

SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE

Vol. 3, No. 2 • The Magazine of the Southern Oregon Historical Society • 1997



THE HORSE TRADER OF ASHLAND • MAIL ORDER BRIDES • DOLLS OF THE 1940s

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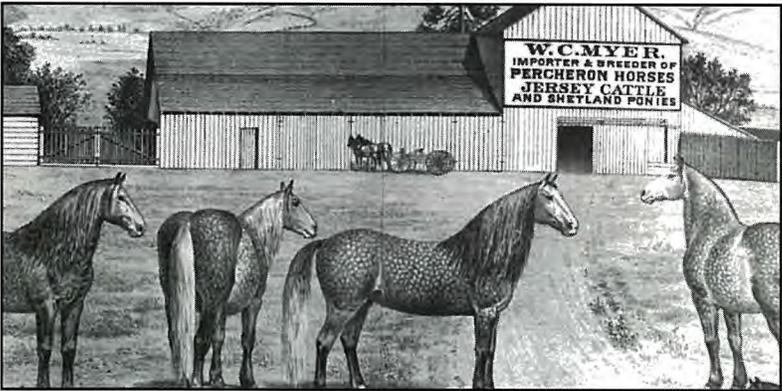
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Above: Detail of Percherons from Mural. See "W.C. Myer" p. 10.



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Above: Remington is one of the most popular artists who romanticized the West, p. 4.

Cover: Detail of "Captain Sligart" from a small advertisement card. The horse, belonging to W.C. Myer, was "traveled" throughout the region for stud, see p. 10.

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SOUTHERN
OREGON
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Exhibit Guide



Bodmer, Karl (1809-1893)
"Magic Pile Erected by the Assiniboin Indians" Vignette 15

Engraving and aquatint with original hand-color

This buffalo skull atop an assemblage of rocks was described by Maximilian as a medicine sign, a magical device to attract the buffalo herds.



Catlin, George (1796-1872)
"Buffalo Hunt, Chasing Back No. 12"

Lithograph with modern hand-color



Catlin, George (1796-1872)
"Mah-to Toh-pa, The Mandan Chief" from *North American Indian Portfolio*, 1844

Lithograph with modern hand-color

Catlin described this chief as "the most extraordinary man, perhaps, who lives this day in the atmosphere of nature's noblemen." Mah-to Toh-pa (Four Bears) had the best war record of his tribe and directed the tribe's most sacred religious ceremony, the Ikpa.

Artists & Explorers

The A.G. Edwards and Sons, Inc. Collection



Bierstadt, Albert (1830-1902), *"The Rocky Mountains"* 1866

Engraving with original hand-color

During the winter of 1833-34, Swiss artist Karl Bodmer and Prince Maximilian, a natural scientist from Germany, sojourned at Fort Clark in the Upper Missouri territory. They spent much of their time in a Mandan village. This scene depicts the home of Dipaurch, an old and respected Mandan, who told Maximilian about the history and beliefs of his people. The lodge interior reveals harsh winter conditions where both animals and man lived together until spring. This is one of the most ethnographically accurate depictions of Mandan Life recorded.



Bodmer, Karl (1809-1893)
"The Interior of the Hut of a Mandan Chief" Tableau 19

Engraving and aquatint with hand-color



Anonymous, "Prairie Fires of the Great West" 1871, published by Currier and Ives, New York
Toned lithograph with hand-color

& Catalog



Bodmer, Karl (1809-1893)
"A Blackfoot Indian on Horseback"
Vignette 26

Engraving and aquatint with original hand-color



Both of these images portray Wi-Jun Jon; one shows him in full tribal costume before leaving for Washington D.C., and the other as he was returning, decked out in a pastiche of uniform items accessorized by a ladies' fan and a liquor bottle in the back pocket. Wi-Jun Jon developed a drinking habit and died at an early age.



Catlin, George (1796-1872)

"Wi-Jun Jon, An Assiniboin Chief No. 25"

Lithograph with modern hand-color



Buffalo were killed in winter by driving them into snow-drifts. By hunting on snowshoes, the tribesmen could move over the snow to kill the fallen animals. Catlin composed this image from several studies of buffalo and Native Americans. He never actually observed such a hunt and these hunters wear summer war clothes.

Catlin, George (1796-1872)
"Buffalo Hunt on Snow Shoes No. 15"

lithograph with modern hand-color



Mah-to Toh-pa, Dates Unknown
"Fac-Simile of an Indian Painting"

Etching and aquatint with original hand-color

Karl Bodmer loaned his watercolor paints and paper to Mah-to Toh-pa in the winter of 1833-34 when both were at Fort Clark. Mah-to Toh-pa depicted his battle and triumph over a Cheyenne chief. See Bodmer's depiction of Mah-to Toh-pa at far left.

Editor's note: These images are from the exhibit "Artists and Explorers: Picturing the West" on view at the History Center in downtown Medford. The text has been excerpted from the exhibit. In an unprecedented community collaboration, "Artists and Explorers" was co-sponsored by A.G. Edwards and Sons, Inc. and the Southern Oregon Historical Society. The prints are the private collection of A.G. Edwards and Sons, Inc., and will be at the History Center until March, 1998.

Impressions of The Wild West

During the last half of the nineteenth century the image of the American cowboy became popular subject matter for publications such as *Harper's Weekly*, *Century* and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. The mythic figure of the cowboy as the personification of Western "wildness" proved to be a favorite topic for Easterners who had never ventured farther west than the Hudson River. Scenes of raucous cowboys stampeding into town, their encounters with Native Americans and the daily toil out on the range perpetuated the stereotype that cowboys led uncivilized lives among the untamed lands and native people of the West. Frederic Remington was among the most sought-after illustrators of the West and his images have become synonymous with cowboy and frontier life. Ultimately, he became one of the world's most highly paid illustrators, with hundreds of engravings reproduced in the leading periodicals of his day.

The land, native people, and wildlife of the New World have been documented since the North American continent was first discovered. However, by the beginning of the nineteenth century there was increasing concern among naturalists that the New World was still unknown. Native American customs were especially vulnerable, due to assimilation, war and disease. Several ethnographers and documentary artists recognizing this traveled into the western territories to record Native American cultures.



Two of the most important documentarians of the upper Missouri Territory were the American artist-ethnographer George Catlin, and the German naturalist, Prince Maximilian of Wied-Nuwied, who employed as an illustrator for his written observations a young Swiss artist, Karl Bodmer. Later artists such as Frederic Remington, Rufus Zogbaum, and Henry Farny popularized the imagery of the West which included the seemingly wild life of the cowboy.

In 1830, George Catlin departed from St. Louis and began a six-year odyssey from Lake Michigan and the High Plains to the Gulf of Mexico. Although he may not have been the most gifted painter, Catlin was certainly dedicated and influential. He was driven by a sense of historical destiny and worked with fervor to document Native American cultures before their extinction. Catlin employed a "field-sketch" drawing style to quickly capture the people, landscapes and action scenes he encountered. The finished paintings were created in his studio at a later date. In 1841, Catlin published his observations in the book *"Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs and Conditions of the North American Indian."* He followed this up in 1844 with a volume of thirty-one lithographs entitled *"North American Indian Portfolio."* The prints in this exhibition are drawn from this volume of lithographs.

In 1832, Prince Maximilian of Wied Nuwied, a member of an aristocratic German family and a respected scientist, left Europe for a two year trek across North America. The travels of

Maximilian and Bodmer proved to be one of the most important explorations of the Missouri River since the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1805-1806. George Catlin had traveled upriver in the Upper Missouri territory to Fort Union; no one since Lewis and Clark had ventured any farther. Likewise, no previous expedition included both an artist-illustrator and scientist-naturalist working in tandem. While Maximilian made field notes and collected animal and ethnographic specimens, Bodmer worked to make watercolor sketches and pencil drawings of geological features, flora and fauna. The detailed studies he made, recording Native American customs, were Bodmer's most significant contribution to history. In the

early 1840s, Maximilian published *"Travels in the Interior of North America"* which was accompanied by a separate volume of Bodmer's prints. The artist supervised the production of eighty-one plates, including a deluxe edition of full-color prints and lesser printings in black and white, or blue and brown. It is estimated that no more than three hundred sets of all prints were created ■.

Jan Broderick is the curator of the "Artists and Explorers" collection owned by A.G. Edwards and Sons, Inc. Her exhibit text has been modified for this article.



Remington, Frederic (1861-1909)
"Hunting the Pronghorn antelope in California"

Wood engraving



Catlin, George (1796-1872)
"O-Jib-Be-Ways"

Lithograph with modern
hand-color

This print is a combination of
field sketches Catlin made of
members of the O-Jib-Be-
Ways tribe.



