agree on one thing: the use of the mineral springs.

It is not known just how much use the Rogues made of the springs, but we do know quite a bit about the Klamath tribe’s reverence for Buckhorn. A man named C. B. Watson, writing in a 1914 edition of the *Ashland Tidings*, seems to be the source for nearly all the material written about the Indians’ use of Buckhorn Springs. Upon hearing stories about their belief in the springs’ healing powers, he visited them in 1870.

Settlers soon displaced the Native Americans and also discovered the natural rewards of Buckhorn Springs. Through the 1930s and '40s, southern Oregonians enjoyed camping at the site in woody surroundings or in later-erected cabins.

The Indians prized the escaping gas as “Hi-U-Skookum Medicine,” or the breath of the “Great Spirit.” This medicine, they felt, was a guarantee of a sure cure if the patient had lived a worthy life. If the patient died, it was obvious he or she did not deserve to live. Why the Klamaths and Modocs exclusively used Buckhorn Springs is not really clear, although Frank Riddle, a white man who lived with the Klamath tribe, told Watson their right to use Buckhorn and no other had been granted by treaty.⁶

There is no question the Indians considered Buckhorn to be sacred—and effective. It was not unusual for them to strap an ailing tribal member to a pony and haul him or her across the Cascade Mountains from their home in the Klamath Basin, a trip that was more dangerous than

it might appear. Even though the Modocs, the Klamaths and the Rogues agreed to the sacredness of the springs, and by treaty would not attack each other during their stay at the springs, the pilgrims, as they were called, remained fair game for surprise attack while traveling to and from the locality.

Once safely at Buckhorn, the first phase of treatment was simple. The medicine man who supervised the springs would find a place where the gas escaped, dig out a depression large enough to accommodate a person, spread out

And even though many whites may have scoffed at much of what the Indians held sacred, they did take pragmatic notice of any practices that might improve either their health or their pocketbooks.

some tree boughs for a bed, then place the patient on the boughs, submerging him or her in the carbon dioxide. The patient would remain there, watched carefully, until he or she passed out.

Thus, under the influence of the "Great Spirit," the person would be removed from the hollowed-out ground and taken to a "wickiup," a structure made of skins and boughs, where, according to Watson, the patient would undergo a "course of manipulation" until regaining consciousness. A spell in the sweat house followed, while the patient listened to the medicine man's incantations, drank mineral water and breathed its steam in the primitive sauna. This treatment would continue until the patient was either cured or declared incurable.

If performed properly, the Indians insisted this seemingly harsh treatment seldom failed to cure even the most serious cases of rheumatism, asthma, kidney disease and stomach trouble—if, of course, the patient was worthy of the cure. In essence, the Indian would be confronting his or her fate with the Great Spirit.

Of course, the curative powers of Oregon's mineral springs among the Indians did not go unnoticed by the white population, which increased sharply over the last half of the nineteenth century. And even though many whites may have scoffed at much of what the Indians held sacred, they did take pragmatic notice of any practices that might improve either their health or their pocketbooks. The mineral springs scattered about Oregon seemed to be among those items. In 1910, the Southern Pacific Railroad crudely echoed this sentiment in a brochure,

Many of the medicinal springs of Oregon have a record of centuries of healing among the Indians, who, like the lower animals, instinctively discover true nature remedies for the ills that overtake them.

Putting the fears of "poison waters" aside, it was not long before white entrepreneurs began offering their own brand of "Hi-U-Skookum Medicine" to those settlers who could find no relief for their ailments elsewhere, medical science being what it was at that time.

Up the road just a couple miles from Buckhorn Springs is Wagner Soda Springs. An old hunter who had learned of the springs' healing value from the Indians claimed the springs in the 1860s. Several whites visited the site, among them Samuel Whitmore, one of Ashland's early schoolteachers. Whitmore, himself afflicted by some ailment, apparently found relief too, and bought the springs when the old hunter decided to move on. In turn, he sold his interests to a Dr. Caldwell, who ultimately



owned more than 800 acres surrounding the soda springs and what would become Buckhorn Mineral Springs. The doctor lived on the property, and by 1871 had built a comfortable house where he offered accommodations for travelers and others visiting the springs for their health. Knowing of the therapeutic reputation of the mineral springs, the doctor later opened a modest sanitarium.⁷

These springs came to be known as Wagner Soda Springs in 1885 when Jacob Wagner of Ashland bought the ranch and hotel. Directly across from the springs stood a “pretentious” twenty-four room hotel where the elite of Ashland as well as long-distance travelers gathered to socialize. In addition, Wagner also developed a plant to bottle the fizzy water, which he distributed for use as a mixer with alcoholic and fruit-flavored beverages. But as successful as the

resort and soda water became, the success was short-lived. When Highway 66 was built, the chosen route bypassed the soda springs development, leading to its demise. The bottling works followed, being abandoned when Prohibition dropped the bottom out of the mineral water market.⁸

Meanwhile down in Ashland, people were beginning to discover other area mineral springs. The spot that eventually became the Helman Sulphur Baths also had been used by the Indians for many years. The first known white man to test the curative powers of these baths was James Russell. Suffering from the pain of rheumatism, he burrowed into the sand and allowed the mineral water to flow over his joints, immediately declaring himself cured. Not too much later Abel Helman, on whose land the springs lay, tried the same therapy and found relief. The word spread about the magical waters, and the Helmans found their cow

pasture crowded with sufferers. Helman’s son Grant decided the visitors might appreciate some privacy as they wallowed in the mud, so he built a small bathhouse with tubs in three separate rooms, thus creating what we know as the Helman Baths.⁹



A footbridge across Emigrant Creek (left) still provides access to the vapor baths. Members of the C. W. Fraley and W. M. Barber families (above) enjoy a picnic at Buckhorn, ca. 1923.

Photo by Natalie Brown

Photo courtesy of Glenn Northcross

Around this time, speculation has it that someone, perhaps Dr. Caldwell, built a cabin next to the springs at Buckhorn. This two-story structure may have formed the basis for the lodge built several years later by James Clarke Tolman. We do know that in the late 1880s, Dr. Caldwell sold a parcel of land surrounding Buckhorn Springs to a man named Blackwood, who in turn sold it to James Tolman in 1890. Tolman immediately began the first real development of the springs that same year by starting construction of a hotel supposedly built around the original cabin.

Today we are reminded often of James Clarke Tolman, his name living on in Tolman Creek and Tolman Creek Road in Ashland, less than eight miles from the springs he first popularized by the turn of the century. Tolman was one of early Ashland's more respected citizens. Born in Ohio in 1813, he dabbled in farming, leather manufacture and politics before coming to Oregon in 1849 in the midst of the gold boom. He returned to Iowa shortly thereafter, only to turn up just south of the Oregon border in Yreka in 1852. By 1853 he was raising stock in the Rogue Valley, but soon returned to politics, winning election to a Jackson County judgeship in 1858. After an unsuccessful run for governor in 1874, he was given the post of surveyor general of Oregon in 1878.¹⁰ By the time the as-yet-unnamed mineral springs outside of Ashland became available for purchase, he had the political and financial clout to strike out in yet another direction.

