

TABLE ROCK

\$2.50

# SENTINEL

NOVEMBER  
DECEMBER  
1989



The  
Magazine  
of the  
Southern  
Oregon  
Historical  
Society



# Fifty-Five Years Ago\_\_\_\_\_



SOHS #4917

Giving and sharing with family and friends are an anticipated part of Christmas. Each holiday season can also present humorous moments as this report of a Christmas crime wave in Ashland in the *Daily Tidings* of December 11, 1934 attests:

## Christmas Tree Globes Stolen From Downtown

Somebody is eligible for the title of the meanest man in town.

Every morning almost without exception, since the installation of the Christmas tree in the street intersections of the downtown district, electric lights on the tree have been missing.

Men working in the city electrical department have found many of the sockets empty of their bright green and red globes. Only five were left on the tree at Third and Main a few mornings ago.

Police are of the belief that small boys are responsible, dashing into the street after the night patrolman has turned a corner.



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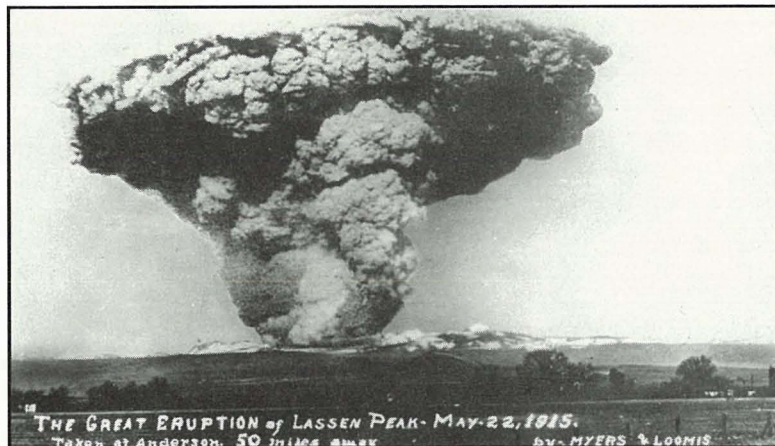
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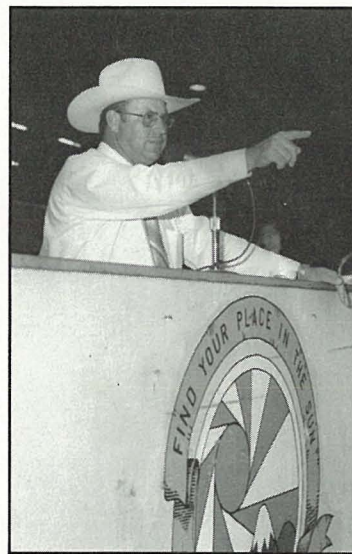
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*by Andrée Flageolle*

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**Front cover:** Visions of sugarplums seem to be dancing through the head of this young actor, photographed by pioneer photographer Peter Britt. SOHS #4810



**Back cover:** A group of children perform a cake walk at the Medford Dance Hall. SOHS #639





# WESTERN EXPOSURES

by Andree Flageolle



# YOSEMITE

Stereo cards were the rage in the late 1800s. This view of President Teddy Roosevelt on Glacier Point in Yosemite was distributed by Underwood & Underwood, one of the largest purveyors of stereo cards at the time. The company would acquire images from photographers and market them without crediting the artist. SOHS #10885

As the science and art of Louis Daguerre's permanent image process progressed, many photographers travelled with their cameras to capture the wild beauty of the Western landscape.

Photography's birth and rapid growth roughly coincides with the opening of the American West. President Jefferson sent Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to find a route from the Mississippi to the Pacific in 1804-1806.<sup>1</sup> In July 1839, Louis Daguerre introduced the first photographic process capable of making permanent images.<sup>2</sup> On August 19, 1839, the French government gave Daguerre's process to the public.<sup>3</sup> Photography was born. Since daguerreotypy was public property, many took it up. By the time the American government sponsored larger expeditions to the West during the 1850s, several skilled photographers were available to help document these explorations.

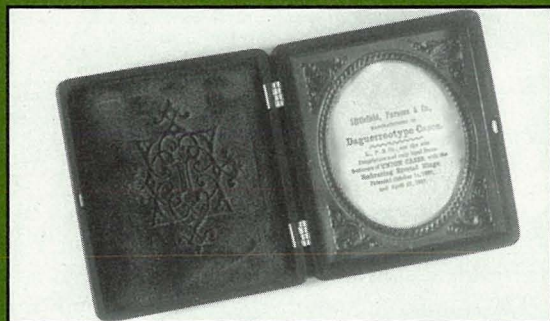
Before the invention of photography, painters fulfilled the role of recording the landscape with watercolor views and sketching flora and fauna discovered on geological expeditions.<sup>4</sup> Samuel Seymour was probably the first staff artist on a western expedition in America.<sup>5</sup> He travelled with Major Stephen H. Long of the Topographical Bureau in 1819-20 to the Rockies.<sup>6</sup> Artists like Seymour often made their more elaborate paintings at home after an expedition, relying on memory, sketches made in the field, and in some cases imagination, to complete them.<sup>7</sup> As a result, photographs taken on the spot were welcomed as more "authentic" documentation of the wonders of the West.<sup>8</sup>

The first photographs were fragile daguerreotypes made on copper-backed silver, and noted for their ability to render fine detail and a beautiful tonal range. The silver side of the daguerreotype plate was polished and buffed to achieve a mirror-like surface.<sup>9</sup> The quality of the smoothly polished silver resulted in the fine grain and varied tones.<sup>10</sup> The polished plate was then exposed to vapors of iodine and bromo so that a thin layer of silver iodide and silver bromide formed on its surface.<sup>11</sup> The sensitized plate was then ready for exposure. Exposure times were long, taking up to fifteen to twenty minutes on a bright sunny day with the early lenses.<sup>12</sup> Next, the exposed plate was developed by placing it over heated mercury vapors.<sup>13</sup> As mercury condensed on the exposed areas of the plate, a direct positive image appeared.<sup>14</sup> Finally, the daguerreotype was fixed in sodium thiosulfate and then toned in a gold chloride solution before rinsing and drying.<sup>15</sup>



# UNION CASE

Fragile daguerreotypes were kept in cases like this one of thermal plastic called union cases. The delicate image was held in place with copper fittings and glass and cushioned against velvet.



All the chemicals used in daguerreotype processing are extremely toxic; the mercury, in particular, will disperse a fine, hot spray if allowed to boil during developing.<sup>16</sup> Mercury at any temperature gives off a surprising amount of vapor, all of it poisonous.<sup>17</sup> One contemporary daguerreotypist cautions,

The design of nineteenth century daguerreotype equipment, particularly the mercury bath, leaves much to be desired in terms of safety.<sup>18</sup>

Though the daguerreotype process was complicated and potentially dangerous, that was not its main shortcoming for landscapes and wildlife photography. Its greatest shortcoming was that it could not be viewed easily by a large audience.<sup>19</sup> The daguerreotype image before toning was extremely fragile and could be brushed off with a fingertip.<sup>20</sup> Even after toning, the silver could be easily scratched and the image marred.<sup>21</sup> To protect the image, each plate was mounted in a small case with a glass covering.<sup>22</sup> The pictures were usually small and when viewed a certain way appeared like negatives. However, since the daguerreotype was a direct positive, it could not be reprinted.

After the invention of the daguerreotype in 1839, refinements of this exciting new technique followed with major photographic innovations being discovered in each successive decade. One having great significance for the outdoor photographer was Frederick Scott Archer's introduction in 1851 of the wet-plate glass process—whereby sheets of glass were coated with a collodion substance that could be sensitized and then exposed and developed into negatives.<sup>23</sup>

In spite of the difficulties and dangers of the daguerreotype process, it was extremely popular for portraiture and useful for outdoor photography until the mid-1850s when it was replaced by the wet-plate, or collodian, process.

San Francisco photographer Robert H. Vance was the first daguerreotypist to popularize scenic views in America.<sup>24</sup> Though the daguerreotype was ill-suited to landscape photography, Vance's exhibit of 300 daguerreotypes of Western views was well received in New York City in 1851.<sup>25</sup> Recognized as the photographer who established an international market for Western landscape pictures,<sup>26</sup> Vance operated and owned a portrait gallery in San Francisco where he trained Carleton E. Watkins, California's foremost nineteenth century photographer.<sup>27</sup>

Watkins' outdoor views were done on the glass wet-plate,<sup>28</sup> which, after its introduction in the 1850s, was the photographic process most outdoor and studio photographers preferred.

Collodion glass negatives were produced by wet-plate processing. This process—coating a glass plate with a light-sensitive emulsion, exposing it in the camera, and then developing the latent image in the darkroom—had to be done within a short period of time. Early outdoor photographers could not take pictures in the field and then develop them at their leisure upon returning home until the advent of the dry plate in the 1870s. The collodion process was not as dangerous as the daguerreotype with its poisonous and volatile mercury vapors, but it was a complicated procedure that required a considerable amount of skill and careful handling of flammable and toxic chemicals.

First the photographer would set up the camera on a tripod, focus and determine the correct exposure.<sup>29</sup> The next step was to prepare the glass plate with the light-sensitive emulsion. In the tent darkroom the photographer coated a glass plate with collodion: a viscous (and highly flammable) solution of nitrocellulose and a halide salt

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Before the invention of photography, painters fulfilled the role of recording the landscape with watercolor views and sketching flora and fauna discovered on geological expeditions.

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such as potassium iodide.<sup>29</sup> Before this coating was completely dry, the photographer immersed the glass into a solution of silver nitrate, thereby causing light-sensitive silver salts to form in suspension in the colloid coating.<sup>30</sup> The plate was then immediately placed in a light-tight holder and exposed in the camera. After exposing the glass plate, the photographer quickly returned to the darkroom tent and developed the latent image before the emulsion dried.<sup>31</sup>



The wet-plate process overcame many of the daguerreotypes' shortcomings: exposure times were shortened to ten seconds, and processing was safer since no heating of volatile chemicals was necessary. Most importantly for the outdoor photographer, the wet-plate process provided a negative from which multiple positives could be printed.

By 1855, the wet-plate process had almost made the daguerreotype obsolete.<sup>32</sup> The major disadvantage of the wet-plate was one the outdoor photographer quickly adapted to: sensitization, exposure and developing all had to be done within a very short time.<sup>33</sup> The wet-plate was successful enough to remain in widespread use until the arrival of the dry-plate process in the 1870s.<sup>34</sup>

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The early outdoor photographer  
was innovative, resourceful and  
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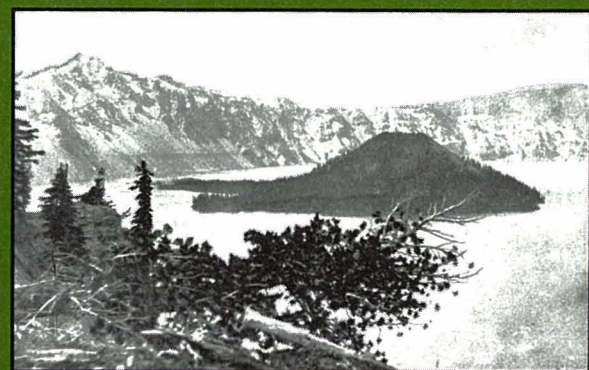
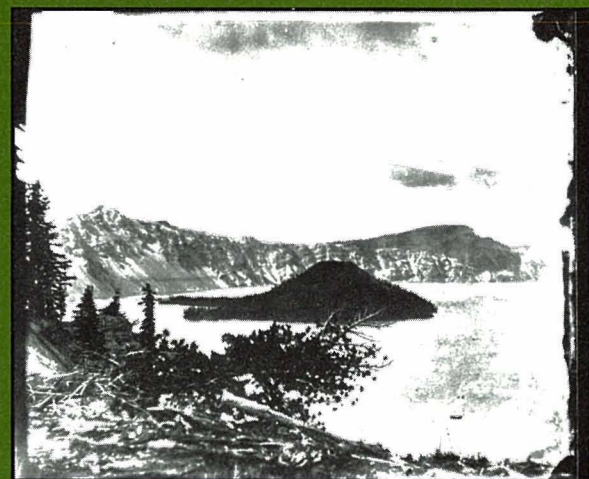
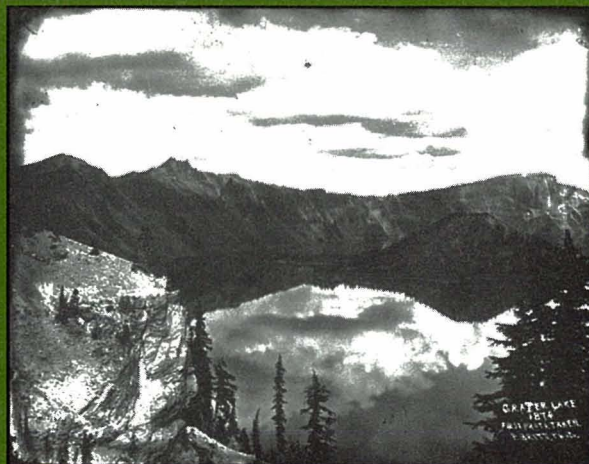
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Timothy O'Sullivan, William Henry Jackson and Edward Muybridge are three of the most famous early photographers who used the wet-plate process as they surveyed the west. Timothy O'Sullivan photographed the Civil War, afterward hiring on with Clarence King as photographer with the United States Geological Expedition of the Fortieth Parallel from 1867 through 1869. The following year he photographed the Isthmus of Panama on the Darien Expedition. He returned to photograph the Southwest in 1873 and 1874 with Lieutenant George M. Wheeler's surveyors in the southwest.<sup>35</sup>