**"Fur
Traders
on the
Missouri
Attacked
by
Indians"**

Cary, William (1840-1922)

Wood engraving with hand-color

This image from *Harper's Weekly*, May 23, 1868 shows fur traders making a spring trip downriver to sell their pelts in St. Louis. Typically, the 2400-mile trip from Montana to St. Louis took about two weeks. Cary knew the hazards of the upper Missouri firsthand. In 1868, he was a passenger on a Missouri steamboat that exploded and sank. Later, he was captured by the Crow near Fort Union and was released only through the intervention of a fur company official.



Above: Remington, Frederic (1861-1909)
"Cowboys Coming to Town For Christmas"

Wood Engraving

Remington's depiction of cowboys galloping into town on a winter's day appeared in *Harper's Weekly*, May 23, 1889. It has become a classic image of the era.



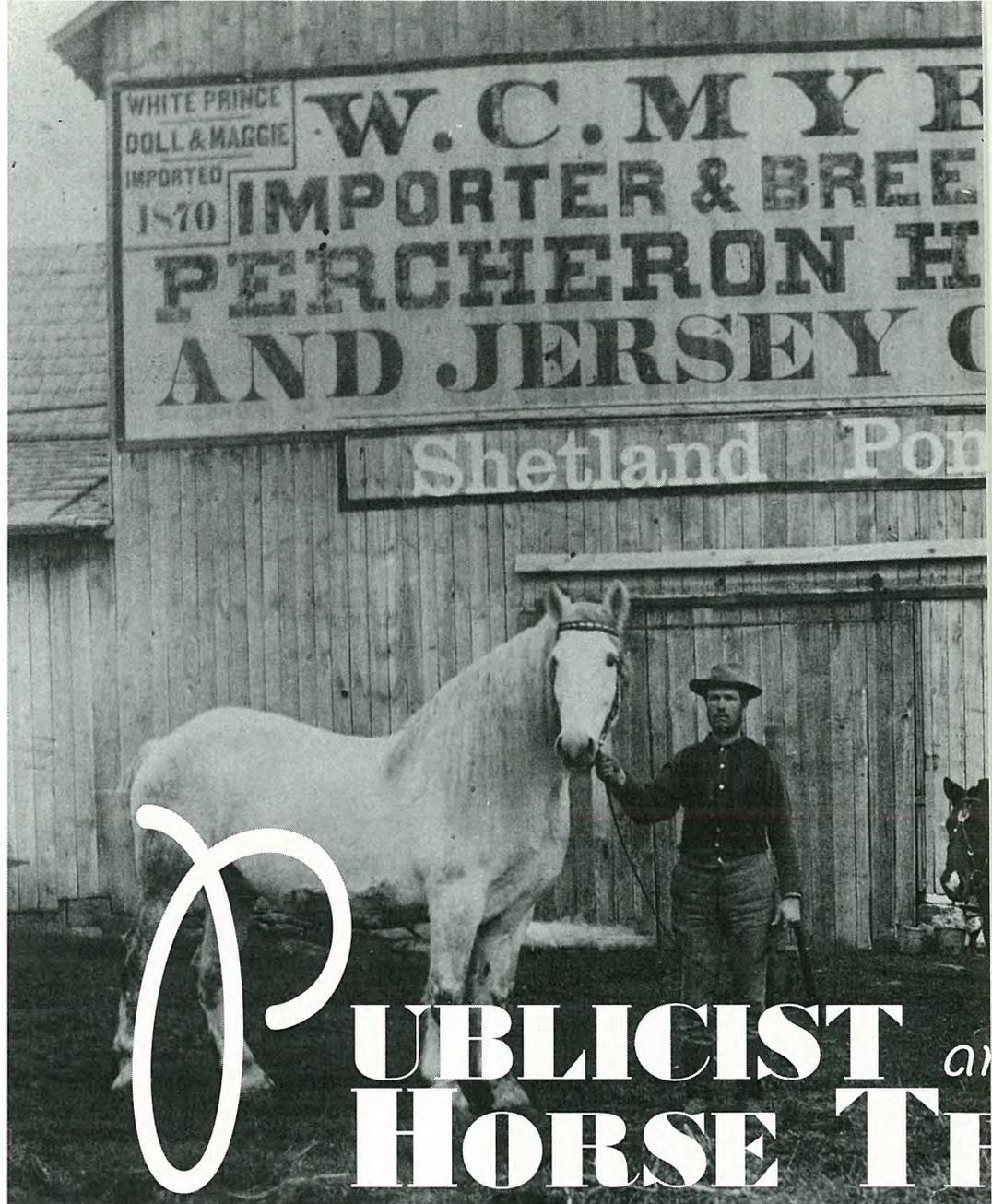
Remington, Frederic (1861-1909)
"In From the Night Herd"

Wood engraving

VOL. 3, No. 2



E. C. Meyer



by Greta Brunschwyler

"Just look at the wonderful Hanley Farm, or the Barrons Farm, or the Bybee Farm or the Dean Farm or the Miller Farm... or the Dunn and Myers Farm near Ashland or any other of the scores of farms in the Rogue River Valley, and you will see many times more value than all the gold ever mined in the whole Southern Oregon; and there you will find the reason for the high quality of the Early Pioneer Settlers, and also of their fine homes and other buildings. They came to remain. They were the real Oregon builders; and their homes and families have become monuments to their memory."

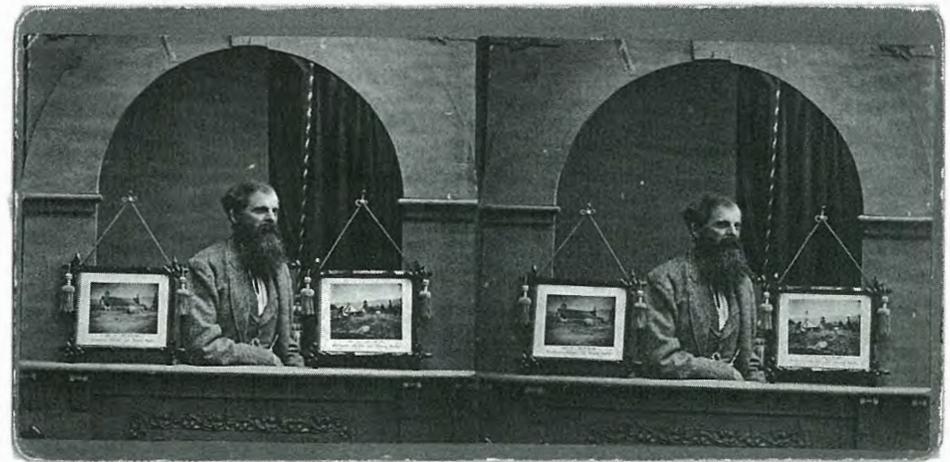
—Fletcher Linn

R. PRIDE OF PERCHE
 FLEURY
 WHITE ROSE
 & JENNEY
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W.C. MYER

W.C. Myer bred both magnificent Percherons (left) and diminutive shetlands, like the one hitched to his cart.



William Cortez Myer poses with images of his stables and Ashland property in this stereo-optic view. Circa 1870s.

fulness in building community. They established businesses, provided services, made innovations and improvements and, in general, made life easier and richer for the entire region. W.C. Myer's name appears often when researching the agricultural arena, especially where purebred or "blooded" stock is involved, and particularly with any mention of Percheron horses.