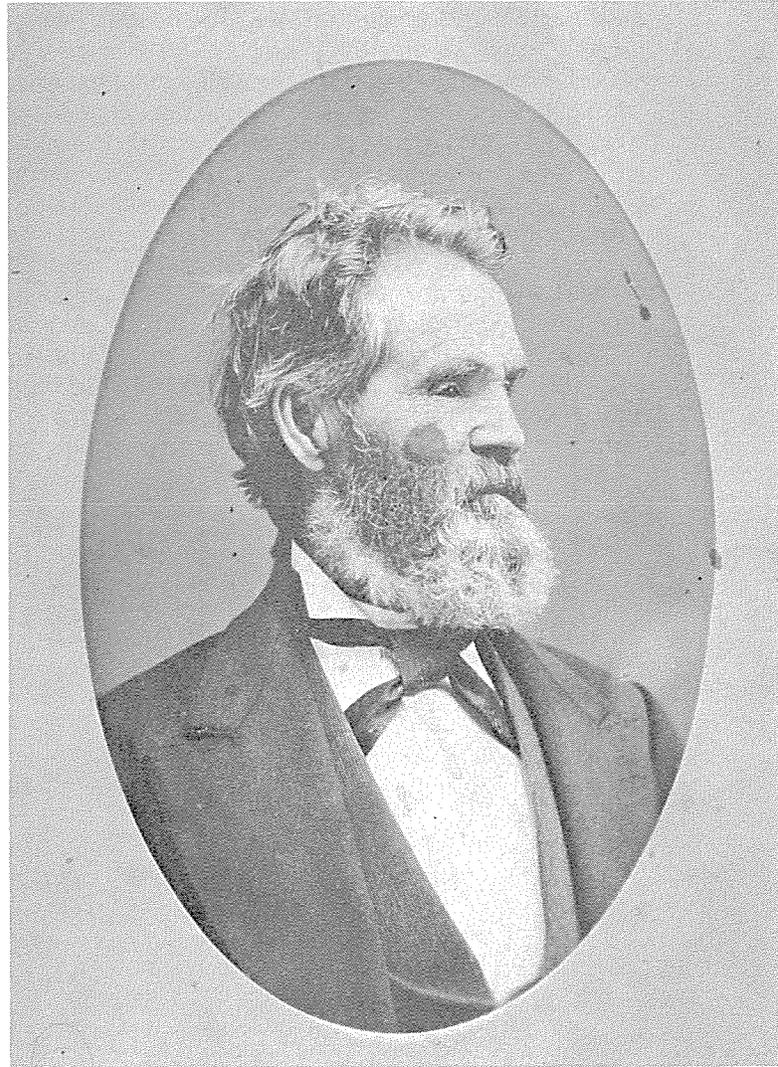
One of Tolman's first acts as the springs' new owner was to give it a name: Tolman Springs, aptly enough. No one knows for sure whether his prime plan for the springs' use was benevolent, mercenary or both. We do know he opened his pocketbook and spent both time and money developing Tolman Springs into a health resort of wide reputation. By 1900 the springs included a hotel, cottages and facilities for visitors to bathe in mud, mineral water or vapor.

The word spread about the magical waters, and the Helmans found their cow pasture crowded with sufferers.

A turn-of-the-century brochure published by the Southern Pacific Railroad made special mention of Tolman Springs:

These springs are mentioned under "Ashland" but it may be further stated that for curative powers they perhaps have no superior, though they are little known. The Indians brought their great chiefs here from long distances, when all other remedies failed.

At this time Tolman's resort was accessible only by stage on a road that wound from Ashland over the Siskiyou past Pilot Rock, then into California. The path of this stage road was most likely influenced by the



Judge Tolman vastly improved the spring's resort potential.
SOHS #11916

locations of Tolman Springs and Wagner Soda Springs and others along Emigrant Creek. Oddly enough, Southern Pacific, which earlier helped promote Tolman Springs, later contributed to its demise when the railroad chose to route its tracks on a more western route through Coe. The road to Tolman Springs was virtually abandoned when north-south traffic followed the railroad, and when the new road to Klamath Falls bypassed the springs.

Ironically, the fall in the fortunes of the Emigrant Creek resorts coincided with a new fervor in Ashland to promote itself as a spa paradise. Ashland residents voted in 1914 to pipe the renowned "Lithia Water" from Emigrant Creek to several downtown locations, a decision that ultimately helped lead to the creation of Lithia Park. By 1920, even the national craze for mineral water spas was waning, Southern Pacific Railroad touted Ashland as an established health resort.¹²

Upon Tolman's death, his heirs sold Tolman Springs in 1912, and the property languished as a private residence for nearly a decade until a woman named Lillian Gearing

purchased it in 1919. Gearing and her soon-to-be husband, C. W. McGrew, had visions of rekindling the popularity of Tolman Springs even though it was off the beaten path. It was most likely the McGrews who for some reason renamed the springs Buckhorn Mineral Springs, perhaps basing the new name on nearby Buck Rock. They began expanding upon Tolman's developments, adding on to the hotel, drilling an artesian well to tap the mineral water and constructing a crude, roofed-over bathing area on the spot the Indians once used to partake of the "Hi-U-Skookum Medicine." The McGrews enjoyed moderate success for more than fifteen years until they decided to sell out.

Visitors would lower themselves into the warmed, enriched mud for a good soak, followed by a massage by the resident masseur or perhaps a vapor bath.

It was not until the Buckhorn Mineral Springs Corporation bought the property in 1936 that the springs enjoyed its most prosperous times, and oddly enough, it was not totally as a health spa that the resort saw its success. With Amelia Toft as a principal partner and manager, Buckhorn began an ambitious building program, remodeling the inside of the hotel and replacing the old carbon dioxide bath facilities with a masonry building complete with enclosed tubs for the bathers. They shored up the creek-side with a rock wall, built a new bridge and added boardwalks from the creek to the lodge and to the newly constructed physio-therapy clinic. To top all that off, they even added an electrical generator on nearby Baldy Creek, making the springs the only property to have electrical power in the area.

Richard Howell, who has lived down Buckhorn Road from the springs for more than half a century, helped with the new construction in the 1930s. Howell says he knew there was something strange about the carbon dioxide pits when he watched another worker set a gasoline-soaked rag on fire and dropped it into the pit where they would later build the "Vapor House." "It went out like you had tossed it into water," Howell recalls. And although he never had the notion to take a mud bath, Howell says he did partake of the vapor baths on several occasions, remembering that they made his skin feel warm and tingly.

According to Howell, the mineral water mud baths were a successful attraction at Buckhorn in the late 1930s. Workers would scoop up dirt or mud from a spot near the vapor bath house where carbon dioxide escaped from the ground, and haul it to the clinic on the other side of the creek. Here it would be added to bath tubs in several private rooms where it was mixed with mineral water that had been heated by two large, wood-fired boilers. Visitors would lower them-

selves into the warmed enriched mud for a good soak, followed by a massage by the resident masseur or perhaps a vapor bath.

It was during this time that Amelia Toft married the masseur, a man named Yarrington. And in a move clouded with mystery, the Yarringtons managed an apparent 1930s version of the hostile takeover when Amelia purchased Buckhorn Mineral Springs at a sheriff's sale on the steps of the Jackson County Courthouse. Speculation has it that as the manager of Buckhorn, she had allowed the taxes to lapse, then bought the title as the sole bidder.¹³

But this did not seem to affect the operation of the resort. Richard Howell recalls that Buckhorn was very popular at this time. The cabins and the hotel were generally filled, and people often camped out in tents. The resort atmosphere actually took on a life of its own, beyond the health spa. The Yarringtons held dances every Saturday night which became immensely popular with overnight visitors and locals. Howell helped form a band that played for the dances.

"We had a lot of fun in that place," Howell says. "Young kids were interested in each other. It was a social occasion. That's what it was all about."

The social occasions were not to last forever, though. The Yarringtons decided in the early 1940s it was time to move on to Seattle to open a funeral parlor, of all things. Too, the public's interest in mineral water spas had almost vanished compared to its high water mark earlier in the century.