Another famous survey photographer, William Henry Jackson, was official photographer to the United States Geological and Geographic Survey of the Territories from 1870 to 1878.<sup>36</sup> Jackson's photographs of Yellowstone were influential in the passage of a bill creating Yellowstone National Park in 1872.<sup>37</sup> He also photographed the central Rockies before opening a studio and publishing business in Denver, Colorado.<sup>38</sup>

In 1867 Edward Muybridge, an Englishman, established a studio in San Francisco. Although his major contribution to photography is his locomotion studies of animals, he ventured outside the studio to document the Modoc Indian War and to take scenic views of the Yosemite Valley.<sup>39</sup>

Like most early outdoor photographers, these three artists were acquainted with the daguerreotype process. They had mastered the wet-plate process in the 1860s or before, and it is likely that all three eventually used the dry-plate process of the 1870s and experimented with the celluloid film of the 1880s.



Peter Britt was the first photographer to document Crater Lake. Using wet-plate processing he shot the first image of Crater Lake in 1874 (*top*). Early negative emulsions were extremely sensitive to blue light, frequently causing reduced detail in cloudy skies. Occasionally photographers would mask out a poorly rendered sky (*middle*) and replace it with a better one from a different negative (*bottom*). SOHS #740, 10892, 10891

# CRATER LAKE



The dry-plate, or gelatin emulsion, process was introduced in 1871 by Dr. Richard Leach Maddox;<sup>41</sup> Charles Bennet, John Burgess and Richard Kennett developed it further, and by 1873 Burgess made the first commercial dry plates available.<sup>42</sup> Dry plates could be kept for long periods of time before use. They were bought already prepared, and after exposure the photographer was safe in developing the plate within twenty-four hours.<sup>43</sup>

## Imagine carrying a huge glass-plate camera and holders up a stately cottonwood.

By the late 1880s, celluloid roll film with a gelatin emulsion coating by Kodak was available and marked the beginning of modern photography.<sup>45</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century, Kodak's roll film and box camera took photography out of the hands of the experts and put it in everyone's.

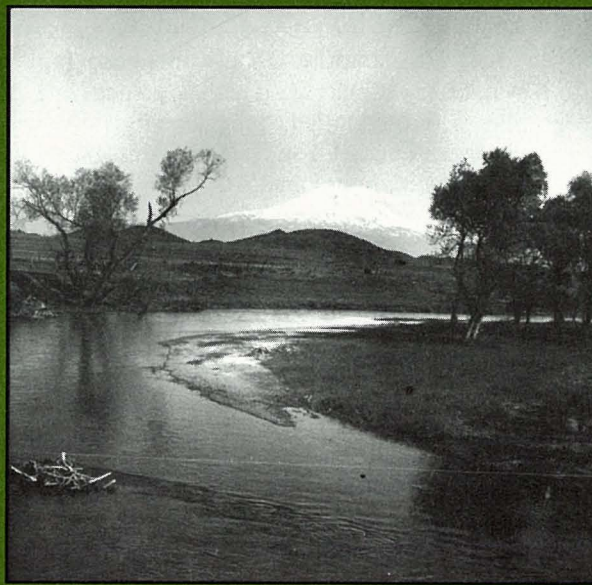
The successful early photographers became experts as they mastered the complex and often dangerous photographic process — from preparation of material on which to expose the image and maintenance of cumbersome equipment to staying current with the latest darkroom techniques. For the early outdoor photographer the difficulty of carrying out these demanding techniques skillfully and safely was exacerbated by the rigors of outdoor life. The wet-plate process predominated during the middle 1850s to the late 1870s because it permitted shorter exposures and because multiple prints could be made from the glass negatives produced. However, since the wet-plate process required that the plate be prepared, exposed and developed within a short period of time, the outdoor photographer had to bring a darkroom and supplies to the field along with the cumbersome camera equipment.

Large-format cameras capable of holding glass-plate negatives as large as twenty by twenty-four inches,<sup>46</sup> along with tripods and negative holders, could be a full load for one mule.<sup>47</sup> Cameras, glass negatives, darkroom tents and chemicals were heavy, fragile and bulky. Transporting this equipment into difficult-to-reach areas via undeveloped roads and trails on temperamental pack animals challenged the field photographer.

Upon reaching the campsite the photographer faced another set of difficulties. Poor light on overcast days prevented proper exposures. Dust, grit and extremes of temperature invaded the portable darkroom where the photographer carefully coated large sheets of slippery glass with the viscous collodion. Finding sediment-free water was often the biggest challenge of all, but the early outdoor photographer was innovative, resourceful and dauntless, persevering to document the landscape and wildlife of the West.

California photographers were experimenting with the wet-plate process as early as 1854. In 1856 the wet-plate was commercially viable on the West Coast.<sup>48</sup> Carleton E. Watkins was one of the first to use it outdoors and adept enough to complete the process from exposure to development in one hour for each negative.<sup>49</sup> Watkins began his fifty-year photography career in the mid-1850s.<sup>50</sup> He ultimately produced thousands of negatives, printing the earliest of these until 1861 as "salt prints."<sup>51</sup> After 1861 Watkins, like most others, used albumen paper.<sup>52</sup>

In Watkins' early work around 1861, such as the Mariposa series, his negatives are streaked, indicating some uneasiness with the wet-plate technique.<sup>53</sup> By 1863 he had perfected the process as the flawless negatives he took of New Almaden and Mendocino show.<sup>54</sup> In addition to perfecting his wet-plate technique, Watkins learned how to overcome printing with unevenly exposed glass-plate negatives. Because his lens did not cover the entire negative plate evenly, the upper corners of his images were underexposed.<sup>55</sup> To counter this, Watkins simply made his prints rounded, or dome-topped, on the upper corners.<sup>56</sup>



Frank Patterson, a one-time Ashland-based photographer captured this silver gelatin image of Mt. Shasta. SOHS #12620

# MT. SHASTA



# ROGUE RIVER



Many of Peter Britt's original glass negatives are housed in the collections of the Southern Oregon Historical Society. This view of the Rogue River by Britt is a contact print from a stereo glass plate negative. SOHS #12622

Best known for his landscapes of Yosemite, Watkins' photographs taken in 1864 helped preserve the area as a national park.<sup>57</sup> Watkins also photographed other parts of California and the Southwest. In addition, he travelled to Oregon twice, intent on taking photographs for a series he called Pacific Coast Views.<sup>58</sup> On his first trip to Oregon, he arrived in Portland during the summer of 1867. Unfortunately, he could not begin photographing immediately as he had planned. As *The Oregonian* of July 20, 1867 reported, Portland's overcast skies did not permit enough light for a proper exposure.

Mr. Watkins, the celebrated photographer of scenery, has his instruments in readiness on the summit of the hill adjoining Robinson's Hill, on the south, to take a view of Mt. Hood and the surrounding scenery, whenever the weather will permit. Ever since his arrival here we have had almost continuous bad weather for the taking of such pictures.

Eventually, Watkins got his pictures of Mt. Hood, along with several other local landmarks such as Multnomah Falls. He then travelled overland back to California, stopping at Mt. Shasta to photograph Whitney Glacier.<sup>59</sup>

After 1870, Watkins travelled in a van that served as a portable darkroom.<sup>60</sup> During his 1867 tour through Oregon, however, he was still using a dark tent for field photography.<sup>61</sup> On Mt. Shasta at 14,000 feet, Watkins had difficulty making the wet-plate negatives. One of his most troublesome was the picture of Whitney Glacier. He pitched his dark tent directly on the ice, and as companion Benjamin P. Avery reported later, Watkins soon discovered that his light-tight tent needed modifications:

Leaving our perch above the lower crater, we crawl down the ledge toward this gorge, and cross a small pond of smooth blue ice at its base. It was on this level spot that Watkins pitched his field-tent for photographic work and when he thought he had the light all shut off, found that enough still came through the ice-floor to spoil his negatives, obliging him to cover that also.<sup>62</sup>

Watkins further modified his dark tent to avoid expos-

ing his developing negatives. He also changed his sleeping pattern to avoid the mid-day heat, grit and grass-bending breezes that could ruin a good landscape photograph. Awakening before dawn when the air was cool and still, he used the pre-dawn light for exposures that lasted up to an hour.<sup>63</sup>

For the Yosemite trip, Watkins had a mammoth camera constructed for him that would hold eighteen by twenty-two plates.<sup>64</sup> This camera measured thirty inches on a side and was three feet long.<sup>65</sup> Including the camera, Watkins took 2,000 pounds of baggage and glass for more than one hundred big negatives to Yosemite.<sup>66</sup> Twelve mules were needed to haul his equipment alone.<sup>67</sup> During such an excursion, Watkins may have experienced the difficulties with recalcitrant pack animals that William H. Jackson reported in his diaries.

In 1873 Jackson went to the central Rockies and Mount of the Holy Cross with the United States Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories, hauling equipment similar to Watkins.<sup>68</sup> In his diaries from that period, Jackson reported several annoying incidents and one near-catastrophe with his pack animals.

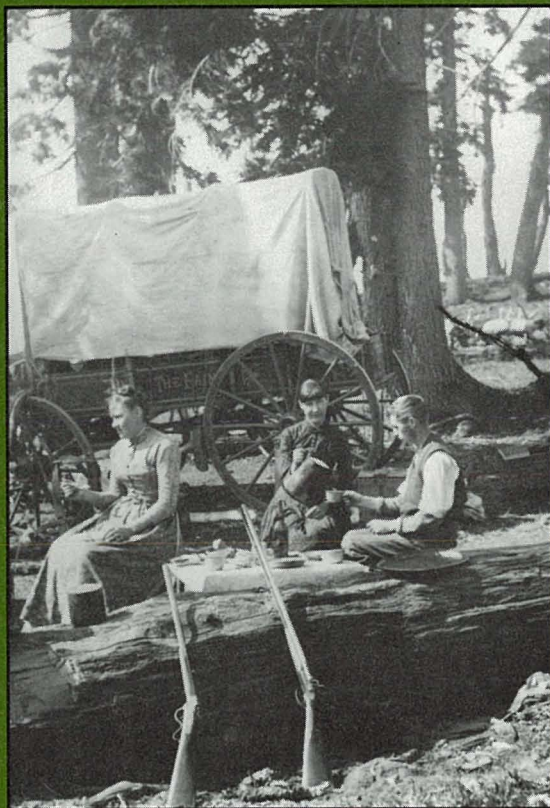
Near Georgetown, Colorado, in the Rocky Mountains, Jackson and his company were ascending a steep pass when the mules gave out.