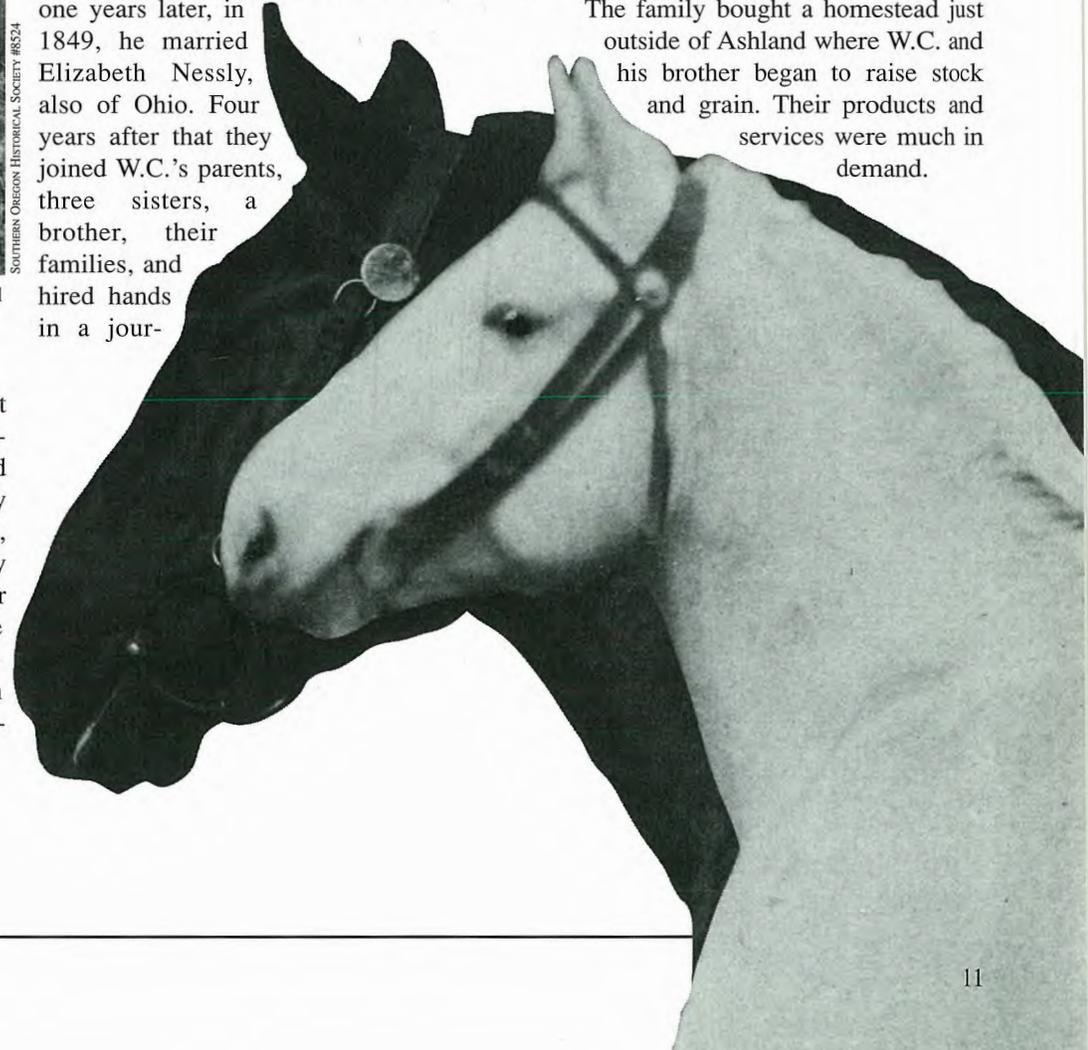
William Cortez Myer was born in Jefferson County, Ohio, in 1818. Thirty-one years later, in 1849, he married Elizabeth Nessly, also of Ohio. Four years after that they joined W.C.'s parents, three sisters, a brother, their families, and hired hands in a jour-

ney westward. They arrived in the Rogue River Valley during September of 1853, after about six month's travel.²

On this arduous journey, Nathaniel Myer took time to note his son W.C.'s penchant for the livestock business in a diary entry: "28th. - Clear and frosty morning. Cortez has bought 4 cows and four or 5 heifers since we left home. He [would] as soon buy on Sunday as any other day. This day bought two black mares and one calf. . . ."³

The family bought a homestead just outside of Ashland where W.C. and his brother began to raise stock and grain. Their products and services were much in demand.

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The pioneers of southern Oregon not only constructed buildings and generated families, but also established the underpinnings of our local economy and culture. Beeson, Hoffman, Helman, Beekman, Bybee, and Linn were all steady notes in the score of "Early Pioneer Settlers." These names and others like them consistently appear in early documents relating to this area. Upon reflection one marvels at their enterprising resource-



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #7480

In 1870 Myer brought the first Percherons to Oregon. He is pictured outside his barn in Ashland with one of his fine stallions.

Early farmers and stockmen were cultivating supplies not only for Valley dwellers, but for the many people passing through looking for land and/or mining opportunities.

The importance of horses to the early settlers may be extrapolated, if order of placement in the text has any weight, from the 1857 diary of Welborn Beeson. The number of horses (thirty-one) was written immediately after Beeson enumerated the number of families on Wagner Creek (there were seven). He then went on to say that there was a sawmill operator, and that the balance of inhabitants were farmers.⁴

Furthering his own interests and those of his peers, W.C. Myer helped organize, and served as president of, Jacksonville's first agricultural fair. The event took place in October, 1859. Of the thirty-one exhibitors, Myer took six premiums, tying with a "Dr. Robinson" for the most awards to any one exhibitor.⁵ At the same time, he furthered his knowledge of improved breeds and equipment by reading the *Breeder's Gazette* and the *Oregonian*, and continually modernized his business.

In 1865, Myer imported the horse "Captain Sligart" from Ohio, a general purpose breed. Captain Sligart stood at stud and was travelled to surrounding

farms to provide his services. The stallion must have had quite a reputation in the Rogue Valley as mention of the horse is made in the [Ashland] *Tidings*, and in Walling's, "History of Southern Oregon."

Myer's life in Ashland is characterized by these few words he interjected into a letter written by his wife to her sister:



W.C. Myer

"Think we are killing ourselves to get rich? If you knew what it takes to live

here, you would not wonder we have to work to live. . . We have milked forty cows this summer and made lots of butter and cheese. . . I have sold over 400 dozens of eggs this spring and summer. . . I now make as good cheese as any fellow that says 'kow' [sic]. Can bake a pretty good batch of bread. . . Am tolerably good at a wash-tub, as I have had some practice at it this summer. . . I have broke some colts this summer and I can stick the wildest of them. My principal saddle animal is a small grey mule. It has stood more abuse and will get over the mountains to hunt stock better than anything I have ever had. . . Hurry up your boys, and push the iron horse across the plains, and I trust I yet may live to ride an Oregon horse on your old farm."⁶

In 1868 Myer sold his Oregon homestead and moved east to Kansas to take part in the great livestock boom. He must have done fairly well in the Rogue River Valley because he was able to drive two hundred horses back across the plains. The trip took five months by the Southern Route, now popularly referred to as the Applegate Trail. He employed the help of seven hired men and his nephew, William. This foray to the Midwest didn't last long – in December of the following year, he sold the Kansas property and returned to southern Oregon.

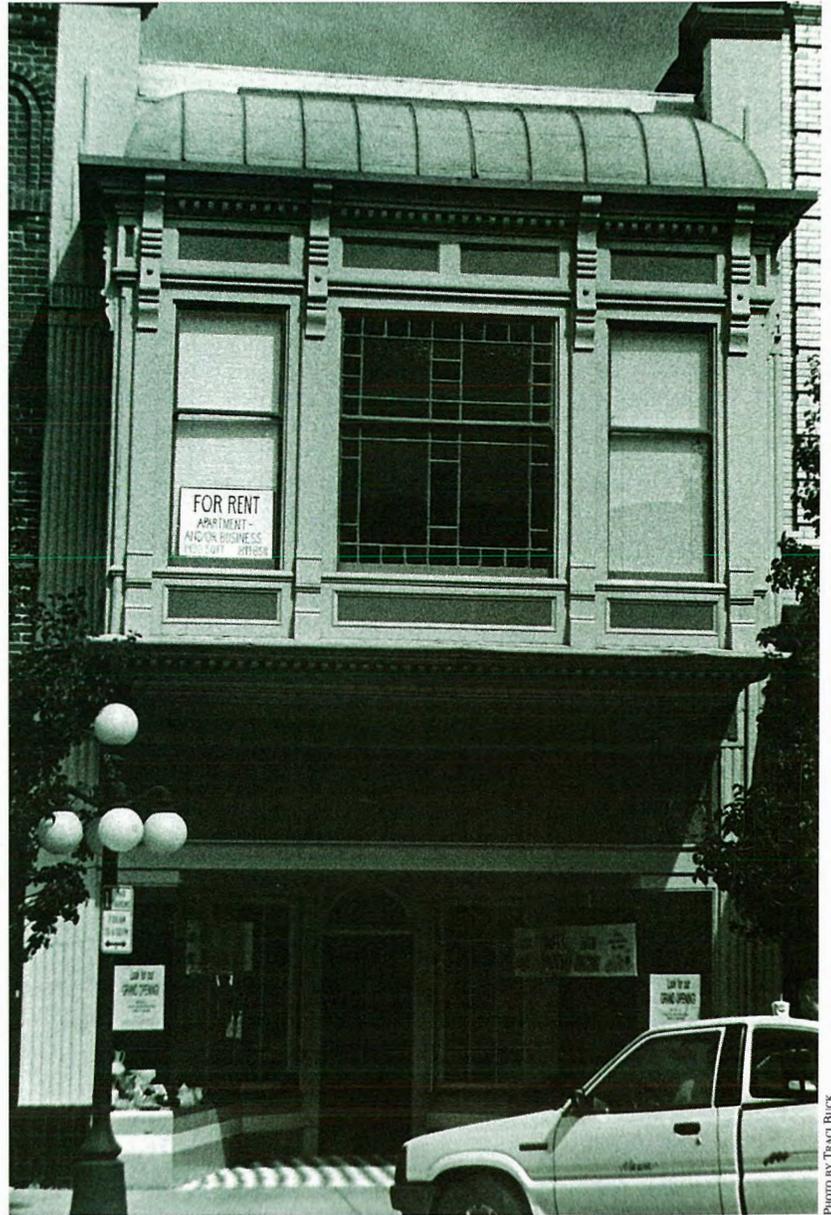
Upon his return to the Valley, Myer bought a farm in Ashland, complete with house and barn. He built another huge barn on the property in 1870. The joinery was done entirely by "tongue and groove" and secured with wooden dowels; not a single nail was used. He then settled his family and installed the Percheron horses, "White Prince," "Doll," and "Maggie," which he had brought from the Midwest. These were reportedly the first Percherons imported into the Pacific Northwest, a notable first of many for Mr. Myer. He used these animals primarily for breeding purposes. The stallion stood at stud in his barn, and was travelled to other regions, just as Captain Sligart had been.