In 1942 Buckhorn Springs changed its focus almost overnight when Herman Wexler, an expatriate doctor from Germany via Portland, appeared in Ashland and decided that Buckhorn would be the ideal spot to open a sanitarium. He had convinced a friend, Hollys Richardson, to accompany him in his new business venture, so she left her home in Lakeview and took up residence at Buckhorn that same year. At that time, Wexler had agreed to purchase Buckhorn Springs, although no money or title changed hands until 1950, after the sanitarium had been open for eight years.

Buckhorn may have been a natural for Wexler's practice, but it would no longer host the dances and good times the Yarringtons had encouraged. Within weeks of taking over the resort, Wexler let it be known that the dancers and musicians did not exactly project the image he had in mind for his sanitarium.¹⁴ That was probably his first mistake.

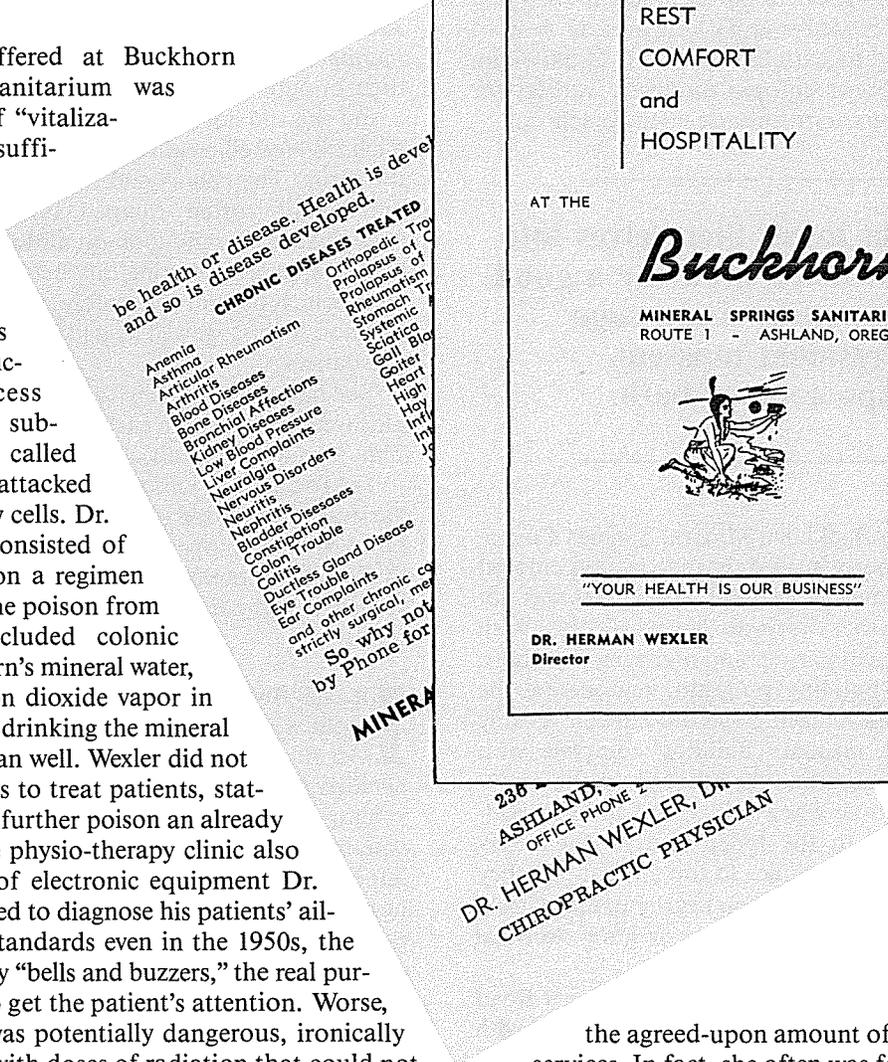
Not too much is known about Dr. Wexler's background. He claimed he was a Vienna-trained physician but could not practice medicine in America because of certification problems, a common-enough occurrence at that time. A tide of German doctors immigrated to the United States in the 1930s and 1940s, so many in fact that the American Medical Association took action to protect American doctors by making it tougher for foreign-trained physicians to practice medicine in the United States. On the other hand, Wexler's office walls showed no evidence of degrees from any university or medical school, and he never offered to produce any proof of his training.¹⁵

Herman Wexler's brochure lists a diversity of diseases he treated at Buckhorn Springs. Dr. Wexler (*opposite*) was a controversial physician during his tenure in Ashland.

The treatment offered at Buckhorn Mineral Springs Sanitarium was based on the idea of "vitalization," which is the "sufficient flow of intelligence and energy to every cell" in the body. The prime cause of sickness or disease was said to be "cell destruction," where "excess waste and foreign substance in the body called Poison or Toxemia" attacked the otherwise healthy cells. Dr. Wexler's treatment consisted of placing the patient on a regimen meant to eliminate the poison from the body. This included colonic enemas with Buckhorn's mineral water, bathing in the carbon dioxide vapor in the vapor baths, and drinking the mineral water from the artesian well. Wexler did not believe in using drugs to treat patients, stating that drugs would further poison an already polluted body.¹⁶ The physio-therapy clinic also contained an array of electronic equipment Dr. Wexler apparently used to diagnose his patients' ailments. By modern standards even in the 1950s, the equipment was mostly "bells and buzzers," the real purpose of which was to get the patient's attention. Worse, the X-ray machine was potentially dangerous, ironically poisoning the body with doses of radiation that could not be controlled by the operator. The picture, though, was likely most impressive to the patient.

Most of Dr. Wexler's colleagues seemed to take a "tongue in cheek" attitude toward his practice. They perceived the sanitarium's therapy as a kind of placebo treatment; medicine has long known that many patients tend to recover if they think they are being cured. One patient, well known to local physicians of the time, insisted his periodic impotence was reversed by bathing in the vapor baths.

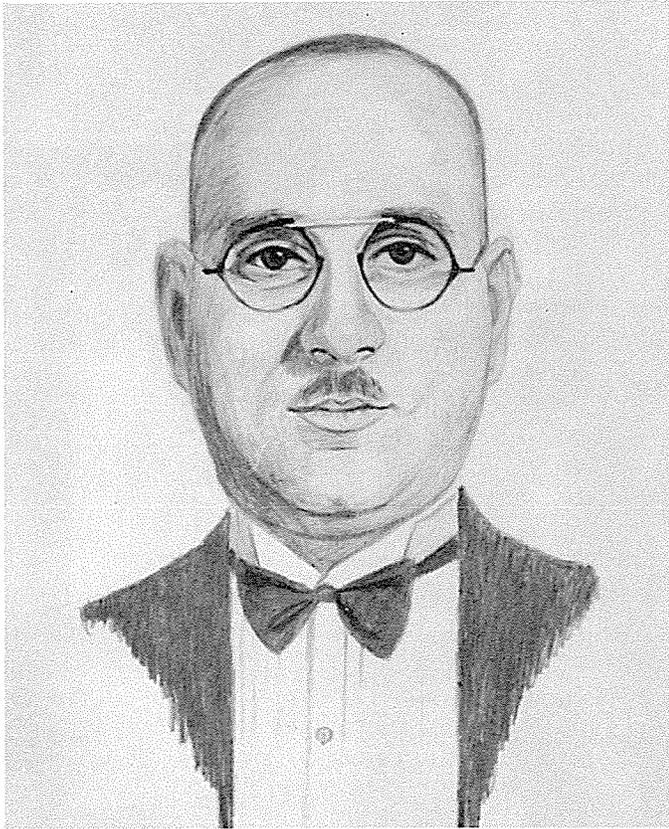
But the public, for the most part, seemed to agree that medical science had bypassed Wexler's brand of treatment. His plan to turn Buckhorn Springs into a thriving and profitable health spa never panned out. He was forced to maintain an office in Ashland on Siskiyou Boulevard just to make ends meet, and apparently there was never enough cash to pay his nurse and companion Hollys Richardson



the agreed-upon amount of \$300 a month for her services. In fact, she often was forced to lend the business money out of her own pocket.