Got more than half way up when the mules got too exhausted to make it any farther up. Some of them rolled downhill several times. Gave it up and went below Georgetown a mile and camped.<sup>69</sup>

A few days later, making plans to set out on a one-day trip to photograph a nearby canyon, they discovered the animals had plans of their own. "Intended to have gone up into Cheyenne Cañon but the stock ran off with a band of horses in the neighborhood . . ."<sup>70</sup>

Sometimes the terrain was too difficult for pack





This view of Britt's wagon which he christened "The Pain" and portable darkroom tent, where he developed his glass plate negatives, was taken at Crater Lake. SOHS #5785

## "THE PAIN"

animals. Then the photographer and his assistants would shoulder the equipment themselves. On one of these occasions, Jackson slipped and fell "... breaking my bath holder and spilling all my bath."<sup>71</sup> He spent the next day making a new bath and trying to devise a way to repair the broken dish. He succeeded and in two days the bath dish was ready.<sup>72</sup>

Over a week later, breakage occurred that Jackson could not repair when, after a successful day's shooting, his pack mule, Gimlet, fell down the hill. Jackson and his assistant had spent an entire day urging their mules up a high Rocky Mountain divide near a branch of the Gunnison River. At the summit the following day, Jackson exposed and developed several successful negatives. Disaster occurred that evening as they were descending the trail when "... Gimlet, the mule that carried my negatives ... tumbled down the hill above camp and many of my negatives were ruined and broken."<sup>73</sup> Ten of his eleven by four-

teen negatives were damaged. Jackson spent that evening repairing as many as he could, but had to re-shoot most of them the next day.<sup>74</sup>

In addition to transporting cumbersome equipment on temperamental mules and waiting out bad weather, the outdoor photographer had to take his equipment into some nearly inaccessible areas. Imagine carrying a huge glass-plate camera and holders up a stately cottonwood. Oregon's wildlife photographer William Lovell Finley and his childhood friend Herman Bohlman delighted in such activity. In 1900 the two young men took pictures of a red-tailed hawk's nest near the Columbia River.

How could we ever secure a good series of pictures at such a distance from the ground? It looked impossible at first, but a careful examination showed a rare arrangement of nest and branches. If we could but hoist our equipment there was no question as to photographs. Eight feet below the aerie the trunk of the tree branched and spread in such a way that we could climb to a point just above the nest on the opposite limb. We strapped the camera in a crotch that seemed built for the purpose, with the sun coming from the right direction. The trouble came in focusing the instrument. One hundred and twenty feet is not such a dizzy height when you stand on the ground and look up, but it is different when you strap yourself to the limb of a tree and dangle out backwards over the brink. No matter how strong the rope, there's a feeling of death creeping up and down every nerve in your body the first time you try it.<sup>75</sup>

Finley and Bohlman began photographing birds in the late 1890s.<sup>76</sup> Their partnership continued through the first decade of the 1900s.<sup>77</sup> They took the first photographs of the California condor,<sup>78</sup> and also photographed several Oregon bird habitats: a great blue heron colony near Portland, the red-tailed hawks' nesting area at the Columbia River, the Three Arch Rock near Tillamook Bay, Tule Lake in the Klamath Marsh, and the Malheur Marsh near Burns.<sup>79</sup>

Finley was writer and conservationist as well as photographer. During the 1920s and 1930s, with his wife as his business partner, William Finley became famous for popular writings on wildlife in publications like *Nature Magazine*.<sup>80</sup> The articles were usually accompanied by the photos Finley and Bohlman had taken in the early 1900s.<sup>81</sup> Eventually, Finley's fame became worldwide after he made wildlife movies for the American Nature Association that were distributed internationally.<sup>82</sup>

An ardent conservationist, he was instrumental in getting Tule Lake, the Malheur Marsh and Three Arch Rock areas declared wildlife refuges.<sup>83</sup> The desire to preserve these areas probably occurred during Finley and Bohlman's first camping trips to these regions. Although they faced hardships on these photographic expeditions, they improvised quickly, if not always successfully. For example, when Finley and Bohlman camped at Lower Klamath Lake they had trouble preparing drinking and developing water. Finley reported later:

These days were full of hardship. The water off the lake contained so much sediment and alkali that it had to be boiled. The first morning out, we tried wetting down the tules and making a small fire on top. Before we could get anything cooked, the whole foundation was ablaze and coffee pot and frying pan had to be used to check the flames.<sup>84</sup>



**L**ike Finley and Watkins, Peter Britt enjoyed photographing the Oregon outdoors. As with most early photographers, Britt kept up with the latest in technical innovations. Earning his living as a studio portrait photographer in Jacksonville did not prevent Britt from venturing out with his camera. On one of these excursions he took the first photograph of Crater Lake.<sup>86</sup> It is probably the only wet-plate glass picture taken of the lake.<sup>87</sup>

Britt had started out in photography using the daguerreotype, but changed to the wet-plate process and made his first paper print in February 1858.<sup>88</sup> However, it wasn't the advantages of the wet-plate process that took Britt outdoors. It was the acquisition of a new camera. In the late 1860s Britt bought his first stereo camera.<sup>89</sup> A precursor of the picture postcard, the stereo view was the most popular photograph during the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>90</sup> During this period before pictorial magazines or newspapers, the stereo view was a way to see foreign lands and natural wonders.<sup>91</sup> Historians agree that "after the Civil War a home's parlor table was not complete without a stereoscope and a basket of views."<sup>92</sup>

Like most outdoor photographers Britt probably took both his stereo and large-format cameras with him in the

two-horse canvas covered wagon he adapted to serve as a portable studio. He dubbed this vehicle "The Pain" and it was a common site on weekends within a 200-mile radius of Jacksonville.<sup>93</sup>

When he took the first picture of Crater Lake in 1874, the eighty-seven-mile trip up the Cascade Mountains to the 1,900-foot-deep lake took Britt and his companions six days.<sup>94</sup> Britt had made the trip to Crater Lake with his camera twice before, once in 1868 and again in 1869, but bad weather prevented picture taking both times.<sup>95</sup> On his third trip he and his companions spent two days waiting for the weather to clear. The third morning as they were breaking up camp to leave, the fog and mist cleared long enough for Britt to get two perfect negatives.<sup>96</sup> In the late 1800s, William Gladstone Steele took Britt's photographs of Crater Lake to Washington, D.C., and lobbied successfully to save the area from private exploitation.<sup>97</sup>

If Britt was patient enough to wait out the bad weather at Crater Lake, another photographer from Burns who set up camp at the Crater Lake rim during the winter of 1911 did not fare nearly as well. The first recorded report that photographer B.B. Bakowski was missing appeared in *The Mail Tribune* of February 22, 1911. By that time



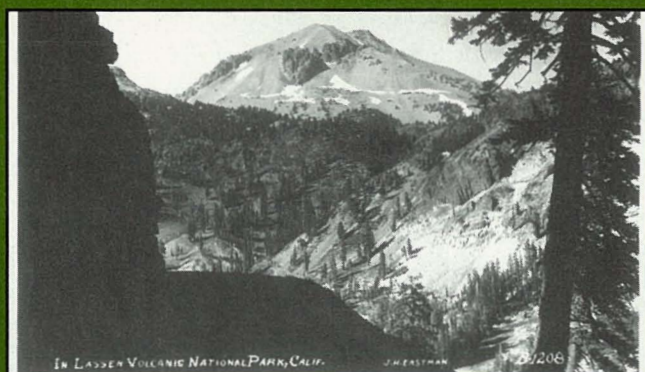
Frank Patterson often used different colored toning to add interest to his photographs. The White Mountains of Inyo, California were captured in this sepia-toned silver print by Patterson. SOHS #12625

INYO



Bakowski had been at Crater Lake taking photographs for three weeks.<sup>98</sup>

Rescuers searched for the photographer and found his sled a mile and a half from the rim of the crater, completely hidden under snow. No camera equipment or provisions were found then. Later newspaper reports of March 1 and 2 tell of a search on snowshoes by the "Medford Explorers," some of whom were B.F. Heidel, M.L. Erickson and Harry H. Hicks. This search party found Bakowski's camera cases at the hotel building, but failed to locate the rest of his supplies or his cameras and equipment.



Varied photographic styles were often found on postcards. Meyers & Loomis caught the great eruption of Lassen Peak (top) on May 15, 1915, while J. H. Eastman's shot in Lassen Volcanic National Park in 1946 (bottom) was carefully composed. SOHS #12621, 12619

# LASSEN

"This leads the men to the belief that he is still alive and probably camped on the other side of the lake," the March 1 article stated.

Eventually, searchers T.S. White and E. Momger found a snow cave that had been occupied two or three days. In this cave "... they found Bakowski's telescope and all of his supplies, including provisions ... Also found were some 60 unexposed films and three cases of exposed film," the newspaper reported on March 2. The search ended March 3 because of gale-force blizzards and no skeletal remains were ever found.<sup>99</sup>

Fortunately, tragedies among photographers like Bakowski's disappearance were few. In fact, most outdoor photographers at the end of the nineteenth century had so much equipment to carry, they seldom travelled alone. Travelling with companions provided some protection against the dangers of outdoor life. Overall, the outdoor photographer must have enjoyed venturing to remote regions of an expansive, relatively untouched country. Some, like Jackson, Watkins, Finley and Britt, were instrumental in preserving the scenic areas they explored from later commercial exploitation.

In the wilderness, after a frustrating day fighting poor lighting and balky mules, a photographer could always turn to nature to relax as Jackson did in the Rockies outside of Leadville, Colorado.

## Travelling with companions provided some protection against the dangers of outdoor life.

"My mule got away from me as we were loading our packs and Harry had to chase her all the way back to camp to catch her,<sup>100</sup> Jackson recorded. Unperturbed, however, he and his assistant moved their camp to another site and Jackson "got a boat and went fishing in p.m."<sup>101</sup>

On another occasion he reports loading up one hundred pounds of camera, chemicals and plate boxes into three separate packs to be carried by himself and two helpers. When they were forced to cross a river, the footing was unstable. So they "[c]rossed the river on a log ... Packs so unsteady on our backs that we did not feel equal to walking it, so we sidled over sitting down."<sup>102</sup>

On the other side at a viewpoint on the ridge they saw a rare sight, one they would have missed from the valley floor:

I saw a peculiar circular rainbow away down in the valley below us. It was a complete circle with all the rainbow's colors and was right in the midst of the driving mists or clouds that were in the valley.<sup>103</sup>

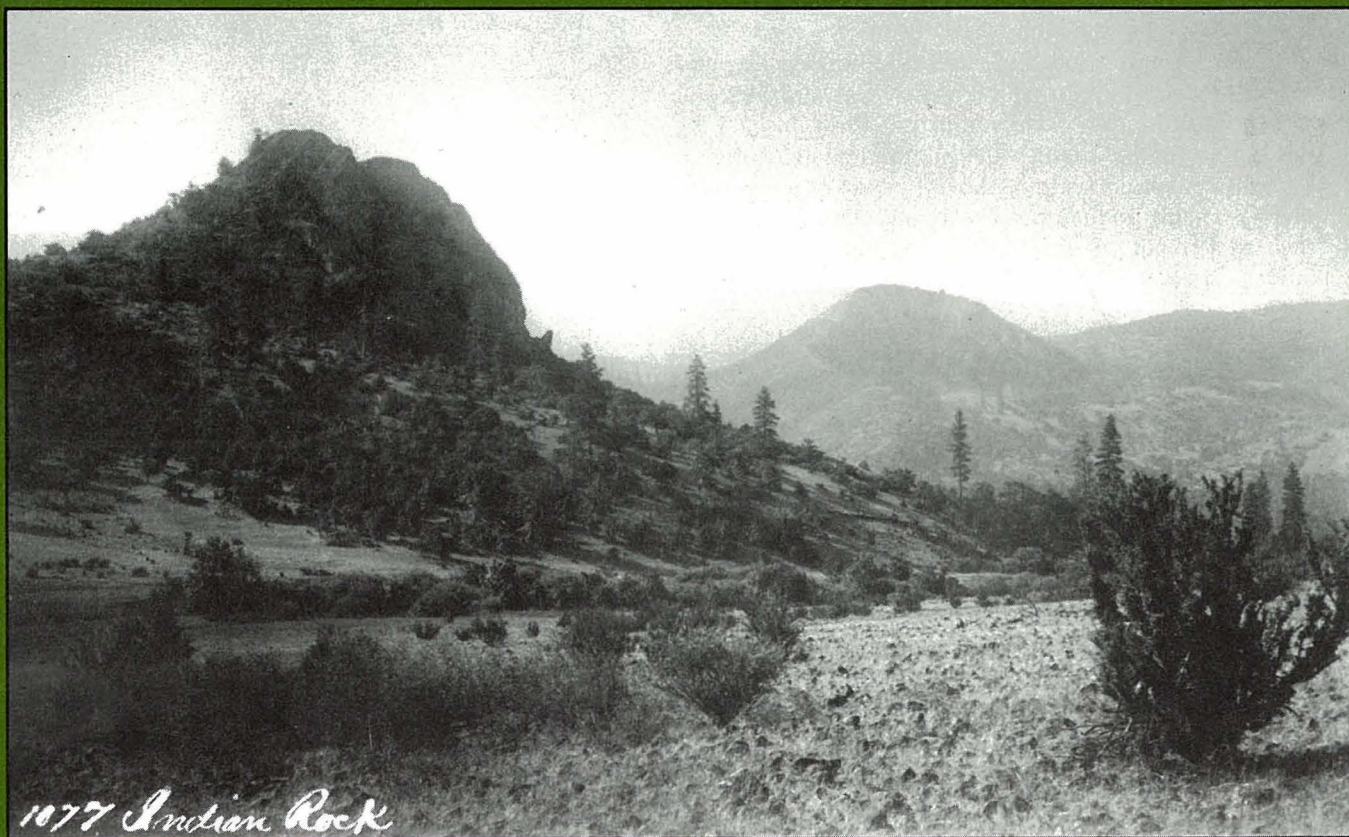
Isabella Bishop, an Englishwoman who travelled for her health, also acquired the capacity for improvisation that the early outdoor photographer needed to succeed.<sup>104</sup> In