In 1872, Myer travelled east to bring back the highly regarded Percheron stallion "Napoleon," and four Jersey cattle. Four years later, his importation of Percherons into the Valley continued with "Pride of Perche," "General Fleury," "White Rose," and "Jennie."

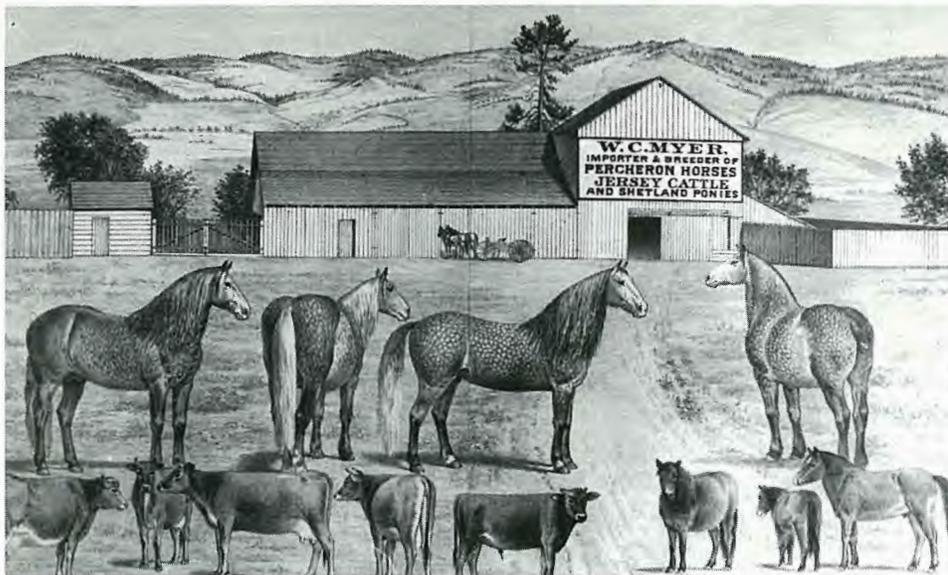
“

The hubbub of everyday life blinds most to the beauty of yesteryear. It certainly did for me.

”



Built in 1894 the Wilkinson-Swem building at 217 E. Main is a fine example of a Queen Anne structure containing both residence and shop. Street level was a meat market, the second story was the Wilkinson family home. Today “Hot Pots” occupies the retail space.



Myer had a mural painted on the side of his barn picturing his blooded stock. Although the barn is still standing, years of storms have washed away the once familiar figures.¹⁶

His investment in Percherons proved wise. Favored by farmers because of their manageable yet energetic nature, Percherons soon became the most popular draft horse breed in America. For the many families who couldn't afford purebred horses, a draft horse was often bred with a smaller-boned breed, resulting in a horse that could pull a plow or cart and be ridden to town. These smaller crossbreeds also required less food than a larger draft animal – they were “fuel efficient,” yet also pulled their weight.

Myer had a flair for promotion and took great advantage of agricultural fairs. At the fairs he could sell and publicize his stock and ideas to the people of the region—especially when his animals placed in various competitions. Myer did not rely solely on local agricultural fairs, but travelled to surrounding states as well. He would, however, occasionally boycott those he thought were exploiting him. He also took advantage of his property and painted an advertisement on the side of his large barn. This painting made a lasting impression on pioneer Fletcher Linn who mentioned it in his *Reminiscences*:

“The very large old Barn which he erected so many years ago, an [sic] on the broad side of which was painted a huge sign, showing pictures of his beautiful blooded stock, is still standing and in use; but years of storms have unfortunately washed out the once familiar figures of the

beautiful horses and Jersey Cows glacing [sic] out at the passers-by.”⁷

Myer ran advertisements in newspapers, published a promotional pamphlet on the value and regard of the Percheron, a pamphlet on the merits of Jersey cows, and even had ads printed on envelopes. Newspaper engravings and articles advertising Myer and his stock trade appeared in such abundance that examples can still be found today in archives as far away as Salem and Portland. In the [Ashland] *Tidings*, he consistently advertised his animals and available services. After testament to the breed, and the prices they commanded, he offered the



Fast Trotting Stallion CAPT. SLIGART—Owned by W. C. Myer, of Ashland Mills, Oreg.

“Captain Sligart,” was brought to the Valley in 1865. The horse is mentioned in Walling’s “History of Southern Oregon.”

signed testimony of local horsemen, and indicated that he could readily procure more of the same – a powerful and savvy entreaty.

Myer understood that the Rogue River Valley could only sustain so much of his trade. In order to expand his interests, he

had to travel his animals so potential customers could be convinced first hand of the merits of his blooded stock. Using local media to his advantage, in 1879 an article appeared in the [Ashland] *Tidings*:

“On Monday next W.C. Myer will start for the Sound country with seven head of young Percheron stock and his Shetland pony, “Bobby Burns.” The Shetland will not be for sale, but the others will doubtless be disposed of before Mr. M. returns. They are all well bred, fine animals, and are a credit to the section of the country which raised them. There are three young stallions, one a yearling and two of them two years old, the latter weighing respectively, 1,260 and 1,440; an extra fine match pair of bay mares, weighing together 2,935 lbs, which will undoubtedly attract much attention wherever they may be taken, and a pair of gray fillies, one and two years old, respectively. Mr. Myer will stop a short time in Portland, and then proceed to the Sound, visiting Olympia and Seattle. His reputation and that of his stock has preceded him to that section and we feel sure he will be well received. That the Percheron stock is gaining popularity and giving satisfaction in the Eastern States, may be seen from the importations mentioned by the Eastern papers. In the New York Tribune of the 20th ult., we are told that 33 head of Percheron stock, horses, mares and colts, have just been brought from France by one importer, Mr. W. H. Dunham.”

His advertising budget must have put him in good stead with the [Ashland] *Tidings*, for the paper itself encouraged readers to peruse Myer’s ad: “Interesting to Stock Men. - Read the new column advertisement of W. C. Myer in today’s issue. Mr. M. appreciates the value of printer’s ink as an indispensable auxiliary to success. He has expended much in advertising, and is satisfied that it pays....”

In some of his advertisements, Myer let potential customers know that his stock was scattered throughout California, the Umpqua and Willamette valleys, Eastern Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana Territories, and British Columbia. A huge range, considering they had to physically traverse the landscape to arrive at these far-flung destinations, all without benefit of train or truck. In the 1890s a depression stopped all importations and as a result

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SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #1514

crossbreeds proliferated.¹³

Myer risked great amounts of money every time he imported stock for his enterprise. With his eye for animals, entrepreneurial spirit, and aggressive advertising his business thrived. He also made a lasting impression on those living in southern Oregon. Many pioneer diaries, including the following, remark on Myer's noted Percheron horses and Shetland ponies.

"Mr. Myer owned a large farm down at the west end of Ashland and he brought in the first Percheron horses and the first Jersey cows that was in the valley and the first Shetland ponies."

— Almeda Coder⁸

"He was particularly interested in the importation and breeding of fine Percheron horses, a breed which soon became popular and in general demand by all progressive farmers. Later he brought in Jersey Cattle, much better milk producers than the 'mixed breeds' in use on most farms when none better were available, and thus found ready demand for all that he could raise."

— Fletcher Linn⁹

"During the years 1850-1865, many families came into the Upper Rogue Valley... Coming nearer the settlement [Ashland] were the Patton homestead and the W.C. Myer Farm, noted for Percheron horses and Shetland ponies"

— Myrtle Converse¹⁰

Even John Billings, who currently lives on the Myer Farm, describes his great grandfather as, "Quite a publicist and a little bit of a horsetrader, if you know what I mean."¹¹

Myer wasn't alone in bringing stock to the region. To supply the needs of the enormous influx of settlers in the Pacific Northwest, all manner of livestock was wanted. As mentioned in an 1892 report from the State Board of Agriculture, "Many of the early immigrants brought with them valuable Horses and Cattle, and stock-raising became a specialty. Large herds of Cattle were annually driven to the markets, north an[d] south, and our Horses were improved by the importation of the best strains of blooded stock, until they

have made for themselves a record as roadsters and draught horses that has placed them among the first on the coast."¹²

W.C. Myer died May 21, 1903 and was buried in Ashland. His two children, William Myer and Frances Myer Billings divided his land: Frances inherited the cultivated area and farm buildings, and William assumed title of the grazing land. Will and his wife, Annie (Gall) then sold their portion of the land and moved to High Street in Ashland.