By the mid-1950s, circumstances had deteriorated to the point where Wexler never worked at Buckhorn; instead, he treated what patients he could attract at his Ashland office. With his stocky build and brusque manner, Wexler cut a rather intimidating figure as a doctor, hardly the ideal bedside companion. To make things worse, at some point he and Richardson had a major dispute, so she stayed at Buckhorn, supposedly managing the sanitarium. The few people who sought treatment at the vapor house were often met by a gruff and abrupt Miss Richardson, and tended to proceed directly to the baths or the mineral water pump in hopes of avoiding a confrontation with her.

With little money coming in, Buckhorn continued to deteriorate. Maintenance on the buildings and grounds went



Courtesy of Bruce Sargent

unperformed. The cabins sagged and what plumbing there was proved insufficient, even unhealthy. By the time Wexler died in late 1962, time had seemingly passed him and Buckhorn by. The public had little use for either.

Now out of the public's view, Buckhorn Mineral Springs entered a period of benign neglect. In 1966, Lucy Harrell and her family purchased the property from Herman Wexler's estate, and proceeded to move in over the objections of Holly Richardson who still occupied the hotel, thinking the property should still belong to her. Richardson may well have had a good point. Because she shared a household with Wexler for years, she could have been considered his common-law wife, with a claim upon his property after his death. However, even though she was the executor of Wexler's estate, apparently no suggestion was ever made that she might have rights to the property. Regardless, the Harrells moved in and proceeded to make Buckhorn Mineral Springs their private residence for the next twenty-one years.

The physio-therapy clinic became a shop for the Harrells. The cabins became storage sheds. The bridge over Emigrant Creek sagged and tilted. The weeds grew. While Lucy Harrell enjoyed having the mineral water to drink occasionally, she did not perceive Buckhorn Springs to be any kind of a historic monument meant to be preserved. Instead, to the Harrells, Buckhorn was home, a place to live and to use, a ranch in an idyllic setting away from the bustle of a big city.

Harrell's husband died within a few years of their moving to Buckhorn, and that may have muted any enthusiasm she felt toward improving the resort. Her main loves seemed to be her animals and her friends, to which she devoted most of her energy. By the time she left for Alaska in 1987, the grounds had become overgrown not just with weeds, but with hulks of old cars and rusting machinery. Weeds,

By the time the present owners, Leslie and Bruce Sargent, took title to the property in October 1987, it was hard to see many of the buildings through the brush. The old clinic had been burglarized and vandalized. Even so, the carbon dioxide gas still bubbled up through Emigrant Creek, the old artesian well still pumped cool mineral water and the vapor baths would still put out a match. The feeling was still there.

The Sargents plan to move into the hotel this fall and begin, as others have before them, to revitalize the resort. They were quick to realize that restoring the health spa would be unrealistic, so the Sargents now say they only hope to preserve the past rather than to recreate it. They would like to open Buckhorn to the public again in the future, but in a different way than in the past. Where patients took mineral baths in the 1930s and received hydrotherapy from Dr. Wexler in the 1950s, tomorrow's visitors will find in the old physio-therapy clinic a museum, a sampling of what Buckhorn Mineral Springs has meant to the Rogue Valley's history.

The beautiful scenery, the clean air, the sound of Emigrant Creek running over the rocks; so many of the features that attract visitors to Buckhorn a hundred years ago may well draw people to the resort once again. 

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6. *Outings in Oregon*, pamphlet issued by Southern Pacific Railroad, c. 1910, p. 57.
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8. Bodon, Bertha, "Hi-U-Skookum Medicine in Bear Valley," *Oregon Journal*, Mar. 21, 1948, p. 8.
9. "The Helman Sulphur Baths," *Table Rock Sentinel*, V. I, No. 10, Oct. 1981, p. 21.
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13. Personal interview with Bruce Sargent.
14. Personal interview with Richard Howell.
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16. *Buckhorn Mineral Springs Sanitarium*, pamphlet issued by Dr. Herman Wexler.

Roger Love enjoys writing and photography. His last article for the *Sentinel* was "The Rebirth of Oregon's Wine Industry" in the May, 1988 issue.



Clara Birdseye (left) stands in front of the family home near Rogue River. SOHS #3987

THE BIRDSEYE FAMILY of Jackson County

by Chuck Sweet

This is the second and final part of the history of the Birdseye family—a history and celebration of two strong-willed and courageous pioneer women. In the first part, Clara Fleming Birdseye struggles to keep her home and raise her family despite the hardships of farming and the errant ways of her husband, David. The story continues when Clara's youngest son, Victor Wesley, meets a pretty and vivacious Effie Cameron at a Woodville dance.

Effie Belle Cameron was born near Hillsboro, Oregon, on August 28, 1883. Her parents were Danmer and Evelyn Cameron, and at that time her father was part-owner of a sawmill. As Effie grew up, she had two brothers slightly older than herself and a sister, Queene, who was two years younger. Mr. Cameron was a British subject, having been born on an English ship. A long-time admirer of Queen Victoria, he had named his youngest daughter after her majesty. Evelyn Cameron died when Effie was five. Danmer tried to care for his motherless children but the sawmill venture failed and there were years when the four youngsters had to live with relatives. Often they were on farms, where Effie learned to love farm life. Unlike her sis-

ter Queene, who was headstrong and quite a flirt, Effie was well-behaved and a good worker.

One day a friend of a cousin with whom the children were living made improper advances at Effie. Packing her few clothes, she left the cousin's home and made her way to the home of a doctor. When she asked the doctor if she could live there and work for her keep, the doctor's family took her in. Effie continued to attend school while at the same time she earned a small amount of spending money by delivering messages for the local telephone company. When she was eleven, her father sent her by train to live with another cousin who lived in Dunsmuir, California. The cousin had a contract processing railroad ties for the Southern Pacific but was soon transferred to Cottage Grove, Oregon, taking his family and Effie with him.

When he gambled away the farm's work horses, Clara and Effie finally persuaded him to go to Roseburg and 'take the cure.'

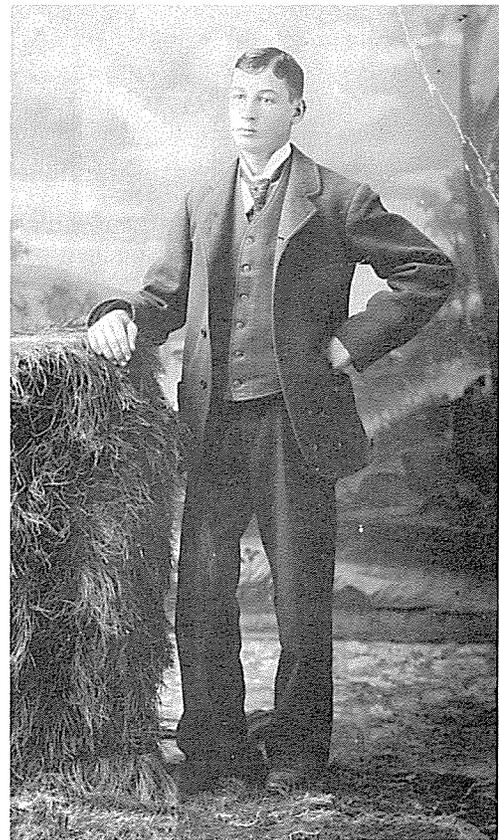
About this same time Danmer thought that he would try his hand mining in southern Oregon. He was living in a tent along the Rogue River near Woodville when he decided to send for his four children. He soon found a small cabin for the family to live in. Effie was now a young lady of fifteen and was attending the Saturday night dances in Woodville. In the meantime her father had become interested in a widow, and it wasn't long before he was married. Following the marriage, Danmer and his new wife took over management of a small hotel in Woodville. Both Cameron girls had jobs at the hotel.