# INDIAN ROCK

Peter Britt photographed landscapes such as this sensitive image of Indian Rock, throughout Oregon and northern California.

SOHS #12623



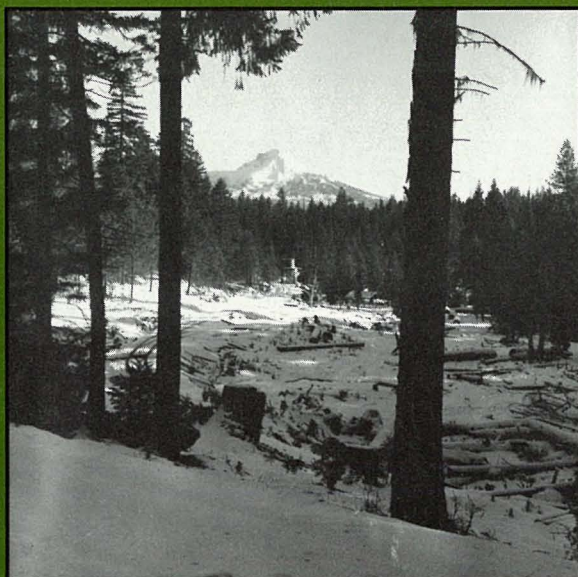
*1077 Indian Rock*



China around 1894, Isabella travelled 8,000 miles in fifteen months. In her writing on photography from this journey she tells how she used a box for a table and, rather than have a darkroom tent, developed her images at night. Sediment-free water, a necessity for the final wash of her dry plates, was more difficult to come by, but she adapted as well as she could and when the results were less than perfect, she viewed them in proper perspective and with good humor.

With 'water, water everywhere,' water was the great difficulty. The Yangtze holds any amount of fine mud in suspension, which for drinking purposes is usually precipitated with alum, and unless filtered, deposits a fine veil on the negative. I had only a pocket filter, which produced about three quarts of water a day, of which Be-dien invariably abstracted some for making tea, leaving me with only enough for a final wash not always quite effectual . . . I found that the most successful method of washing out 'hypo' was to lean out over the gunwale and hold the negative in the wash of the Great River, rapid at even the mooring place, and give it some final washes in the filtered water . . . When all these rough arrangements were successful, each print was a joy and a triumph, nor was there any disgrace in failure. Knowing the procedure it is pleasant to observe that the plate that follows the description in the first edition entitled, "The author's Trackers at Dinners," is faintly speckled with flecks of real Yangtze mud."<sup>105</sup>

Documenting wildlife and landscapes was exciting and arduous for the outdoor photographer. The hardships and rigors of outdoor life were compensated for, in part, by the beauty of the country the photographers explored. They also enjoyed mastering the difficulties of a new technology. Thanks to their persistence and skill we can share their excitement of discovery in the photographs they made.



A winter shot of Mt. Pitt was taken by E. W. Smith. SOHS #2866

# MT. PITT

## ENDNOTES

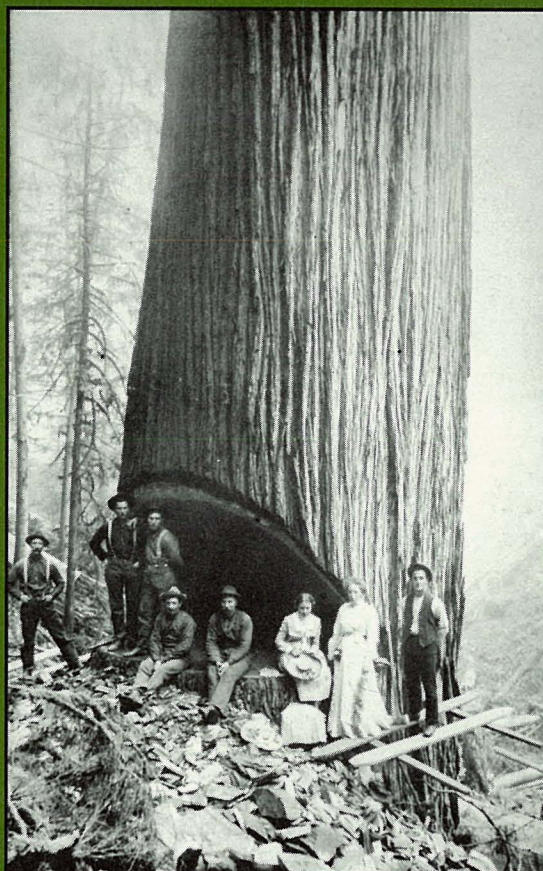
1. "The West Comes East," p. 8.
2. Helmut and Alison Gernsheim, *The History of Photography* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1969), p. 22.
3. Ibid.
4. "West Comes East," p. 8.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p. 9.
8. Ibid.
9. Kenneth E. Nelson, "A Practical Introduction to the Art of Daguerreotypy in the 20th Century," *Northlight: Photography at Arizona State University*, vol. 2, p. 1. An excellent instruction manual on how to make daguerreotypes, includes illustrations of equipment needed and safety precautions. Recommended for the contemporary daguerreotypist — of which, Nelson says there are thirty-plus in existence.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Oliver Mathews, *Early Photographs and Early Photographers: A Survey in Dictionary Form* (London: Pitman Publishing company, 1973), p. 49.
13. Nelson, p. 1.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Nelson, p. 18.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., appendix five.
19. "West Comes East," p. 10.
20. Nelson, p. 23.
21. Ibid.
22. "West Comes East," p. 10.
23. Mathews, p. 54. Frederick Scott Archer also invented the ambrotype, which is a variation of the wet-plate process whereby the glass negative is backed with a dark material, making the image appear as a positive.
24. Peter E. Palmquist, "Western Photographers, II: Robert Vance, Pioneer in Western Landscape Photography," *American West*, Sept/Oct 1981, p. 22.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid., p. 26.
27. Ibid., p. 22.
28. Peter E. Palmquist, *Carleton E. Watkins: Photographer of the American West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983).
29. Beaumont Newhall and Diana E. Edkins, *William H. Jackson* (Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth: Morgan and Morgan, 1974), p. 14.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Robert Doty, ed., *Photography in America* (New York: Random House, 1974), p. 11.
34. Mathews, p. 54.
35. Ibid.
36. Ralph W. Andrews, *Picture Gallery Pioneers: 1850 to 1875* (New York: Bonanza Books, MCMLXIV), p. 13.
37. Newhall and Edkins, p. 13.
38. Andrews, p. 25.
39. Newhall and Edkins, p. 27.
40. Andrews, pp. 69-70.
41. Mathews, p. 50.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Newhall and Edkins, p. 15. There is some question as to who was the first to haul a "mammoth" camera into the wilderness — William Jackson or Carleton Watkins. Jackson had a specially built twenty by twenty-four inch camera with him in 1873 when he photographed the Mount of the Holy Cross. However, Watkins had a large camera built that was only slightly smaller (eighteen by twenty-two inches) than Jackson's, and Watkins had it on his first trip to Yosemite in 1861 according to Palmquist.
47. Ibid., p. 23.
48. Palmquist, *Carleton E. Watkins*, p. 7.



49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., p. 3.
51. Ibid., p. 7.
52. Ibid. Salt prints were the first available printing papers. The paper was treated with sodium chloride, thus the name. After 1861, Watkins, like most photographers, used albumen paper which was coated with a sensitizing solution that included egg whites. Photographers continued to make albumen paper prints until the 1890s when the gelatin silver chloride, or bromide paper which modern printing paper is based on, was first marketed. For explicit instructions on the albumen printing process from a contemporary photographer who still practices this time-consuming technique, see Bernice Halpern Cutler's article, "Albumen Printing: A Modern Look at a Historic Technique," in the December 1988 issue of *Darkroom Photography*. For a historical look at albumen printing and a description of a wet-plate darkroom, read Oliver Wendell Holmes' article "Doings of the Sunbeam." Originally published in the July 1863 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*, it has been collected and re-published in Beaumont Newhall's *Photography: Essays and Images* from the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1980.
53. Ibid., p. 22.
54. Ibid. pp. 22-23.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid., p. 14.
58. Ibid., p. 33.
59. Ibid., p. 35.
60. Ibid., p. 39.
61. Ibid.
62. Benjamin P. Avery, "Ascent on Mount Shasta," *Overland Monthly* 12, No. 5, May 1874.
63. Palmquist on Watkins, p. 18.
64. Ibid., p. xi.
65. Ibid., p. 18.
66. Ibid., p. 25.
67. Ibid.
68. Newhall and Edkins, p. 15.
69. Leroy R. and Ann W. Hafen, ed., *The Diaries of William Henry Jackson: Frontier Photographer* (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1959), p. 227.
70. Ibid., p. 230.
71. Ibid., p. 238.
72. Ibid., pp. 238-239.
73. Ibid., p. 243.
74. Ibid.
75. William L. Finley, *American Birds* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), p. 59.
76. Worth Mathewson, *William L. Finley: Pioneer Wildlife Photographer* (Covallis, Oregon: Oregon State University Press, 1986), p. 2.
77. Ibid., p. 4.
78. Ibid., p. 2.
79. Ibid., p. 4.
80. Ibid., p. 12.
81. Ibid., p. 4.
82. Ibid., p. 14.
83. Ibid.
84. *National Geographic Magazine*, August 1923.
85. Ibid. There are over 2,000 of Finley's glass plates in the Oregon Historical Society Photography Collection in Portland. Many technical innovations helped Finley and Bohlman in their wildlife photography. In 1877 Muybridge used a 1/1000 of a second shutter speed. In 1890 Carl Zeiss introduced a lens with a F4.5 aperture and several excellent telephoto lenses were available in the late 1890s. The wide-angle lens came on the market in 1900 patented by Carl Goerz.
86. Alan Clark Miller, *Photographer of a Frontier: The Photographs of Peter Britt* (Eureka, California: Interface California Corporation, 1976), p. 25.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid., p. 23.
89. Ibid., p. 25.
90. Ibid., p. 24.
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid., p. 25.
94. Ibid.