Ralph Billings, Frances's son, assumed the operation and ownership of the farm in 1905, and farmed it until his death in 1956. Since that time, Ralph's son John has owned and operated it. They farmed with the Percherons until the early 1940s, at which time John speculated that the horses were some thirty years old. None of the Percherons were bred. In 1943 the Billings acquired a tractor which could do the job of six horses. The horses were put out to pasture. Ralph and his family did have purebred Jersey cattle until their children grew up and moved away. The descendants of the Jerseys are still around, although they have been bred with Angus cattle.

The farm itself, being owned by the same family for over one hundred years, was designated an Oregon Century Farm in 1974. The current farm has 150 acres compared to the original, which was reputed to be several thousand.¹⁴ According to Ralph Billings, the cement silo is the oldest of its type in this part of the state.¹⁵ Both the original house and barns are still standing. A larger house was built around 1887, immediately adjacent to the old house, which is now used as a utility building.

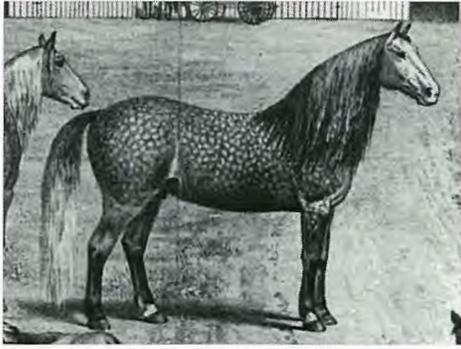
At the 27th Annual Reunion of the Southern Oregon Pioneer Association, Myer was memorialized:

"Mr. Myer had been for over 64 years a member of the Methodist Church and was for many years a Steward and Trustee in the Church. Mr. Myer was a worthy Pioneer and citizen, honorable and Straight forward in his dealings with his fellow man, true to his country, his neighbors and his God—Few men among the Pioneers of Southern Oregon did more for the advancement of his City,

county, and State than he. His years were long and active ones, and his life full of usefulness, leaving imprints upon the history of the Community where he so long resided, that will long survive—The Pioneer Society of Southern Oregon, in his death, lost one of the most worthy members, and this community one of its honored and respected citizens whose industry and integrity entitle his memory to be long cherished as it will be, by his surviving family, neighbors and friends—All of which is respectfully submitted █."

Greta Brunschwyler is the Curator of Exhibits at the Southern Oregon Historical Society.

1. Fletcher Linn, *Reminiscences*, book 4, p. 118.
2. *Ashland Tidings*, 24 Sept. 1952, p.7.
3. *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 60, p. 381.
4. "Diary of Welborn Beeson, SR," 1857, University of Oregon Library, Special Collections Dept. 1 Feb. 1985, for Mary Keating.
5. George Himes, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 8, p. 326.
6. Edward M. Ham, Ed. *Journey into Southern Oregon: Diary of a Pennsylvania Dutchman*, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Sept. 1959, vol 60, p. 377. S
7. Linn, p. 118.
8. Mrs. Almeda Coder, SOHS oral history, tape 49(Abel Helman's granddaughter), p. 14.
9. Linn, p. 118.
10. Myrtle Converse, "Books, Balls, and Bibles 1852-1912," p. 37.
11. John Billings, phone interview, summer 1997.
12. *The Resources of the State of Oregon*, (prepared by the State Board of Agriculture, Salem, Oregon, 1892.)
13. Charles Philip Fox, *Circus Baggage Stock*, (Heart Prairie Press Whitewater, Wisconsin, 1983).
14. *Oregon Historical Society Century Farm application*.
15. *Ashland Daily Tidings* 29 Aug. 1974.
16. Linn, p.118.



Detail from mural, depicting Percherons.

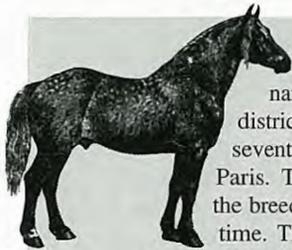


The first Percherons were brought to America in 1839. This one belonged to W.C. Myer of Ashland.



One of Myer's young stallions. Percherons often go from black to white as they mature.

The Percheron in the United States



The Percheron breed derives its name from the French district of La Perche, some seventy miles southeast of Paris. The exact origins of the breed have been lost over time. The horses may have descended from the original ones found in that region during the Ice Age, or they might be closely related to the Boulonnais horses used in the Roman invasion of Brittany. Still others believe the breed is from Abd el Rahman's Arab stallions, or were brought to France by the invading Moors at the battle of Tours and Poitiers, after which the remaining horses were divided among the victorious French forces. Regardless of these ancient beginnings, it is known that at two points in history the native mares of the La Perche region of France were mated with Arab stallions, first during the eighth century, and later during the Middle Ages. By the time of the crusades the Percheron was widely recognized as outstanding for its substance, soundness, and characteristic style.¹

Throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, horses in America were used primarily for riding and pulling light vehicles. In the West, horses were needed to carry supplies to mining camps and haul ore to the railheads. At first, local Indian ponies were relied upon. Later, these were often replaced by larger and stronger draft crosses. Two draft-type horses, the Conestoga horse and the Vermont Drafter, were developed in America; both, however, were absorbed into the general horse population by 1800. In 1823, a horse named "Jean Le Blanc" was foaled in La Perche; all of today's bloodlines trace directly to him. The first Percherons to come to America were brought in 1839 by Edward Harris of Moorestown, New Jersey. The stallions "Normandy" and "Napoleon" were imported to Ohio in 1851 (W.C. Myer's horse "Louis Napoleon" was descended from "Napoleon"). Tremendous agricultural expansion in the 1880s gave the

breed a big boost. In 1884, more than two thousand Percherons were brought to the United States.²

Originally, oxen were the preferred draft animal on most American farms. They cost half as much as horses, required half the feed, and could be eaten when they were no longer useful or died.

Oxen, however, worked only half as fast as horses, their hooves left them virtually useless on frozen winter fields and roads, and physiologically they were unsuitable for pulling the new farm equipment developed in the nineteenth century. The revolution in agricultural technology, westward expansion, and the growth of American cities during the nineteenth century, led to the emergence of the draft horse as America's principal work animal.³ In a comparison of heavy pulling and driving ability amongst draft horse breeds Clydesdales were considered too leggy and clumsy, Suffolks too small, Belgians were inclined to be too heavy, were too slow afoot and gave up too easily, and Shires were just too heavy and could not step lively enough to keep the heavy loads moving under tough conditions as could the quick-footed Percherons.⁴

The revolution in agricultural technology between 1820 and 1870, created a demand for a larger and stronger horse to power the new equipment. In 1862, Congress passed the Morrill Land Grant Act which led to the establishment of state agricultural colleges. As farmers became more educated, there was a corresponding improvement in the care, feeding, and breeding of horses. This information was widely dispersed in publications such as the *Breeder's Gazette*.

New and improved farm equipment greatly increased the productivity of the American farmer. With the McCormick reaper, which both cut and tied grain into stalks, one man could do the work of thirty. New steel plows, double-width harrows and seed drills, mowers, binders, combines and threshers decreased the need for manpower, but increased the demand for horsepower. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the typical Midwestern wheat

farm had ten horses, each of which worked an average of six hundred hours per year.⁵

Importations halted with a depression in the 1890s, scattering much of the early blood. At the turn of the century, however, a resurgence began, and by 1910, 31,900 Percheron horses had been registered by the 5,338 American Percheron breeders. The Percheron was so popular that by 1930 the government census showed three times as many registered Percherons as the four other draft breeds combined.⁶ After the second World War, widespread use of the tractor virtually destroyed the American market for draft horses. As a result, only fifty-eight Percherons were registered in 1954.⁷

The Amish are credited in part with the breed's survival in the United States. Interest in draft horses revived in the 1960s. Now, there are probably 15,000 Percherons registered in the United States.⁸ Their confirmation and use is very different from that of their ancestors. The breed has changed so dramatically that many American breeders won't accept the mixing of French Percheron blood in their stock.⁹ Percherons are now being used primarily for show purposes. ■

1. Percheron Horse Association of America, Promotional Material, PO Box 141, Fredricktown, OH.

2. "Power for an Emerging Nation" exhibit at the International Museum of the Horse, Kentucky Horse Park, www.horseworld.com/imh/draft/dr1.html.