Besides going to the weekly dances, Effie took an active interest in the local literary society and belonged to the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. She had joined the Temperance Union while living in the Willamette Valley. At the dances she found herself falling in love with Wesley Birdseye. Her father had reservations about the relationship because of the young man's reputation as somewhat of a playboy. Danmer also suspected that Wesley liked to drink with the boys. Wesley's mother had become acquainted with Effie and, observing that the girl was a good worker, hired her to work a few hours a day when she wasn't needed at the hotel. It wasn't long before Effie became involved in the many chores that farm women faced in those days.

The romance blossomed and on February 6, 1901, Effie Belle Cameron and Victor Wesley Birdseye were married in Woodville. The newlyweds came to live with Clara in the old Birdseye farmhouse. At sixty-seven, Clara was still in fairly good health but she turned over much of the work to her seventeen-year-old daughter-in-law. Effie found her-

self taking care of the house, doing the washing and ironing, hand-milking the cows, making butter and soap, canning, sewing and when necessary helping to take care of the sick. With the passing of years, she handled more strenuous farm chores such as pitching hay and caring for the cattle. Clara spent much of her time in the garden or sitting before the fire knitting and smoking her pipe. Years before, she had discovered the pleasure of smoking a cigar or a pipeful of tobacco.

Soon after the marriage, Effie discovered that Clara and her son were often at cross purposes. Wesley tried to convince his young wife that she shouldn't be too distressed over the friction between him and his mother. On February 5, 1902 Effie gave birth to their first son. They named him Victor Frederick after Wesley's brother Fred. By this time Effie had no doubt about her husband's serious drinking problem. He had begun leaving home after supper and would return in the small hours of the morning with liquor on his breath. Sometimes when he was drinking heavily, he would become abusive to his wife or young son, which led Effie to decide not to have another child unless he quit his drinking. Matters grew even worse after Wes-



courtesy of Nita Birdseye

Victor Wesley Birdseye, ca. 1895

took to gambling when drunk. When he gambled away the farm's work horses, Clara and Effie finally persuaded him to go to Roseburg and "take the cure." Effie went up there with him and they came home in high spirits, thinking that he had licked his affair with John Barleycorn.

Soon Effie was pregnant again. Unfortunately her husband had fallen off the wagon before the baby arrived. Their second son, Glenn Cameron Birdseye, was born on July 19, 1911. Shortly thereafter, Wes repeated the cure in Roseburg. This time the treatments seemed to be successful and the family had never been so happy. It happened to be a good crop year and the Birdseye farm showed a profit. Wes was an excellent farmer and a good businessman if he put his mind to it. The only thing to dampen Effie's spirits at this period was the condition of her ailing father. Danmer was getting very forgetful and probably suffering from what is known today as Alzheimer's Disease. After his wife left him, he came to live on the farm with the Birdseys.

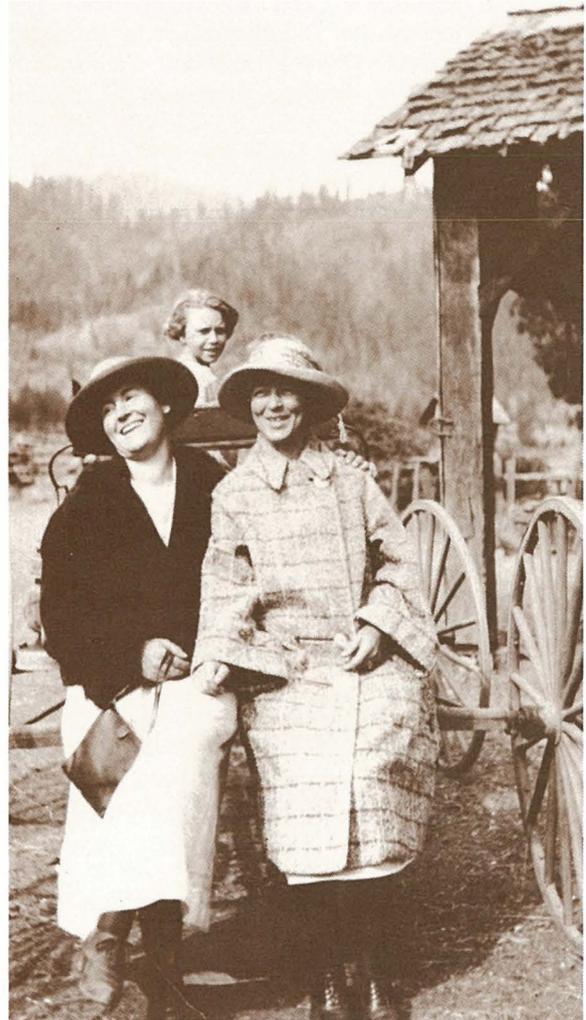
Meanwhile, Wesley was doing quite well. He purchased a hay-baler and contracted with farmers all over the valley, often taking young Victor along to work with the men. He also started up a movie theater in Woodville. One day his mother had a surprise visitor when her girlhood sweetheart Wesley Hobbs showed up and sought her hand in marriage. Clara told Hobbs that too much water had passed under the bridge and sent the poor man packing. Not too long after this incident, Clara suffered her first small stroke. This did not leave her paralyzed, but it did seem to change her personality. She now became quite agreeable and was no longer contentious. Wesley had succeeded in staying away from the bottle for several years following that second trip to Roseburg, but eventually went back to heavy drinking. He did go back for a third try at curing the problem, but again it failed to work.

Wesley's mother continued to experience small strokes and on April 6, 1915, she died in her youngest son's arms. She was buried in the Rock Point Cemetery located across the river from the farm. The community turned out in large numbers at the funeral for this pioneer woman who had taken an active part during the Indian wars and was so well acquainted with all the terrors and tribulations of frontier life. Clarissa Stein Fleming Birdseye had seen the Rogue Valley develop out of a wilderness and had played a role in that change.

Now it was up to her daughter-in-law, Effie, to carry on. It was not an easy task, but she proved equal to it. Wes was drinking heavily and losing interest in the farm. Their oldest boy, Victor Frederick, had reached age thirteen and was helping his mother run the farm when his grandmother died. In 1917, Effie was shocked to discover that she was in a family way for the third time and on February 20, 1918, gave birth to a chubby, blond boy named David Nelson Birdseye, after his pioneer grandfather. Four years later, on February 11, 1922, David's father died during one of his frequent absences from home. Although saddened by the death of Wesley, Effie and her three boys couldn't help but feel a sense of relief that the long ordeal was over. Now the major problem confronting the family was that of meeting the yearly tax payments and paying off the debt they owed the bank.

By 1923 Victor was ready for college, but the family could see no way of financing his education until Effie's sister

Queene and her husband, James Hutcheson, came to the rescue. Hutcheson was then a Southern Pacific vice president and had become a fairly wealthy man. Kind and generous, he had a great admiration for Effie. James and Queene happened to be visiting the Birdseys the summer they were wrestling with the problem of furthering Vic's education. The Hutchesons offered to pay for two years of college provided that Effie and Glenn (now twelve-years-old) could



Sisters Effie Birdseye, left, and Queene Hutchinson, right, smile for a camera in front of the family home. SOHS #3982

get along without Vic's services on the farm. That September, Victor registered in the school of dairy husbandry at Oregon Agricultural College in Corvallis.