# EUREKA

An image of a large redwood tree in northern California was taken by Eureka photographer Van Sant. SOHS #3391



95. Ibid.
96. Ibid., p. 26.
97. Ibid.
98. Eva Hamilton, "Missing Photographer Still a Mystery," *The Mail Tribune*, May, 1976. This article summarizes the earlier news reports of searches for Bakowski.
99. Ibid.
100. Hafen, p. 234.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid., p. 250.
103. Ibid., p. 251.
104. Christine Page, "Travels of a Victorian Lady: Isabella Bird Bishop 1831-1904," *Northlight: Photography at Arizona State University*, vol. 7, Tempe, Arizona, pp. 1-9.
105. Pat Barr, *A Curious Life for a Lady*, (Garden City, N.Y., 1970), p. 312.

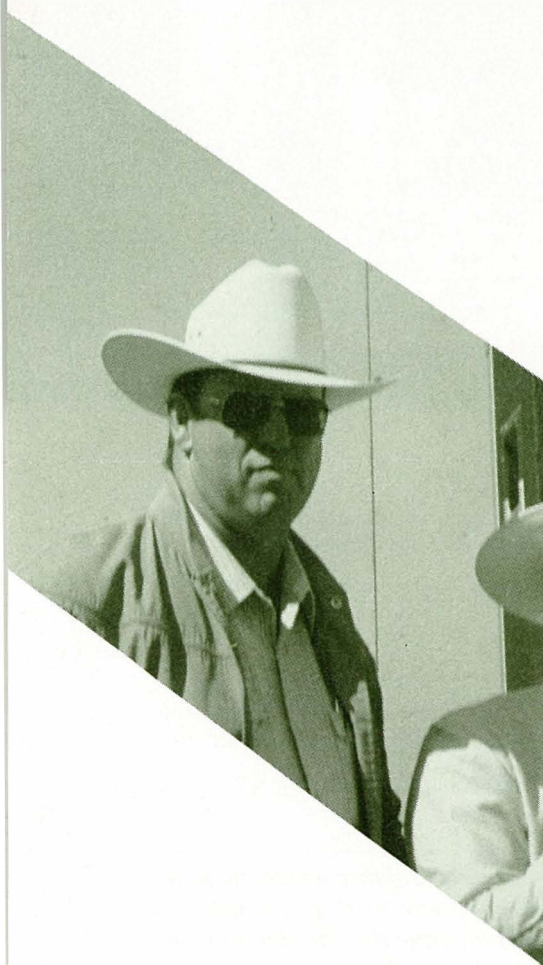
*Andrée Flageolle is an Ashland free-lance writer and photographer. She will begin graduate work at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque this fall studying the history of photography and Native American Indian Art.*



# Going, Going, Gone

by Debora Cohen

## Auctioneering in Southern Oregon



**I**t is a luminous mid-May at the Jim Miller ranch, Jackson County's oldest, just off Dead Indian Highway in Ashland. The auction won't begin until 9 a.m., but at 8:30, as country-western music plays, a sizeable crowd roams the area, assessing the rusty artifacts that line the ranch yards: shovels, scythes, pitchforks, antique hand tools, autos and trucks from the '30s through the '60s.

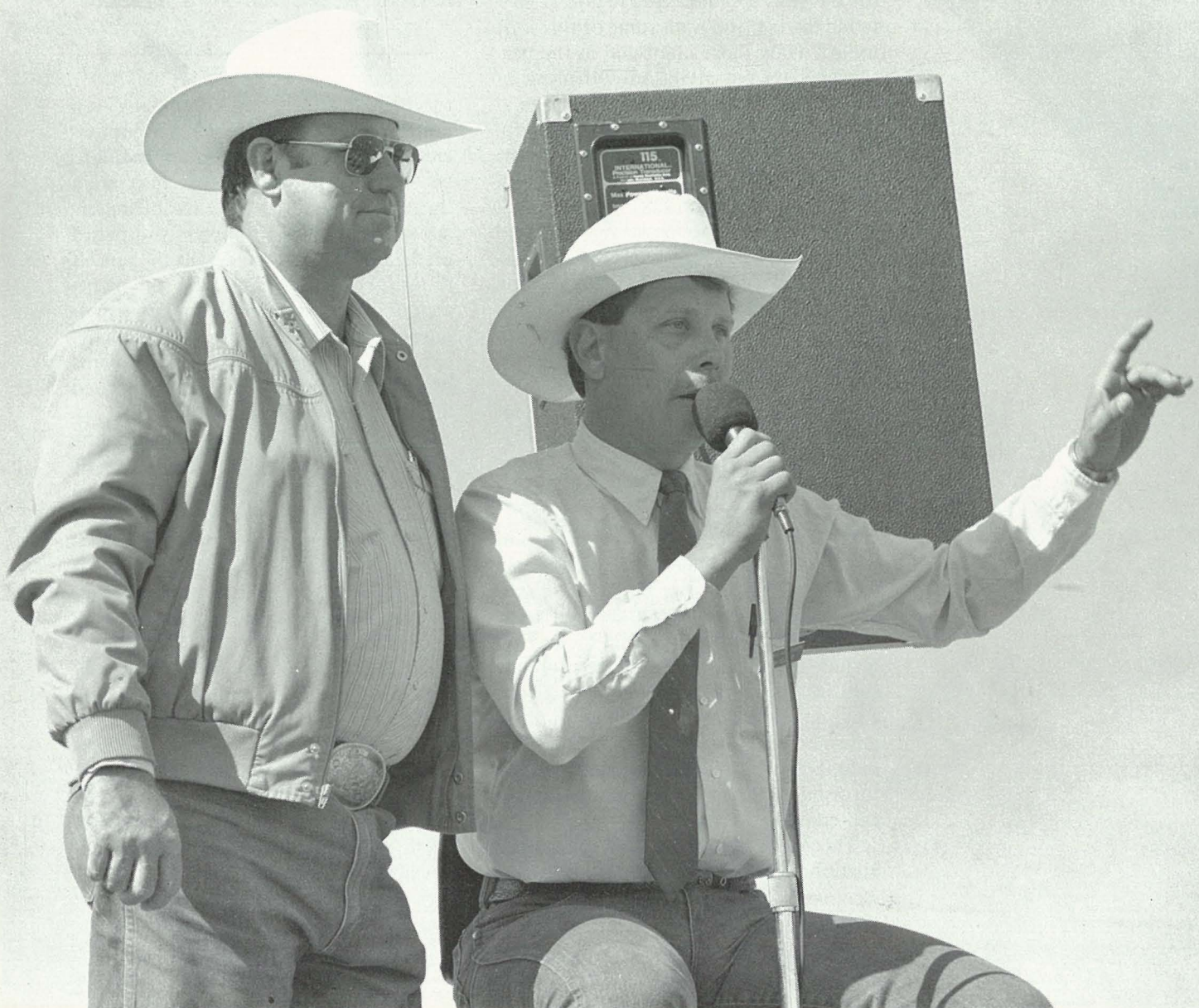
"We've lotted and tagged and displayed the items to the best of our ability out here on the sale site and put them in their natural setting. . . .", says auctioneer Stan Deupree, who has been preparing for the auction for a month. "If we had a bunch of horses we would sell them differently. . . .The same with fine artwork. . . .We wouldn't bring a Rembrandt out here and sell it at this sale." Deupree promotes the items' historical value in order to market them most profitably. The flyer advertising the sale reads: "This is a dispersal of antiques and relics from 2

pioneer families, also 2 sawmills, farm equipment and 23 acres irrigated ranch. . . . Home Builders; this is an opportunity to place a Pioneer Relic in your yard."

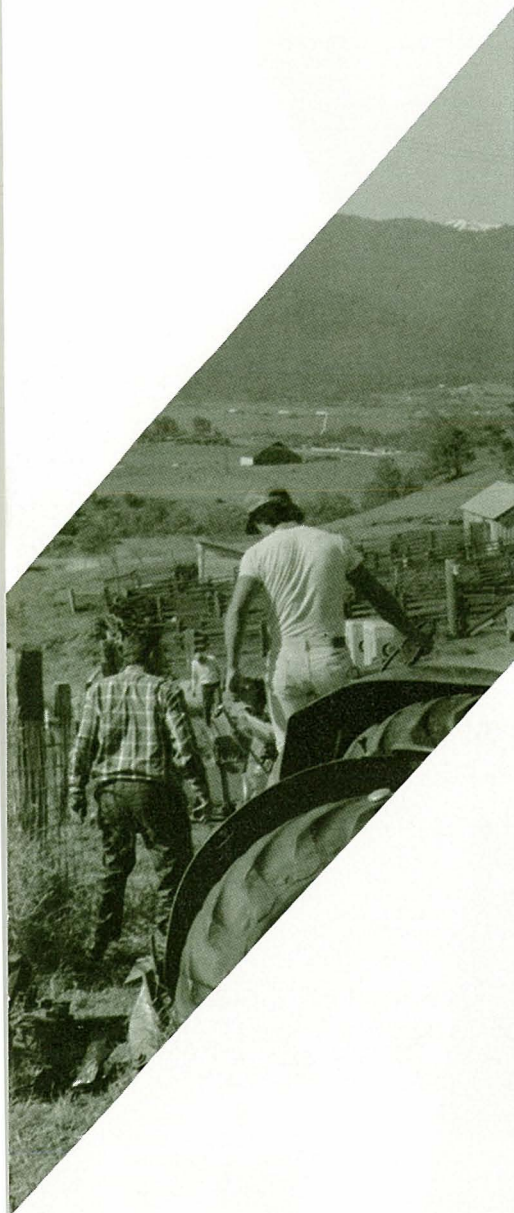
The flyer works, enticing buyers hopeful of getting a steal. One stylish, middle-aged couple who "grew up in the country" have a particular interest in antique tools and have come to see what is here. Another man with a rumpled, lived-in look is interested in a harness and a fresno and "came to be with the crowd." As auction time nears, Deupree can be heard making intermittent announcements over the loudspeaker, informing his buyers to register and get buyer numbers from the now-open office. Deupree's auctioneer assistant, Ron Anderson, is well known in the community, having conducted FFA and 4-H sales at the Jackson County Fair for years. He exchanges warm greetings with several generations of buyers as he strolls through the crowd.



**Auctioneers Ron Anderson  
(left) and Stan Deupree  
(right) work the crowd at  
the Jim Miller ranch in  
Ashland. Photo by Natalie  
Brown.**







Not much after nine o'clock, Deupree begins the auction. Standing on the back of a flatbed truck, he presides over the crowd introducing his co-workers: Anderson, his former 4-H leader, with whom he will share auctioneering duties; his sister Rhonda, who clerks and registers buyers in the office; his wife Carie, who clerks "ringside" next to the auctioneer; and several bid-spotters spread out among the crowd who will look for bids Deupree might otherwise miss and "work the crowd," encouraging prospective buyers through their words and gestures to bid before it's too late.

The young Deupree conducts his auction with a pleasant, polite demeanor and an even, melodious chant. He'll pause mid-item to flatter a woman with a "hi, pretty girl" and identifies buyers by name if he knows them. As Deupree sells, the gruff but charismatic Anderson stands by his side enjoining the crowd to get with the business at hand: "You're gonna have to bid faster if you want some of this stuff today." Only those interested in the particular items pay attention. Others sit or stand on the hillside visiting, or gaze at the horses in the stalls next to the barn. Some are half-attentive; women in one group admire a baby while keeping half an eye on the sale. The flatbed truck moves a little further down the road and Deupree and Anderson switch positions as the crowd follows behind. Anderson sells with a syncopated, guttural, idiosyncratic chant, punctuating his sales with remarks designed to keep his buyers' interest. "Thank you," he'll tell one buyer who bought quickly. "You saved me a lot of air." Meanwhile, Deupree is meandering among the crowd, wearing down the distance between himself and his buyers to better solicit their bids.

A farm auction, the category into which the Ashland sale loosely fits, is only one of the many types of auctions that exist today. Each offers a very different experience. Commodities sold by auction include fish, auctioned in Seattle; liquor, sold in New York; and everything from equipment, livestock, antiques, llamas, automobiles, fine art, and Western paraphernalia to coins, stamps and home furnishings, sold wherever an auctioneer can convene a crowd.