3. Maurice Telleen, *Draft Horse Primer*, Rodale Press, (Emmaus, PA., 1977).

4. Charles Philip Fox, *Circus Baggage Stock*, Heart Prairie Press, (Whitewater, WI, 1983).

5. "Power for an Emerging Nation."

6. Maurice Telleen.

7. Promotional Material.

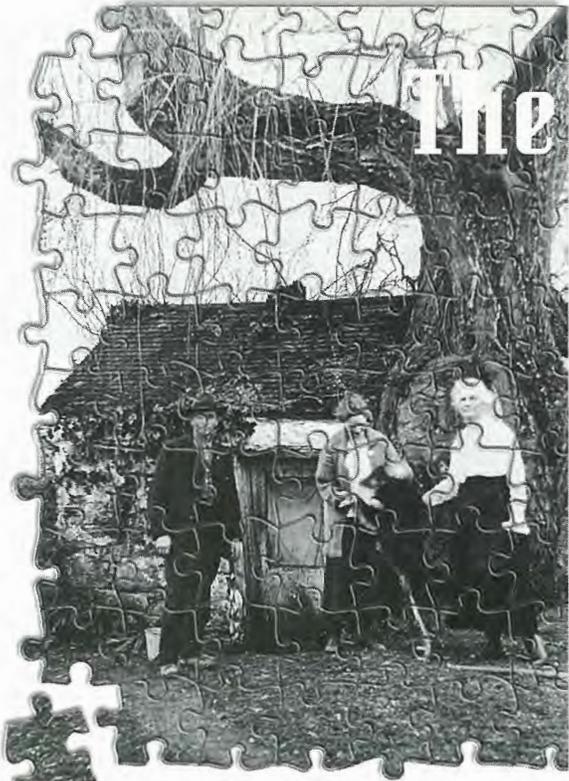
8. Percheron Society of America, phone interview, summer 1997.

9. Clarence Dudley, phone interview with California Teamster and longtime Percheron breeder, summer, 1997.

The

Hanley Farm Spring I

by Margaret Hambly Watson



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #10172, ALTERED

Alice and Clair Hanley by the spring house in the 1920s. The structure, even then, was falling into disrepair. Preservation work has begun, but many questions remain unanswered.

Oregon Territory, March 25, 1857. Settlers Michael and Martha Hanley made arrangements to purchase some Donation Land Claim acreage, improved with a log house and a large frame barn, on the road from Jacksonville to Fort Lane (near Tolo). In July of that year, the Hanleys trundled their goods and children down from Douglas County to their new farm in the heart of the Rogue Valley.

Michael soon began improvements to the farm, including the construction of a stone structure built into a small earthen berm over a spring near the center of the farm. The building would protect the spring from freezing solid during the winter, and from the trampling and waste of animals. It could also serve as cold food storage during the long hot summer months. Spring houses dotted farms across Ohio, Michael's place of birth, and was as obvious an improvement to the place as would be a refrigerator or sink in a kitchen today.

The Hanley's stone spring house was built to last. The nearly rectangular building boasted walls one-and-a-half feet thick made from local sandstone. A massive lintel stone framed the door, and was held fast by thick, rough-sawn boards. Exposed to snow, flood, and falling trees, the spring house withstood the test of time with only an occasional patching and roof-job. Eventually the structure was left as an outmoded icon of the past in a farmscape that developed into a garden landscape around the commanding "new" Hanley farm house (built around 1872). The spring house became a reliquary of spiders and strange smells, with mortar missing and fallen stones scattered at its foundation. Despite its dilapidated state the building spoke with a sense of permanence and strong connection to the past.

By 1994, nearly 150 years from its construction, the spring house spring ran dry and the now brittle walls bulged precariously.

Careful studies, orchestrated by the Southern Oregon Historical Society staff, architects, preservationists, and student interns, began to outline the steps necessary to keep the spring house standing. Questions were raised; how was this building originally constructed and finished? What materials and tools were used? How was it used, and who used it? What did it look like? How do we preserve it? Who knows how to do all this properly?

Partnerships with professional organizations were created that could bring expertise to the Spring House Preservation Project. The Preservation Institute of Windsor Vermont, which conducts national training seminars, agreed to hold a workshop to restore the spring house. A University of Oregon graduate student in architecture and preservation combed archives locally and nationally, looking for original roof construction clues and evidence of other surviving buildings of this type. Anthropology students from Southern Oregon University excavated the perimeter of the building and a portion of the dry spring inside during an archaeology field school. They looked for ceramic shards and other clues that might shed light on how and who used the building. National advertising brought together students and professional masons seeking preservation training. They came from Oregon, Idaho and California, to repair the spring house and learn some old tricks of the mason's trade. What was discovered literally changed the face of this old stone structure.

Southern Oregon University students, under the direction of Southern Oregon Historical Society staff archaeologist Ted Goebel, discovered porcelain-like and heavy, white-bodied ceramics. Large slabs of sandstone, uncovered near the entry, revealed steps had once formed a path to the door. Stones were exposed that had fallen from the wall as mortar gave way. Scientific analysis and cata-



PHOTO BY MARGARET HAMBLY WATSON

In the summer of 1997, participants came from Oregon, Idaho, and California for the Southern Oregon Historical Society's archaeology field school and preservation workshop.

ouse

Springs Back!



logging of all the artifacts recovered has been undertaken.

Masonry students, led by Preservation Institute mason John Wastrom, studied the composition of the original mortar and replicated the lime and sand-based recipe. Careful examination and cleaning of the walls revealed building techniques, including a double dry-wall construction with rubble in-fill, and chinking of smaller stones between the larger stones. Layers of mortar pressed between the rocks by trowel after dry construction “pointed” the walls. Discovery of finishing techniques such as scribing the mortar joints, done to give the impression of a more formal and uniform stone structure, required students to replicate ancient techniques of masonry. The application of a heavy plaster finish on the interior, called “pargeting,” and a thick whitewash covering the entire surface of the spring house mocked the students’ attraction to the robust, raw stone walls. Visually, the whitewash made the stone look stuccoed; structurally, however, it protected the mortar with a waterproof barrier—an essential factor in constructing a lasting building.

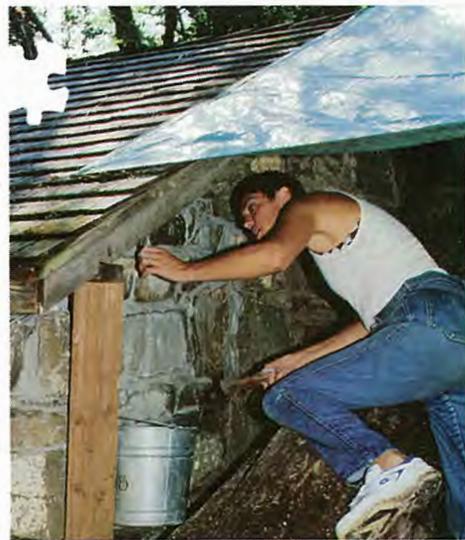
All these observations were utilized in restoring the spring house to its original condition. Reconstructed retaining walls alongside scribed and whitewashed walls, once hidden by years of garden growth and partially covered with dirt, revealed the historic meaning of this functional structure in the midst of a garden setting. The students were the first in generations to see Michael Hanley’s intentions – a gem, gleaming white, sturdy, functional, and waterproof,

holding the wild and wooly elements of the landscape at bay.

Many discoveries and revelations led to the historically accurate restoration of the structure, and just as many new questions arose. Still unanswered is how the spring house was used. Initial observations of the recovered ceramic samples from the archaeological dig do not suggest that stoneware and ironstone vessels were used to store food in the cool of the spring house. Why were there so many porcelaineous and whiteware chips—usually associated with fancy tableware? Did the function of the spring house change over time? When and why did these changes take place? Why did the spring run dry? Was it because of the willow tree?

Other questions about the construction of the building remain unanswered. On the interior of the western gable end are a series of crosshatches. Are these sloppy scribe marks made by a tired and inexperienced mason? Or are they a signature, a mark that could lead one to ancient masonic ritual and the safety of fraternity? Michael Hanley is known to have hosted secret masonic rites atop Hanley Hill. Was the completion of this stone structure associated in any way with these mysterious rites?

These questions, and many more, may or may not ever be answered. But the asking of them brings us into a closer relationship with the past; brings the spring house into sharper focus; helps us accept the reality of whitewash versus the romance of stone. This once state-of-the-art farm structure emerged through time to be rediscovered on the verge of a millennium where buildings



Historian Margaret Watson at work on the spring house.



Preservation Institute mason John Wastrom.

rise from steel and glass skeletons, and the cross-hatches of www. evoke ribbons of communication as recognizable to us today as the mystery slashes above the spring house’s lintel must have been to those “in the know” a century ago. Perhaps 150 years from now, the time capsule of stone will be reopened, and discovered in new ways with new methods and new questions ■ .