After two years of college, Vic had to stay out of school for a couple of years to assist on the farm but he later returned and graduated from Oregon State College in 1928. Following graduation, he worked for a short time as a logger in eastern Oregon and earned enough to help with the finances at home. The late 1920s were bad years for the Birdseye farm. One year a fire destroyed the grain crop; the next year an outbreak of cholera killed all of their hogs; then came the 1929 stock market crash, which sent farm

prices plummeting. After Victor returned home from working as a logger, the family decided to supplement their meager farm income by taking over a milk-delivery route that had become available in the town of Rogue River (formerly called Woodville). David was now old enough to have a driver's license and worked part-time as a deliveryman

Victor was married on June 15, 1930, to the girl he had met in college, Anita (Nita) Armilda Blakeway. The young couple lived on the farm and Nita was able to take some of the pressure off Vic's mother, allowing Effie to get away from the farm chores and take part in activities that she previously hadn't found time to do. She served on the Foothills Creek School Board, was a member of the Jackson County Home Extension Committee and later became head of the Oregon Home Economics Council. Effie's greatest interests involved projects designed to improve living conditions and cultural opportunities for farm families.

During the depression of the 1930s, the milk route helped somewhat, but it and the farm operations still were not making a living for the family. Then, when Victor had the chance to acquire a dairy farm near Medford, he and Nita took it over as a Birdseye family enterprise, which in time became a successful venture. Glenn and his mother con-

Effie met Gary Cooper and invited him to go salmon fishing on the Rogue River and try some of her homemade huckleberry pie and ice cream.

tinued to operate the farm on the river. As World War II started and the depression came to an end, the Birdseye farm began to show a profit. Glenn was able to make a number of improvements on the farm and finally repaid the loan advanced by the Hutchesons. By then, Uncle James had passed away, but Aunt Queene was still living.

The big year in Effie's eventful life came in 1947 when she had reached age sixty-four. That year a Grants Pass friend, Mrs. Tom Knox, entered Effie's name in a nationwide contest. Mrs. Knox had read that Cecil B. DeMille was seeking an Oregon man or woman who "best personifies the unconquered American spirit in achieving a great victory in the face of great odds." The film pro-

David Nelson Birdseye had no desire to become a farmer, but he showed considerable mechanical ability. This aptitude eventually led him to attend a technical college and move away from the farm. He married Claretta Hansen Snellstrom on August 26, 1943, and now lives in Marcola, Oregon. David and Claretta have two children: Harvey (adopted in March 1944) and Deniece Janet (born July 14, 1945). Harvey Birdseye married Julie Marie Connott on November 7, 1939, and Deniece married Kaye Jann Won on January 25, 1969.

ducer was planning a promotional scheme aimed at advertising his movie titled, "The Unconquered," a story of pre-Revolutionary days and the western migration across the Allegheny Mountains. The Oregon Historical Society selected Effie Birdseye to represent the "Unconquered Spirit of Oregon" and sent her to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where she competed against contestants from other states and attended the movie's premiere. The contestants went to filming sessions, dinners, luncheons and radio interviews (including one with Bert Parks).

As one of six finalists, Effie appeared on Vox Pop, the most popular talk show of that day. She was named first runner-up and was presented with a gold wristwatch, \$50 in travelers checks, and a gleaming white deluxe electric stove. Oregon's representative was slightly overcome with the magnitude of this last award but brought down the house when she said to Master of Ceremonies Warren Hull, ". . . I would much prefer a wood stove. That way, if the electricity goes off, I can go right on baking my bread." Attending the movie premiere were eight governors and the mayors of twenty Ohio River Valley cities. Effie met Gary Cooper and invited him to go salmon fishing on the Rogue River and try some of her homemade huckleberry pie and ice cream. During those two weeks in that glamorous world, Effie had a ball, but when she got home she told Mrs. Knox (in a newspaper interview) that the women she saw back East ". . . had too much money, too many jewels, too many furs, too many cocktails, and too little of the worthwhile things in life." She voiced the opinion that to find real happiness all these women needed was a ranch and a few mortgages to pay off.

By the late 1950s, Victor and Glenn had consolidated their dairy interests and were limiting operations of the farm on Birdseye Creek to growing hay and grain. Their mother, no longer burdened with many of the chores around the farm, had started writing down the history of the family and farm. As the years rolled by, Effie had to slow down. She now suffered from phlebitis brought on by surgery on the leg that she had injured many years before. Although she was still living at the farm with Glenn, she occasionally visited Vic, Nita and their two children, Victor Theodore and Mary Anne at the dairy.*

At the time of the Oregon Centennial in 1959, the Birdseye farm received recognition for having been operated for over 100 years by the same family. If it hadn't been for Clara's and Effie's dogged determination and willingness to live lives of self-denial in order to keep intact their treasured house, the farm no doubt would have been sold little by little as the years went by. Both ladies would be proud and pleased to see the house as it stands today, restored and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It

*Victor Theodore Birdseye was born March 15, 1931, and married Beverly Ann Abbott in 1952. Their son, Victor Theodore II, was born January 2, 1953, and married Sharon (Sheri) Dawn Larsen in 1973. They are the present occupants of the 1856 Birdseye house, and their son, Victor Theodore III, the great-great-great-grandson of the first occupant, will one day inherit the farm. Mary Ann Birdseye was born June 4, 1934, and married Dan Wayne Doty in 1955. The Dotys now live in Sandy, Oregon.

is regrettable that the recognition and restoration didn't precede Effie's death in May 1966, when she was eighty-three.

Glenn Cameron Birdseye and Mrs. Mary Jane Finley of Anaheim, California, were married on October 1, 1972, in the Birdseye home on Hanley Road. Glenn's brother Victor was best man at the wedding and Nita was matron of honor. A rancher all his life, Glenn was a member of the Cattleman's Association and the Grange Co-op. He died March 14, 1988, as this story was being written, and was buried in the Rock Point Cemetery.

Effie's oldest son, Victor Frederick, died four years earlier on May 19, 1984, and his widow Nita now resides at Medford's Rogue Valley Manor. In addition to operating a successful dairy, Vic was very active in civic and governmental affairs. From 1960 to 1974 he served on the Jackson County Planning Commission. Oregon State University honored him for "significant contributions to Oregon agriculture." Vic also served on the boards of several dairy organizations and was a director of Mayflower Farms when that company merged with Medford's Jorgensen's Dairy about 1972. He served two years as Oregon's voting delegate with the National Milk Producers Federation and was a director of the Oregon Dairy Herd Improvement Association.

When the Birdseye dairy was sold in 1975, money became available to help pay for restoration of the 1856 house. The building had been placed on the National Register of Historic Places the previous year, thereby becoming eligible for a matching grant from the National Historic Preservation Fund. The State Historic Preservation Office administered the grant, and Professor Philip Dole of the University of Oregon School of Architecture prepared the plans for the restoration. At Dole's suggestion, a former student, Gregg Olson, supervised the project and restored damaged logs. Except for the southeast corner of the house, the original logs were found to be remarkably well preserved. To obtain suitable replacement timber, the surrounding hills were searched for pine trees that matched those felled in 1856. Restoration specialist Olson used a broad axe to shape the logs.

A major portion of the restoration involved the repair and shoring-up of the old fireplace. At least twice during its lifetime the fireplace had sagged when floodwaters from the river reached the foundations of the building. Most of the furniture in the house had been used by generations of Birdseyes and consequently showed the ravages of time. It was here that Sheri Birdseye's parents, Nancy and Walter Larsen, came to the rescue. Their skill and expertise in restoration of antiques was used in restoring and refinishing the furniture. The only other task in the restoration was to replace the flooring in the heavily-used kitchen. The entire project took nearly three years. Under the terms of the national grant, the Birdseye House was open to the public for five years. It is now closed to public viewing but the historic house is visible from the road.

It is well worth an afternoon's drive to pass by the old homestead, where time stands still and history is palpable.