The Miller ranch auction, like every auction, reflects a particular time and

place in history, the product being sold, and the individual creativity of its auctioneers. The door prize of a Hereford steer reflects the ranch connections of the auction's participants. The auction incorporated high technology: in one of the barns a large screen television displays a videotape of real estate that will be sold later in the day. While auctions historically have served the dual function of popular entertainment and marketing event, the example provided by surrounding Ashland may be partially responsible for the auctioneer's ingenious ability to create a festive event and to package his-

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**He'll pause mid-item to flatter a woman with a "hi, pretty girl" and identifies buyers by name if he knows them.**

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tory in a dramatic and compelling way. Starting early in the morning, Deupree's crew prepared an antique steam engine to be fully functional—for maximum theatrical effect—by the time of its sale at 1 p.m. An article prominently displayed on the side of the barn details the ranch's historical origins. Mildred Gibson, matriarch of one of the several families disposing of property through the sale, sits in a rocker outside of one of the barns dressed in pioneer garb, accessorized down to her wire granny glasses.

Historically, differences in auctioneering styles accommodate the types of products being sold and the cultural milieu of the buyers. For example, the auctioneer who sells cattle and automobiles must sell a lot of items very quickly, so his chant is very fast, and the patter with which he accompanies it primarily conveys information and contains little else. The auctioneer's style can vary greatly even within a single auction: the auctioneer sells faster and more melodiously at the end of a livestock auction when selling slaughter cows at relatively fixed prices to a few meat company buyers than he does when selling more variably priced livestock to a crowd of farmers and ranchers.



Livestock auctions are attended by buyers who have been attending regularly for a long time, so the auctioneer makes few concessions to the uninitiated in his chant. Household and real estate auctions, on the other hand, are often attended by buyers who may not have been to a sale before. Auctioneers at these auctions slow down and make themselves understandable to the novice.

Sotheby's in New York City deals in antique and fine art auctions. Because the auctioneers there intend to be perfectly understandable and to reflect their institution's sophisticated image, they speak slowly and formally with a slight British accent; their chant is not really a chant at all. They mark the end of each sale with a brisk knock of a gavel.

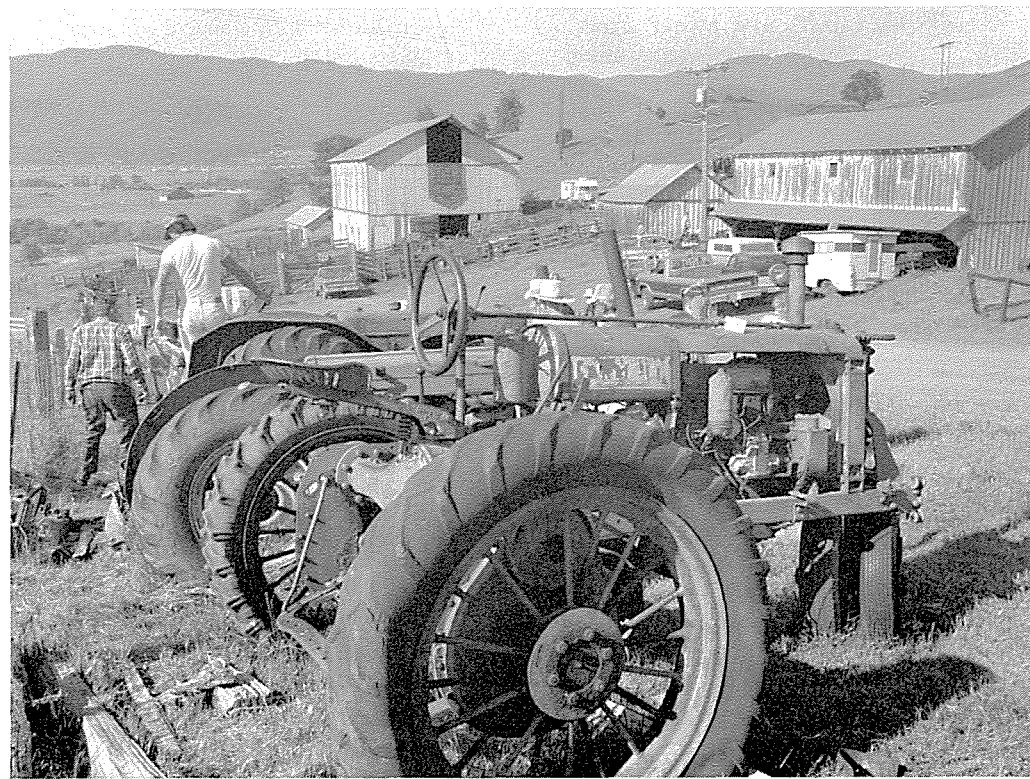
Perhaps it is auctioneering's ability to adapt to changing times and circumstances, incorporating tradition and allowing for each auctioneer's personal stamp, that has allowed it to survive. Auctioneering is an extremely old form of marketing which has existed since ancient times. Herodotus describes marriage auctions occurring in Babylon around 500 B.C., and the Roman emperor Caligula is recorded as having disposed of family furniture by the auction method.<sup>1</sup>

During the twentieth century in the United States, auctioneering has been particularly important in rural agrarian areas, where tobacco and livestock commonly have been sold in this way. Researcher Josie Graves in an unpublished paper reports that the first tobacco auction warehouses were established in 1858 in Danville, Virginia. Farmers hauled tobacco to Danville by horse and wagon from everywhere in the South, sometimes traveling for days. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, tobacco warehouses spread throughout the South.

Livestock auctions became widespread after World War I. Such auctions were used sporadically in the mid-nineteenth century, but new factors began to re-shape the marketing system and livestock was either sold at terminal markets or at auctioneerless stockyards affiliated with major railroad stations, or was sold along with the rest of the household furnishings and farming equipment as part of a farm sale. A sharp drop in livestock prices following World War I caused farmers to be more cost-conscious and to once again

favor the decentralized livestock auctions. Livestock markets peaked in the 1950s with 2,600 markets in the U.S., according to Harold Davis of the Packers and Stockyard Association in Washington, D.C.

During the last fifty years, farm and ranch communities have been breeding grounds for auctioneers. Growing up in a rural community where livestock was regularly sold by auction provided a store-



house of background information about the product and auctions themselves—knowledge vital to a would-be livestock auctioneer. A rural child can develop an interest in livestock through participation in organizations like 4-H and Future Farmers of America. Most families bring their children along to the livestock market when they buy or sell animals; there the children absorb the auctioneer's drone. Cousins, uncles and family friends participate in the buying and selling rituals, which makes up a large though unconscious part of rural life. Mastering auctioneering is a rigorous process, requiring not only exposure to the craft but substantial on-the-job training. Both are nearly impossible for a city person to acquire, but insiders showing potential and motivation find a way, often through the help of friends and neighbors.

**Livestock, farm equipment and acreage are a few of the items for sale at a farm auction. Two gentlemen (above) scrutinize the merchandise offered at the Jim Miller ranch auction.**

*Photo by Natalie Brown.*



**Many youngsters develop an interest in livestock by participating in programs such as 4-H and Future Farmers of America. This young woman poses with his prize winning animal and the lamb's new owner after an auction at the 1989 Jackson County Fair.**  
Photo by Natalie Brown.

Stan Deupree is a case in point. He's lived on an Eagle Point ranch since he was five, with a father who always had a side-line cattle operation even while working at logging and real estate sales. Stan recalls going regularly to the livestock market as a child:

I've always admired Norm Woodward, another fine livestock auctioneer. He sells almost all the local livestock sales and I remember listening to Norm as a kid growing up and always thinking, 'I wish I could speak that fast or be a man of that importance' . . . the local livestock yard was where you bought and traded your cattle, your horses. . . . That's where everybody comes Thursday afternoons here at Rogue Valley Livestock Auction . . . swap stories and swap

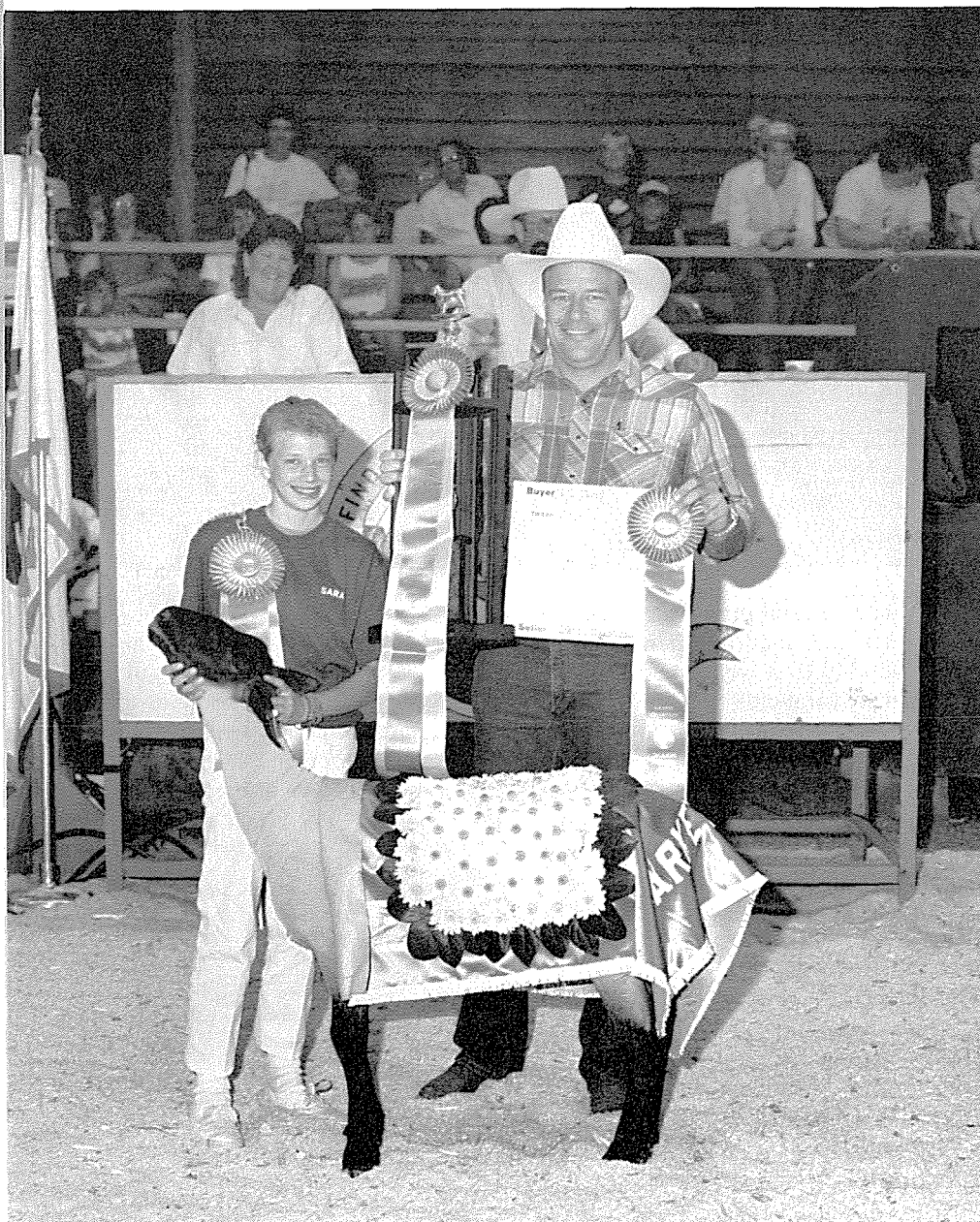
ideas. . . . Every now and then there's a few gossip stories passed around about the next-door neighbor, but it's a meeting place. Today we go down to the dance hall or to the discotheque and that's where all the kids meet, but not too long ago where everybody went was to the auction yard.<sup>2</sup>

Deupree participated in 4-H and became partners with his father on the cattle operation when in high school. Known as a "farm boy" at Eagle Point High, Deupree remembers being singled out by his classmates for his financial acumen and pressed into service to raise money for school activities. He entered college intending to pursue a degree in agricultural resource economics, but when he began to doubt his interest in pursuing the field, factors in his environment facilitated his transition to becoming an auctioneer.

Among them was his relationship with neighbor Tom Caldwell, one of the best, if not the best, equine auctioneers (an auctioneer of horses, thoroughbred and standard) in the world, to whom Deupree's father sold an Eagle Point ranch when Deupree was in high school. When young Deupree showed an interest in auctioneering, Caldwell nurtured it, giving Deupree exercises and tongue twisters to practice.