Margaret Hambly Watson, a graduate of Winterthur, is a historian with the Southern Oregon Historical Society.

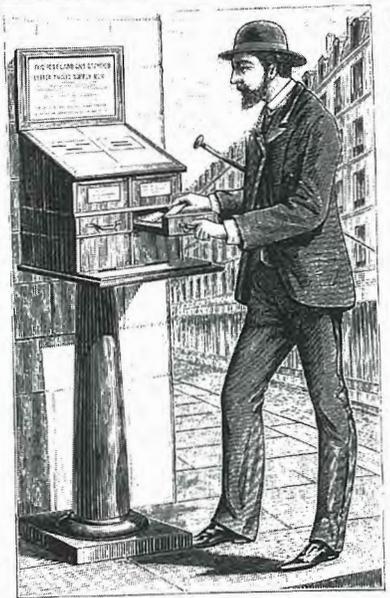
If you would like to help finish whitewashing the Hanley Farm spring house, and to have a more intimate view of this building, call The Southern Oregon Historical Society at (541) 773-6536.



Wanted: A Wife

By Louise A. Watson

Courtship in southern Oregon took place through the mail, and in the newspaper



What good news! Two people are getting married and planning a life together. The bride eagerly anticipates her wedding day: flowers, music, food, excited friends and relatives, a special gown, that magic tradition of something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue. It seems it's always been that way.

On the western frontier, with a shortage of women, courtships often started with a letter written "back home" from a lonely miner or farmer seeking a wife. In 1859, John Watson wrote from Siskiyou County to his uncle in Pershire, Scotland, describing his prospecting adventures and bemoaning his difficulty in finding a spouse. "There is a population of ten thousand people, and out of that ten thousand, there is [sic] only fifty young marriageable ladies, so what chance have I got to get one—why none at all—so I expect I will have to go and get a bonnie Scotch lassie."¹

History doesn't record whether Watson ever found his Scottish lassie but Miles S. Wakeman, a veteran of the Rogue River Indian wars found his bride through the mail. He wrote home to Pennsylvania in 1853 and, using a very popular method, he "ordered" a prospective wife. Sarah Catherine Evans of Philadelphia journeyed west to join him. Miles and Sarah were married in Jacksonville, Oregon, on June 6, 1863, at the home of J.G. Riddle, county magistrate. Reportedly, she was disappointed in Miles' height but married him anyway. Sarah sat for a formal portrait in the gown she'd stitched for the ceremony. It was fashioned of black faille with small lavender leaves, a full skirt, gathered pleats, and a light brown lining.² Sarah's wedding gown and history are part of the Southern Oregon Historical Society's collections and will be on display at the Jacksonville Museum through January 10, 1998.

Men throughout the West were looking for wives. *The Talent News*, a small community newspaper published in Talent, Oregon, from 1892 to 1894, printed (almost gleefully) an advertisement from a gentleman who only signed himself as "X." The ad, which appeared November 1, 1892, read: "Wife wanted—I am a young man twenty-five years of age, weight 178 pounds. My habits for this country, are fairly good. I have a pretty cabin by the side of a romantic mountain stream, in the midst of a lovely grove of evergreens. My business (mining and wood cutting)



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #10171

Miles Wakeman "mail-ordered" wife Sarah from Philadelphia. Portrait, 1863.

— renders it very inconvenient to do my own housework and I want a wife. I can very nearly support myself now, and with the aid of an honest, industrious help-meet I think I can lay up money. She must be able to cook anything from a miner's flap-jack to an acorn-pie; must be not over twenty, good looking and an orphan, as I don't want any mother-in-law boss over me."³

Those readers over one hundred years ago in Talent, Oregon, were probably hoping for wedding bells, especially after reading replies to "X" from Rosie Lee in Salem, and "R.Z.L." Miss Lee said she was eighteen, weighed 103, and had a kind stepfather and mother who "don't boss anybody." She also did most of the cooking. "R.Z.L." wrote that she was blonde, twenty years old, an orphan, possessed of "blue eyes that sparkle like—well, like a Negro's heel before daylight." Her cooking ability ranged from preparing a mud pie to an elephant's trunk.⁴

To satisfy everyone's romantic curiosity, "X" reported in the *Talent News*, New Year's Day 1893, that he had decided to wed "R.Z.L." For playing Cupid, *Talent News* Editor Robison wrote that he wouldn't mind accepting a quarter-section of "bride's cake," or the groom's gift of a "steer calf or a small size cayuse pony, a Waterbury watch, or some other equally valuable present which we could make use of in our business."⁵

If "X" and "R.Z.L." ever tied the knot and went off to live in that pretty cabin by the stream, Editor Robison didn't put the wedding announcement in the paper. It could all have been a joke on the part of Robison to boost his circulation.

In Arizona, a thousand miles away from Oregon, men were also using newspaper ads

to find wives. Readers of a weekly in Yuma were privy to the following ad: "Wanted: a nice, plump, healthy, good-natured, good-looking domestic and affectionate lady to correspond with. Object: matrimony. If anybody doesn't like our way of going about this business... it's none of their business." Another Arizona swain, admitting he was middle-aged, had pretty specific requirements for a mate in his ad. She should be "under 25 years of age and just a bit on the lazy side; fond of reading; just enough of ambition to keep herself clean and look after the household; very little work to do; washing put out. A lady on the slender side preferred; about a 36-inch bust measure..."⁶

A hard life awaited the women who came west to join their men, something they probably knew deep down, no matter how romantic the notion of a wedding. On April 4, 1883, Nannie Tiffany of West Virginia married Walt Alderson, a Texas cowboy she met through Kansas relatives. They quickly headed for Montana, via stagecoach and train, looking forward to a bright, rich future in cattle ranching. It didn't quite go that way: Nannie's first baby was born in 1884, the same day her dream house was burned to the ground by Cheyenne Indians. Four years, two children, and a failed ranch later, Nannie remembered her bridal trip: "I was a girl then, and every little hardship was a game, but now it was all grimly serious."⁷

Today you can pull up an Internet search engine, enter "mail order brides," and watch thousands of entries unfold on the screen—and they aren't talking about 19th century women who crossed the plains in covered wagons. Matrimonial traffic is still, however, traveling from East to West—the Far East, that is. Australia, Latin America, Russia, and Europe are also actively trading in matrimony. The Internet "mail order bride" entry lists 714,558 related subjects. Topics include "Russian Mail Order Brides," "The Lovemall," "Filipina Dreamgirls," and a discussion of immigration laws regarding foreign brides.

Ordering brides from other countries is not a new phenomenon, according to Gary Clark, author of *Your Bride Is In The Mail*, a step-by-step guidebook for men considering the mail order bride option. He points out on his Web site, that French royalty wanted to colonize what is now Quebec in the 17th and 18th centuries. In order to do so the monarchy sponsored French brides for the lonely male settlers in the New World. Asian men who settled in America also wrote home for brides from matchmaking services. These new wives were called "picture brides" because a photo was frequently used to

help make the decision.⁸

Clark doesn't recommend international mail order as a means of finding wives because of the expense involved in traveling to her country for introductions.⁹

Recently *The Oregonian* stated that an estimated two thousand men purchase wives through mail order catalogs each year.¹⁰ Personal ads have become commonplace. The following from the Medford *Mail Tribune's* "Personally Speaking" section illustrates today's criteria for a mate: "Intellectual writer, enjoys tennis, golf, conversational walks and inexpensive meals, 36. No psychics, channelers or astrologists need apply."¹¹

The days when there were "ten thousand men and only fifty marriageable women" in southern Oregon have long since passed. Women are now advertising for their own version of happiness, be it "fun," "adventure," "a possible relationship," or maybe even "blendship." It's probably too much, however, to expect the *Mail Tribune* to print the results. ■

Sarah Wakeman's wedding gown and history are part of the Southern Oregon Historical Society's collections and will be on display at the Jacksonville Museum through January 10, 1998.

Louise Watson is a Medford freelance writer and history buff. Next year, she will proudly assume the role of Mother of the Groom.

1. Dani Dodge, "Early courting followed strict code of behavior," *Mail Tribune*, How It Was, Our Children, (Special Section), 30 Mar. 1997, p. 7A.
2. Collection of Southern Oregon Historical Society, deposited with the Jacksonville Museum, 27 Feb. 1959 by Mr. and Mrs. William Kocsis, Accession No. 82.47.1, Catalog 3, Personal Artifacts.
3. *Talent News*, Vol. 1, No. 19, 1 Nov. 1892, p. 1.
4. *Ibid*, No. 21, 1 Dec. 1892, p. 2.
5. *Ibid*.
6. Don Dederer, "Newspaper Ads Were The Words that Wed the West," *Arizona Highways*, Vol. 70, No. 11, November 1994, p. 51.
7. William Bevis, "Nannie Alderson's Frontier And Ours," a review of *A Bride Goes West*, by Nannie Alderson and Helena Smith, *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, pp. 29-31.
8. Gary Clark, "A Cold Look At The Truth About Mail Order Brides," World Wide Web, 1997, p. 1.
9. *Ibid*, p. 2.
10. *The Oregonian*, 10 Oct. 1997.
11. *The Mail Tribune*, 10 Oct. 1997.