She milked a 17-cow dairy herd, by hand, morning and night. She sold the milk and she sold eggs. In five years she had done what she had to do to save the farm.
During Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration Mrs. Birds-



NO 'MERE' WOMAN

eye was honored as Oregon's Unconquered Spirit. She traveled to Pittsburg, where she met the President, but throughout all the excitement she said she kept "looking back toward home."

The Medford Mail Tribune featured Effie Birdseye after she was honored as Oregon's Unconquered Spirit. SOHS #8848

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Table Rock Sentinel. Southern Oregon Historical Society, 8-9.

Chuck Sweet is a Medford resident who has found numerous outlets for his interest in history. In addition to writing articles for the Table Rock Sentinel, he has participated as researcher and greeter for the Society's living history program and currently volunteers as docent in the Jacksonville Museum.

Society Update

Election Results

Seven hundred and ninety-nine members voted in the Society's annual board of trustees election this spring. The ballots were tallied on June 9 with Board Secretary Marjorie O'Harra presiding over the count.

Re-elected were Mark Wolfe, of Medford; William Bagley of Medford; and Dr. James Sours, of Medford. Newly-elected board members are Jean Smith, of Central Point, and William Faubion, of Gold Hill.

Pear Exhibit Graces Museum Hall

Visitors to the Jacksonville Museum this summer will find a new exhibit on a topic that is historically relevant to the Rogue Valley. "Pear Packing: A Season of Women's Work" is on display now through September in the museum's central hallway.

Susan Reid, an Ashland City Council member and business owner, produced the exhibit early this spring. In 1984 Reid became a pear packer as part of her graduate studies in sociology at SOSC. Her experiences with women who have spent years as packers are detailed in the photographs—some from the Society's historical collection—and poetry contained in the exhibit.

Historically, women have dominated the local pear-packing labor force. Over 500 mothers, sisters, grandmothers, and aunts carefully prepare each year's harvest for shipment at the area's 13 packing houses. Many return year after year. "Pear Packing: A Season of Women's Work" tells their special story.

Where Next?

There is still time for members to reserve space on the Society's tour of the Crescent City area on Thursday, August 11. Focusing on both the historical and natural features of the redwood and coastal environments, this trip is certain to be unique.



Photo by Marjorie Edens

Don Rowlett and the Box R Ranch treated Society members to a hay ride during the recent mystery history tour.

Mystery (Tour) Solved

The destination of this year's Society mystery bus tour was the Box R Ranch on the Greensprings. Owner Don Rowlett and his staff provided Society members with a delicious barbecue picnic lunch and a fascinating tour of the working ranch. Highlights

of the day included a horse-drawn hay wagon ride and a sneak-preview of the exhibit building where Rowlett's vast collection of ranch artifacts are displayed. Thanks to Rowlett and his entire staff for showing the forty-four participants a terrific time!

The bus will leave the Jacksonville Museum at 8:00 a.m. After a "coffee stop" at the Junction Inn in Cave Junction, the group will proceed to Ender Beach, south of Crescent City, where National Park rangers will lead a one-hour interpretive hike. Participants will have opportunities to observe birds, sea life, and native coastal plants as they walk along the beach.

Following lunch at the Grotto in Crescent City, the group will visit the Crescent Harbor (Art) Gallery. On the trip home, a stop at Hiouchi Visitor Center in the Redwood National

Park will allow time for a tree walk/talk by park rangers. Expected return time will be between 5:00-6:00 p.m.

Participants should wear comfortable clothing and walking shoes. Cost for the tour will be \$21 for Society members (which does not include lunch); \$36 for non-members. Call Susan Cox, membership coordinator, at 899-1847, for more information.

The final bus tour of the 1988 season will be an overnight trip to the Oregon Caves on September 8 and 9. Mark those calendars now for this one!

Tours Not For Tourists Only

Since Memorial Day weekend, 147 people have taken advantage of the Society's guided walking tours of Jacksonville and Ashland. Many are visiting the area and enjoy the opportunity to explore the historic districts in such fashion. Local residents, however, shouldn't overlook these tours as a way to refresh their own memories of the area's history.

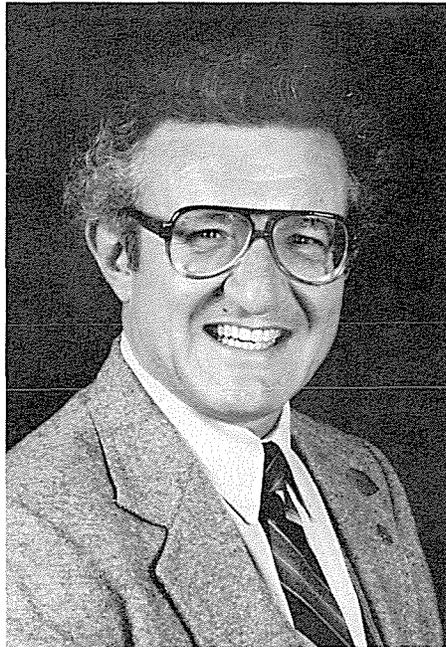
Costumed interpreters lead tours of Jacksonville beginning at 11:00 a.m. daily at Courthouse Square. Tours of Ashland's downtown historic district begin at 10:00 a.m. on Thursdays and Saturdays beginning at the water fountain on the Plaza. On Fridays, also at 10:00 a.m., the Society offers an hour look of Ashland's railroad district starting on the corner of 4th and A Streets.

Labor Day weekend ends the summer walking tour season. Although guided tours may be available for groups throughout the year, why not join us now for an unusual look at southern Oregon history? After all, members may participate at no cost if they present their membership cards; non-members may purchase tickets for \$1 per adult and children 14 and up. That's a true summer bargain!

Fantastic Attendance as Summer Begins

The Society's Memorial Day weekend opening of two of its Jacksonville historic sites proved very successful. At the Beekman House, 248 guests met and chatted with costumed actors portraying the family, friends, and employees of pioneer banker C. C. Beekman. Downtown at the Beekman Bank, over 1025 curious individuals inquired about banking privileges, with 422 visitors on Sunday, May 29 alone. That broke a record of 405 set in 1986!

Since then, approximately 1900 visitors toured the Beekman House in June, while nearly 4700 stopped in the Beekman Bank.



Fund Raiser Joins Staff

Last month Society Executive Director Sam Wegner announced the appointment of Ted E. Lawson to the position of development director. As of July 1, Ted became responsible for planning and managing the Society's marketing and public relations programs, fund-raising activities, and membership development.

A native Oregonian and graduate of Medford Senior High School, Ted most recently worked as a development associate at KSOR-FM Public Radio in Ashland. He has an undergraduate degree from the University of Kansas and a masters degree from Portland State University in business management. He is a Certified Association Executive with previous experience in medical and dental association management, property management, and public and community relations in the U. S. Air Force.

Ted lives in Medford and is active in many area organizations. He serves on several boards, including the Britt Musical Festivals, Ashland Community Hospital Foundation, the Rogue Valley Symphony Orchestra, and the Southern Oregon Repertory Singers, and is chairman for the March of

Dimes/Jackson County campaign.

Ted also has a "flare for the dramatics"; he is playing "Mike Rooney" in the Rogue Music Theatre's production of "Paint Your Wagon" in Grants Pass and currently can be seen on stage as the Master of Ceremonies for the melodrama "Daisy, the Gold Miner's Daughter" at the Minshall Theatre in Talent.

A welcome addition to the staff, Ted arrives at a challenging time as the Society looks forward to its move into new headquarters and a future where membership development, public relations, and fund-raising will play a vital role in the organization's operations.

Summer Fun at Children's Museum

Daily visitors to the Children's Museum may find a variety of activities and demonstrations going on during their visits in July and August. Programs, such as "Woodcarving," "Prairie Dolls and Fishing Poles," and films are scheduled throughout the weeks of summer.