Deupree took a term off from college to attend a two-week out-of-town session of auction school. Auction school provides intensive practice in chanting, performing before others and learning various aspects of the auctioneering business. But only one of every ten auction school graduates actually becomes an auctioneer. What is valuable to the auctioneer is the opportunity to put what is learned into practice and to get on-the-job training through actual experience.

This practical experience was available to Deupree upon his return home. Anderson gave Deupree the opportunity to work with him at his county fair 4-H sales, and he worked on a weekly basis for the Rogue Valley Livestock Auction for about a year selling the smaller, less valuable animals at the beginning of each sale. Deupree also had the opportunity to conduct real estate auctions for his father's company, and Caldwell hired him as a bid-spotter at several of his sales. While Deupree's practice has now expanded to include a variety of one-time sales such as the Miller ranch sale, real estate sales and work for Tom Caldwell still comprise the bulk of





Deupree's business. He now assists at all of Caldwell's sales around the United States and structures the rest of his schedule around this commitment.

Deupree credits Caldwell for "bringing him up" in auctioneering, helping him to achieve the level of skill he has attained. Mentoring relationships such as Deupree's and Caldwell's figure in the success of many auctioneers, particularly livestock and tobacco auctioneers. While tales abound of auctioneers who try to keep competitors out, others such as Caldwell make it a practice to teach promising newcomers what they know. Their disciples learn through example and criticism.

Deupree admired Caldwell's broad knowledge of people in the horse and cattle industries and the skillful way he relates to them. He touts the personal qualities which contribute to Caldwell's success as a auctioneer; these include a strong and forceful presence and a developed sense of justice that Deupree calls "a big heart and a strong, cold, swift hand." Deupree says Caldwell's intimate knowledge of the pedigrees of horses and their consequent values allows him to market them at an advantageous but appropriate price. Caldwell sells a horse

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**"Caldwell has something, my goodness, that's gold lace . . . it's beautiful. They compared him to a big brass drum. He can make the building rock."**

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at an average price of \$575,000 every minute-and-a-half or two minutes at his sales. The type of sales Caldwell conducts are impressive to Deupree: "The man has earned the respect of the leading, foremost sale—the Keenland Kentucky Sale. He's in charge of it, director of auctioneers . . . the Harrisburg standardbred sale, one of the world's foremost standardbred sales: the Tatersall standardbred sale. . . . People are there from Switzerland and England and France and

America. The Keenland sale, we have dignitaries from Arabia, Europe, Japan, American congressmen and leaders, Queen Elizabeth." Deupree also admired Caldwell's chant. "Caldwell has something, my goodness, that's gold lace . . . it's beautiful. They compared him to a big brass drum. He can make the building rock."

Not only has he provided an inspiring example, but Caldwell has been generous to Deupree with his feedback. Jerry Strassheim of the Eugene Livestock Market, patriarch of an auctioneering family, says it is critical for an auctioneer to have a constructive critic at every stage of his career and credits his wife with being his. The need for an outside eye is a major reason that a mentor is so valuable to an aspiring auctioneer.

The importance of this personal relationship is one reason that auctioneering tends to run in families. Caldwell is a third-generation auctioneer and two of his sons, Scott and Chris, are now successful equine auctioneers. As well as the opportunities he gave his sons to work, Caldwell credits their success to regular feedback sessions at the dinner table. Deupree credits Caldwell's wife, Mary, a retired classical singer, with giving him valuable input as well.

Rural communities are most apt to foster this teacher-student type of relationship based on years of acquaintanceship as neighbors, such as that of Caldwell and Deupree, and provide other community involvements, such as the 4-H connection between Deupree and Anderson. Work in a livestock market is another learning experience, constituting a "trial by fire" for the beginning auctioneer. Livestock market buyers provide the novice auctioneer with plenty of frank feedback. The livestock auctioneer is considered competent when—and if—he gains the approval of his buyers.

Rural communities have in the past provided a nurturing ground for the development of auctioneers, but as America's rural areas fade, opportunities in the country fade as well. Tobacco auctioneers in the United States dwindled by half in the last ten years due to the decrease in tobacco sales. There are now fewer than 100; it is a field virtually no young men are entering. The decline in the number of livestock auctioneers is not as





dramatic, but livestock markets too have been decreasing. Mike Seymour, owner of the Twin Cities Livestock market in Centralia, Washington, says every little town had its own livestock market in the 1950s, but the highway system and the decrease in farming have changed the situation. There are now only 1,800 livestock markets in the United States. There used to be two livestock markets in the Ashland area. Now there is one.

As opportunities dry up in the country, many auctioneers whose motivation and roots are rural find urban applications for their skills. Scratch many an urban auctioneer, such as Tacoma's equipment and charity auctioneer Billy Ehli, and you'll find a transplant from the country who learned his craft there. Joe Paryppa of

Chehalis, Washington, 1987 Reserve World Champion Livestock auctioneer, has diversified his sales to include the Chehalis Livestock Market, which he bought to assure himself that he would always have a job as a livestock auctioneer, and the South Seattle Auto Auction where he works two days a week so he can pay the bills. Though Tom Caldwell resides in Eagle Point, his sales take him all over the country, with international buyers including royalty.

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The move from the country to the city affects auctioneering practices. A prime example is the change in auctioneers' attitudes toward charity auctions. Getting paid to do a benefit auction is unheard of for the rural auctioneer. It is part of the rural auctioneer's ethic to perform benefit auctions free of charge; it is a way to demonstrate support of the community and he is generally glad to have that opportunity. City auctioneers, however, are often paid to perform benefit auctions, and some have turned this kind of trade into a lucrative industry. It is perfectly understandable why the city auctioneer cannot afford to extend the same generosity to his neighbors as his county cousin; he could spend all his time doing charity auctions for a bunch of strangers. This change in professional values, however, demonstrates how a changed auctioneering environment impacts the practice of the craft.

Today's technology has also affected auctioneering. Some livestock auctions are now conducted by cable. This year for





the first time, applicants could apply to the National Livestock auctioneering competition by submitting a videotape of themselves. This democratizes the process because formerly only a contestant sponsored by a livestock market willing to pay his expenses could compete. Computers have changed the way auctioneers do business. Auctioneers who formerly kept records in their heads and on scraps of paper now hire clerks to enter them into the computer. Regulations related to auctioneering increasingly require detailed record-keeping, and many states require that auctioneers be licensed, although Oregon is not one of them.

Auctioneering requires a complex set of skills, many of which are not visible to the public. An auctioneer must have a mix of administrative, human relations and performance skills—an unusual combination, which perhaps accounts for the high salaries successful auctioneers draw. Deupree discusses the importance of being perceived as trustworthy and says that because of his young age, engendering trust among buyers and sellers has been one of his major accomplishments. Tom Caldwell says that being an auctioneer requires innate ability and talent. He has seen people enter at every stage of life and be successful. Crucial personal qualities, he says, include a sincere earnestness and

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**Mastering  
auctioneering is a  
rigorous process,  
requiring not only  
exposure to the craft  
but substantial on-the-  
job training.**

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joy in working with the public and selling things, and a desire to bring buyer and seller together and make both satisfied. Caldwell also says a drive to compete against oneself rather than others is necessary, likening the psychology of the successful auctioneer to that of a golfer.

Many beginning auctioneers idolize other auctioneers whose qualities they strive to emulate. Knowledge of the role

model's greater skill gives the novice an outside standard of excellence and provides ideas for ways to improve. Visualizing such a hero may provide the novice auctioneer with inspiration to accomplish the isolated task of competing against himself.

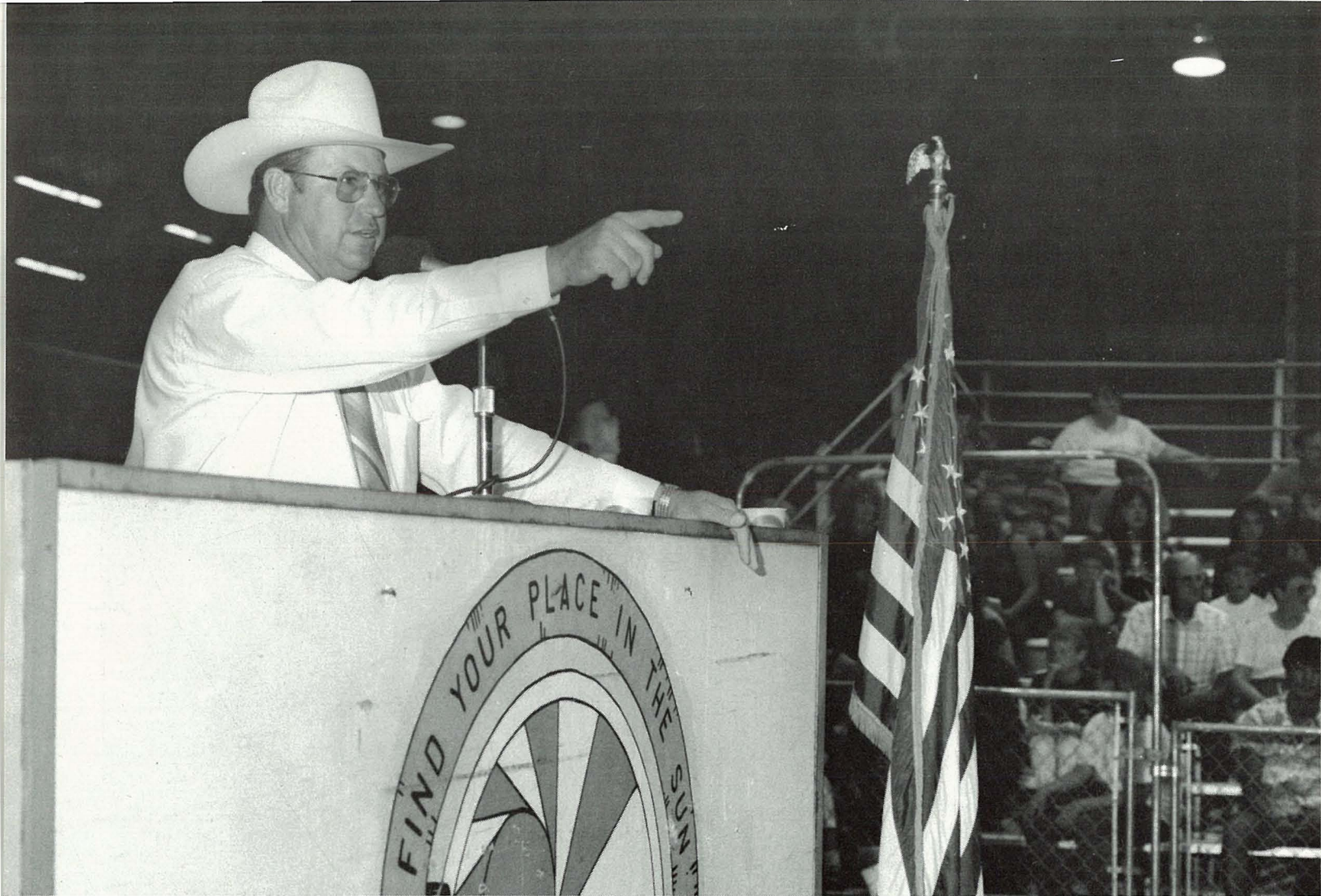
The way the auctioneer masters the chant is illustrative of how the auctioneer is receptive to, and synthesizes, influences



**With help from a talented  
auctioneer, this 4-H  
youngster (above) gets a  
record price for his fryers  
and exposure to the auc-  
tioneering profession.**

*Photo by Natalie Brown.*





**Veteran auctioneer Ron Anderson (above) takes a bid at the Jackson County Fair livestock auction.**  
Photo by Natalie Brown.

of those he admires, although he ultimately must create a style uniquely his own. Auctioneers universally describe the process of acquiring a chant as similar to learning to drive a car—after much practice over a long period of time, the ability suddenly emerges, and it is an automatic

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**Many beginning auctioneers idolize other auctioneers whose qualities they strive to emulate.**

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one. Listening to audio tapes is an accepted educational practice, but the auctioneer who copies another's chant is generally disdained by the auctioneering populace as is the "bid-taker," an auctioneer who merely coordinates the bids offered by his buyers rather than actively

controlling the crowd to attain the highest price based on his knowledge of the item's value.