Mondays are "Spinning and Weaving" days when youngsters can learn how wool eventually can be turned into cloth. Fridays are reserved for "Quilting Bees." These two activities are offered twice, from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 2:00-4:00 p.m., on their respective days.

Call (503) 889-1847, ext. 227, for information on what activity may be scheduled for the days you plan to visit the museum.

Setting the Record Straight

Shortly after we published the April 1988 issue of the *Table Rock Sentinel*, Mrs. Ray Lennox called to inform us of an error in the article, "Saving the Street, Saving the Stories: Medford's South Oakdale Historic District." On page seven, the text should read that William S. Warner, not his father, L. B. Warner, was the director of Jackson County Federal Savings and Loan. William S. lived at 519 S. Oakdale Avenue.



Members Gather Together

The Society held its 1988 Annual Membership Meeting on Saturday, June 25 with over 150 members attending. Festive Fourth of July decorations and the swingin' dixieland sounds of the Dixie Dudes made this year's event—under the shade trees on the grounds of the Jacksonville Museum—much like the old-fashioned pioneer picnics once held on the same site.

During the business meeting, Board Trustee Jessie McGraw presented the Society's annual historic preservation awards. Recipients were the community of Eagle Point for the relocation and restoration of the Antelope Creek Covered Bridge, the First Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville for the renovation of the church's exterior, and Pam Burkholder and Gary Turner for the restoration of their c. 1918 Craftsman-style bungalow in Ashland.

Secretary of State Barbara Roberts, a fourth generation Oregonian, enchanted the audience with accounts of her ancestors' early arrival in Oregon Territory. Last summer she traveled extensively throughout the state, visiting most of the eastern counties and retracing the steps of her family's trek across the Oregon Trail.

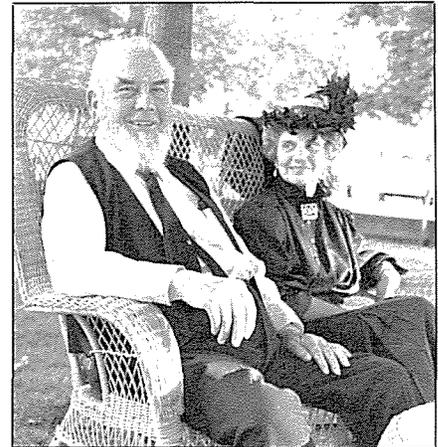
As part of her role as Secretary of State, Mrs. Roberts oversees the state archive. Her interest in Oregon's



“paper heritage,” as she calls it, has drawn her into the effort to secure state funding for a badly-needed new state archive building in Salem. In closing, Mrs. Roberts asked members to support this project when the Oregon Legislature meets again in January 1989.

As the sun sank below the horizon and cool evening breezes stirred, the meeting ended. The response to the setting and picnic atmosphere was so positive that the annual meeting very well may be held in the same location next year!

This event was made possible with the assistance of several area businesses: Valley View Vineyards and the Jacksonville Inn generously supplied a variety of wines for the members to enjoy before and during dinner, Steiner's Corp. (linen supply), Vintage Floral of Jacksonville, and Soup to Nuts Catering of Ashland.



Society members (top) enjoy a picnic in the grand old tradition under the trees on the courthouse lawn. Secretary of State Barbara Roberts and Executive Director Sam Wegner (center) exchange Oregon memories. C. C. and Julia Beekman (below) arrived from 1911 to enjoy the festivities.

Welcome New Members

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Mrs. Lois Willis, *Rogue River*

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Regional Digest

Oakdale Tour a Smash

The Medford Historic Commission's first public event to promote historic preservation proved to be an overwhelming success. Officials estimated that over 1600 individuals attended the South Oakdale Home Tour on Sunday, May 15.

Fifteen residences, dating from 1910 to 1947, were open to the public in the historic district. Helping to create an appropriate atmosphere, members of the Horseless Carriage Car Club of America and the Rogue Valley Old Timers Car Club dressed in costume and lined the avenue with their vintage vehicles.

Southern Oregon Historical Society members who presented their

membership cards received a discount off the ticket price. In the future, there will be more opportunities for members to obtain free or discounted admission to events if they show proof of their membership, so be sure to carry those cards!

History Magazine Available

Before 1987, no single publication has served as a national information network for heritage education instructors. Today, *Heritage Education Quarterly* provides teachers, planners, preservationists, educators, museums, and civic groups who lead community heritage projects a forum for sharing ideas and information on

heritage education programs throughout the country.

Heritage education transforms communities into learning laboratories for students of all ages. Children and adults exploring their local heritage use a wide range of disciplines (architecture, archaeology, environmental and museum studies) and techniques (oral history, photograph, artifact and archival document research) in their learning activities.

Heritage Education Quarterly describes programs for children and adults, providing case studies and lesson plans that have been field-tested. Annual subscriptions are available for \$12 from: Heritage Education Quarterly, 498 South Main Street, Madison, Georgia 30650, (404) 342-0770.

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*Indicates upgraded membership category or monetary contribution in addition to membership dues to further support Society programs.

Calendar of Events

Through 1990 **Making Tracks: The Impact of Rail-roading in the Rogue Valley:** The Society's newest exhibit at the Jacksonville Museum traces the coming and going of the railroad, how it changed people's lives and the Valley economy, its local role in the nation's battles overseas, and the introduction of the railroad worker as an important part of the Valley's communities. Admission is free. Hours listed below.

Through March 1989 **Home Entertainment: 1852-1988** An exhibit that looks at the variety of pastime activities families and individuals have pursued during their leisure hours at home. Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum. Free.

July 16-24 **Tenth Annual Quilt Show:** The Jacksonville Museum Quilters will display over 40 handmade quilts in the ballroom of the U.S. Hotel in downtown Jacksonville. See "Society Update" inside for details.

July 20 **Quilting Bee for Preschoolers:** An opportunity for the little ones ages 3-5, to design their own paper quilt blocks! Times: 10-10:30 a.m. and 1-1:30 p.m. in the Children's Museum. No registration required. Free

July 26 **The Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees** will hold its monthly meeting in the conference room of the Jackson Education Service District building, 101 N. Grape, Medford, at 7:30 p.m. Members and the general public are invited.

Can You See What I See? In conjunction with the "Home Entertainment" exhibit at the Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, this program features a look at old-fashioned optical toys: kaleidoscopes, stereoscopes, and magic mirrors. Children, ages 7-12, even will learn to cast "hand shadows" on the wall and make their own kaleidoscopes! 1-4 p.m. at Chappell-Swedenburg in Ashland. Limited to 15; to register, call (503) 889-1847, ext. 227. Admission is free.

August 11 **Yarn to Cloth** A three-hour workshop to introduce children, ages 8 and up, to three early methods of weaving. Participants will create their own masterpiece on a frame loom, 4-harness table loom, and by card or tablet weaving. Time: 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (children should bring a sack lunch) at the Children's Museum in Jacksonville. Admission is \$2.50 for members, \$3.50 for non-members. To register, call (503) 889-1847, ext. 227.

All offices and department 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 phone number is (503) 488-1341.

Jacksonville Museum, P.O. Box 480, 205 North 5th Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Sun., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Research Library in the Jacksonville Museum, P.O. Box 480, 205 North 5th Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Fri., 1-5 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Children's Museum, P.O. Box 480, 205 North 5th Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Sun., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Chappell-Swedenburg House Museum, 990 Siskiyou Boulevard, Ashland, OR 97520. Open Tues.-Sat., 1-5 p.m.

Administration Offices, Armstrong House, 375 East California Street, Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.



P.O. Box 480, Jacksonville, Oregon 97530-0480

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