Auctioneers concur that getting the best price is their goal and their "performance" is a means to that end. Still, a unique performance style is a matter of pride for many auctioneers—Truman Kongsle of the River Basin Auction Academy of Bismarck, North Dakota, which travels yearly to Salem, reports that many people come to his auctions to see what he will do next.

It is the opportunity to distinguish himself and "be someone special" that draws many a young man to want to be an auctioneer. Although the auctioneer performs myriad tasks and has a complex skill set, the auctioneer's performance skills—his chant, movements, humor and gift for gab—are visible to the community at large and confer upon him local celebrity. They also make the auction an enjoyable, festive event, one in which a hypnotic mood prevails that can loosen a person's hold on his wallet.



Auctioneering has had a long history, shaped by tradition on the one hand and by adaptation to present circumstances on the other. During the last fifty years, Pacific Northwest farming and ranch communities have facilitated transmission of auctioneering skills. Some aspects of the auction endure as rural areas undergo change and the auctioneer moves from the country to the city. But the feeling of community—of personally knowing the auctioneer as friend or neighbor—is something that is generally lost. An auction such as the Miller ranch sale in Ashland is a hybrid event, influenced by the particular auctioneer's exposure to the world outside of Eagle Point, but also rooted in rural tradition. Many children at the Ashland auction recognize Stan Deupree and Ron Anderson from the county fair 4-H auction. One of those children, being bounced by a parent in

time to the auctioneer's chant, was probably thinking: "I'd like to be able to talk that fast and have the crowd in the palm of my hand like that. I'd like to be an auctioneer when I grow up."



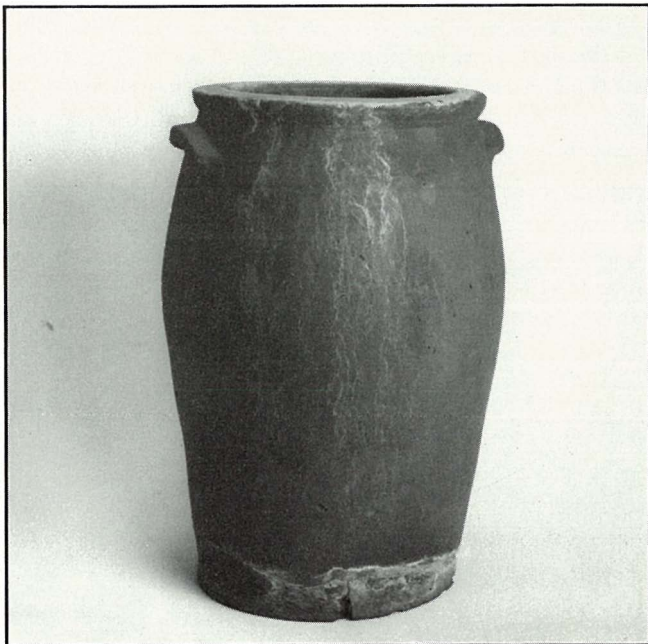
#### ENDNOTES

1. Brian Learmount, *A History of the Auction*, Barnard and Learmount, 1985.
2. John H. McCoy, M.E. Sarhan, *Livestock and Meat Marketing*, Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., Inc., 1988, pp. 12-20.

*Debora Cohen is a Portland filmmaker, currently producing a documentary videotape on livestock auctioneering in the Pacific Northwest with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts/Folk Arts program, the Skaggs Foundation, the Pioneer Fund, the Metropolitan Arts Commission and the Oregon Arts Commission.*



## From the Collections



"Oh my gosh, look at this thing!" Pottery expert Jim Robinson was understandably excited upon first glancing at the newest Hannah pot discovery sitting on his workbench. "Just look at the lines of this pot . . . our potters were every bit as good as any upstate. This pot really gives a good example of their skills. It's a classic, a very nicely thrown pot."

Staff member Roy Bailey discovered the pot in a friend's backyard in Medford where it was being used as a plant

stand. Upon learning that the pot was a Hannah Pottery product, the owner agreed to part with it, making it the latest entry into the Society's collections.

Consistent with the style developed at the Hannah's kiln site in the Sam's Valley area, the pot was likely to have been "thrown" or made during the 1870s or 1880s according to Robinson. The rim, foot, and handles are very "Hannah." It was slightly underfired, and the thickness of the sides may indicate a "double collar" throwing process used for large pieces: building a base with one hunk of clay, then adding more clay on top and incorporating the two pieces together.

This discovery is a fine example of how an exhibit can continue to contribute to the base of knowledge about a particular subject. When Society staff and members of Clayfolk (a local pottery organization) first began to compile research information on the Hannah family and pottery, only 12 remaining Hannah wares had been identified. Today, through researchers' efforts and publicity, we know of at least 32 pieces still in existence. And more may be discovered as interest in the exhibit, *HANNAH: Pioneer Potters on the Rogue*, continues.

After going through the processing procedure for new artifacts, the pot soon may be found in the new donation case in the Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society houses numerous objects that, owing to limited exhibit space, are not often seen by visitors. We hope that featuring items in each issue of the *Table Rock Sentinel* will provide an enjoyable and educational view of the scope of its collections.



# Then and Now



**Refugees (above) take shelter in a camp made of corrugated sheet iron scraps gathered from the ruins in the aftermath of San Francisco's 1906 earthquake.**  
SOHS #12629

The tragedy in San Francisco on the evening of October 17, 1989 has brought about an increased curiosity regarding the nature of earthquakes and their early manifestations. Although southern Oregon has no written record of seismic activity to match that of her neighbor to the south, earthquakes are not an unknown phenomena here.

One of the first quakes in the Rogue Valley occurred November 22, 1873. Jacksonville's *Democratic Times* reported that the trembler, which struck just past 9:00 Saturday evening, disrupted both a card game and Odd Fellows meeting in Jacksonville, cracked the earth in Linkville (later named Klamath Falls), and tumbled down chimneys in Grants Pass. Crescent City, the epicenter, appears to have suffered the most damage, with almost every building affected by the earth's movement.

An 1875 quake in Linkville struck at 1:00 in the morning with enough force to awaken many of the town's residents from their slumbers. Although most were aware of the event, townspeople reportedly believed a runaway wagon crashing down Main Street was responsible for the disturbance.

In Medford, similarly blissful ignorance appears to have been the rule when a quake occurred on March 15, 1913. Eyewitnesses related tales of broken dishes and swaying elevators, while one immigrant stated he "... lived so long in California that I at once recognized the nature of the

disturbance." Despite such reports, "very few people knew that an earthquake had visited the city," and the paper was pleased to clear up the mysterious origins of a crack on East Main Street by declaring the earthquake at fault.

When San Francisco suffered its first devastating shock of the twentieth century in April 1906, people in southern Oregon followed the story with great interest and were quick to send assistance. Alongside tales of refugees fleeing north on the Southern Pacific from the great metropolis, the *Ashland Tidings* told of benefit theatrical performances, building projects delayed so that funds could be sent for the succor of the homeless, and community contributions to purchase sorely wanted supplies. Because of its proximity and access to the railroad line, southern Oregon was a leader in sending relief to those in need. Early indications are that the tragedy of 1989 will emulate that of 1906, with the Red Cross Blood Bank in Medford reporting a large number of donors the day following this year's quake.

One old soldier recalled his former captain's cry in heavy seas and rode the waves of San Francisco's great earthquake of 1906 calling out "Steady while she pitches!" With the help of southern Oregonians, San Franciscans at the turn of the century were able to weather the storm of tragedy and it seems likely the same generous spirit will once again help ensure the reconstruction of our great neighbor to the south.



**Residents of San Francisco's Marina district (above) were allowed a few minutes to retrieve what they could of their possessions following the devastating October 17, 1989 quake.** Photo courtesy Associated Press.

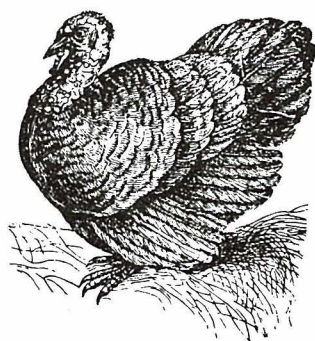


# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Through 1990

**Making Tracks: The Impact of Railroad in the Rogue Valley** The Society's major exhibit at the Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History traces the coming and going of the railroad, how it changed people's lives and the Rogue Valley economy, its local role in the nation's battles overseas, and the introduction of the railroad worker as an important member of the valley's communities.

**HANNAH: Pioneer Potters on the Rogue** This exhibit features the wares and pottery-making techniques of the 19th-century Hannah pottery works (once located near present-day Shady Cove) and focuses on pioneer methods of food preservation and preparation. Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History.



## November 15

Preschoolers can find out what Thanksgiving Day is all about at **Tots and Turkeys**, a special program just for three to six year olds. Come join us at 10 a.m. at the Children's Museum and celebrate the harvest by making edible puppets! Call (503) 899-1847, Ext. 227 by 5 p.m. Monday, November 13 to register. Admission \$1.00 for Jr. Historians, \$1.50 for non-members.

## November 18

Children ages 8 to 14 can learn the techniques of embroidery work at **Stitches A "Cross" Time**. Participants will cross-stitch a seasonal pattern on a handkerchief following a brief his-

tory of needlework and its role in the lives of earlier generations. Time 1-3 p.m. at the Children's Museum. Workshop fee: \$2.50 for Jr. Historians, \$3.50 for non-members. Call (503) 899-1847, Ext. 227 by 5 p.m. Friday, November 10 to register.

## November 23

All Society facilities will be closed for **Thanksgiving Day**.

## November 24 through December 23

The Society gift shop in the Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History is having a **SUPER INVENTORY REDUCTION SALE** on selected items to prepare for its move to the History Store located just inside the History Center in downtown Medford. Don't miss this one: Rock-bottom prices . . . one-of-a-kind items! And remember that membership discounts of 15-25% (depending upon the category) apply to all non-sale merchandise, so stop by to check out the more unique gift selections as you plan your holiday purchases.

## November 29

The **Southern Oregon Historical Society Board of Trustees** will hold its November meeting on **November 29 instead of November 22**. The Board meets at 7:30 p.m. in the conference room of the History Center, 106 N. Central, Medford. Members and the general public are invited to attend.

## December 2-3, 9-10, and 16-17

The sights and aromas of an old-fashioned Christmas return to Jacksonville as the Beekman House opens its doors to holiday visitors. The home will be decked in appropriate 19th-century trimmings. Costumed interpreters will welcome callers between **1-4 p.m.** while cooks bake cookies in the woodstove oven for guests to sample! Donations accepted.



**Santa Claus is coming to town!** and youngsters of all ages will be able to visit him in the Children's Museum from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. the first three weekends of December. After passing on their secret holiday wishes, children will be invited to make an ornament to display on the Museum's Christmas tree. Additional daily activities will be available at the Children's Museum from December 19 through 23.

## December 25 and January 1

**All Southern Oregon Historical Society museums will be closed** to allow staff members and volunteers to observe Christmas and New Year's Day with their families and friends.

All offices and departments of the **Southern Oregon Historical Society**, except the Swedenburg Cultural Resource Center, may be reached by calling (503) 899-1847. The telephone number for the Swedenburg Cultural Resource Center is (503) 488-1341.

**Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History**, P.O. Box 480, 206 North Fifth St., Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Children's Museum**, P.O. Box 480, 206 North Fifth St., Jacksonville, OR 97530. Open Tues.-Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Swedenburg Cultural Resource Center**, 990 Siskiyou Blvd., Ashland, OR 97520. Open Tues.-Sat. 1-5 p.m.

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

Other Jackson County organizations associated with the Southern Oregon Historical Society are:

**Woodville Museum**, First and Oak Streets, P.O. Box 1288, Rogue River, OR 97537. Phone: (503) 582-3088. Open Tues.-Sun. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

**Eagle Point Historical Society Museum**, North Royal Ave. (near the Antelope Creek Covered Bridge), P.O. Box 201, Eagle Point, OR 97524. Open Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

**Gold Hill Historical Society**, P.O. Box 26, Gold Hill, OR 97525





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

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