"A BANK FOR EVERYBODY"

THE FARMERS AND FRUITGROWERS BANK

"The cashier's window is first, of course," reported the Medford Mail Tribune, "and in connection the latest thing in money cages have been installed so that the cashier or paying teller can conduct business with the wicket up without any danger of light-fingered gentry swiping any part of the bank's assets."

by William Alley

Throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, Medford could boast of having four healthy homegrown banking institutions. The oldest was the Jackson County Bank, which was organized in 1892. In 1905 the First National Bank of Medford was opened, followed in 1906 by Medford National Bank. The youngest of these four was the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank.

The Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank was organized in August of 1909 with initial capitalization of \$50,000. At the first stockholders' meeting in September the bank's directors were

elected. The board consisted of George L. Davis, Louis Niedermeyer, Louis E. Wakeman, W.H. Stewart, I.W. Thomas, A.C. Randall and James Campbell. The directors immediately elected the following slate of officers for the bank: George L. Davis, president; Louis Niedermeyer, vice president; Louis Wakeman, cashier; and L.L. Jacobs assistant cashier.¹

The Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank opened its doors to the public on December 23, 1909, in the corner office of the Syndicate Building, located on the northwest corner of Main and Grape streets. Described as "The most elaborately and conveniently furnished bank in southern Oregon," the Farmers and Fruitgrowers boasted a main counter and cashier's window made of mahogany. "The cashier's window is first, of course," reported the *Medford Mail Tribune*, "and in connection the latest thing in money cages have [sic] been installed so that the cashier or paying teller can conduct business with the wicket up without any [danger] of light-fingered gentry swiping any part of the bank's assets." In order to make himself readily available to customers, the president's office was located in the front of the building. To the right of the entrance was

a section devoted to lady customers, enabling them to conduct their banking without having to loiter in the lobby. The vault for cash and safe deposit boxes was in the rear of the building.²

Because the president of the bank, George Davis, was also a principal of the Bank of Jacksonville, it was decided by the Board of Directors to merge the two banks and operate the Jacksonville institution as a branch of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers. Application to operate the Jacksonville branch was duly forwarded, December 1909, to the State Banking Commissioner in Salem.³

From its opening the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank was a success. The first certificate of deposit was sold on opening day to Mildred Antle, whose husband was one of the bank's initial stockholders and later served as cashier. During the first month of the bank's operations the average daily gain in assets was \$4,256.11. According to their annual report to the State Banking Commissioner, loans and discounts for the first year stood at \$185,744 and deposits at \$277,894.⁴

The first year was not without its setbacks, however. In the summer of 1910 the State Banking Commissioner finally





Farmers and Fruitgrowers was located on the corner of Main and Grape Street. December 1925.



Farmers and Fruitgrowers opened two days before Christmas in 1909. It was hailed the "most lavishly and conveniently furnished bank in southern Oregon."

Wahl wrote a customer who was behind on his car payment. "Have been wondering if you could spare us a payment on your car contract," the letter opened. "We are expecting the bank examiner most any day now and a payment at this time will help materially in getting by with my usual line of apple sauce. Any way do the best you can."

ruled on the bank's application to maintain the Bank of Jacksonville as a branch of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers. The ruling stipulated that a bank could only maintain branches in the same city as the main branch. The directors therefore decided to divest themselves of the branch in Jacksonville. As of September 1, 1910, the Bank of Jacksonville was operated as an independent bank with new ownership and a separate board of directors.⁵

In the spring of 1912, the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank underwent a major restructuring of its leadership. At the April 1912 meeting of the Board of Directors, George Davis tendered his resignation in order to manage his timber holdings. Delroy Getchell replaced him.

Delroy Getchell was born in Galion, Ohio, in 1861. As a young man he began a successful career in the newspaper business. At the age of twenty he was elected head of the Minneapolis Typographical Union, and later was an editor for several Minnesota papers. Trouble with his eyes, however, prompted Getchell to give up his career in newspapers and move on to banking. He established two banks in Minnesota, making him the youngest bank president in the state. He

also served as vice president of the Merchants Bank of St. Cloud, Minnesota. Getchell, proving his mettle, was able to keep his banks solvent during the panic of 1893, when over a dozen banks in the region were forced to close.

In 1905 Getchell's physician advised him to seek a milder climate, so the banker relocated to Southern California. There he met and married Alice McClure. In 1909 the Getchells came to Medford on business and decided to remain.⁶

After assuming the presidency of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank, Getchell wasted no time establishing himself. He began acquiring outstanding shares of the bank's stock, and it was not long before he owned a controlling interest. Getchell also broadened the scope of the bank's loan policies. In addition to chattel and crop loans to area farmers, Getchell saw the potential profit in making automobile loans. By this time C. E. "Pop" Gates, one of the region's largest automobile dealers, was on the board of the bank. The books swelled with loans for automobiles.

With his control of the bank secured, Getchell began a modernization program. In 1915 he contracted with the American Bank Protection Company of Minneapolis, Minnesota, for



Delroy Getchell, bank president, on the porch of his Oakdale Street home.



Getchell met his wife Alice McLure in Southern California. They moved to Medford in 1909. Circa 1936.

THE ACQUISITION OF THE FARMERS AND FRUITGROWERS BANK BY U.S. NATIONAL BANK WAS THE "FINAL CHAPTER IN HOME OWNED BANKING IN MEDFORD" UNTIL THE POST-WAR YEARS.

the installation of the latest in electrical burglar alarms. At the time of its installation, the Farmers and Fruitgrowers was the only bank in Jackson County so protected. The steady increase in the bank's business over the years also necessitated the purchase of additional blocks of safety deposit boxes.⁷

Under Getchell's leadership the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank continued to thrive. By the end of the decade the bank's growth had doubled, with assets approaching half-a-million dollars. During World War I the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank purchased more Liberty and Victory Bonds per capita than any other bank in the country, investing in excess of seventy-five percent of the bank's capital in those bonds. The bank's purchases of these government securities during the war prompted the government to award Getchell a medal. Growth during the decade of the 1920s slowed a bit but stabilized with assets remaining at about \$400,000.⁸

The years after the First World War saw another shake-up at the Farmers and Fruitgrowers. The war had fueled a great deal of anti-German sentiment across the

country, and Medford was not immune. Bank Director and Vice-President Louis Niedermeyer found himself under attack. According to family members, some of the barbs aimed at Niedermeyer stemmed from his relationship with August Niemeyer. Niemeyer was a close family friend of the Niedermeyers and, after the former returned to Germany, Louis Niedermeyer managed some of the properties Niemeyer owned. This required Niedermeyer to send checks to Germany on a regular basis. This was seen by many as supporting America's enemies.⁹

The Niedermeyer crisis came to a head in September of 1919. Niedermeyer had read an article in the Portland German-language newspaper *Nachrichten*, and arranged to have it reprinted in the Medford-Ashland *Pacific Record Herald*. The article, titled "Y-Workers Views," was endorsed by Niedermeyer because he "believed in giving both sides of the story." Statements in the article such as "The treatment accorded American soldiers by Germans makes us wonder if we did not bet on the wrong horse," proved to be extremely inflammatory. The local

American Legion declared the article un-American propaganda and passed a resolution demanding Niedermeyer's resignation from the board of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank. The Ashland Legion Post filed a similar resolution the following day. This publicity threatened to have an adverse effect on the bank, thus Niedermeyer reluctantly tendered his resignation as vice-president and director on September 23. Getchell eventually bought out Niedermeyer's holdings in the bank.¹⁰

In retaliation for his ouster from a bank he had helped establish, Niedermeyer and his relatives withdrew their deposits, totalling almost \$85,000. Another director, angry that he was not elected vice-president in Niedermeyer's place, also withdrew his funds. During this period of turmoil, a group of men attempted to acquire a controlling interest in the bank's outstanding stock, but Getchell prudently and quietly agreed to purchase the stock of any individual that inquired as to the stock's value, solidifying his control of the institution.¹¹

Throughout the twenties there was little growth in assets, and the stockholders received no dividends. On the whole the

THE SOCIETY HOUSES SOME OF THE BANK'S ARTIFACTS SUCH AS THESE MONEY BAGS, PASS BOOKS AND STAMP.

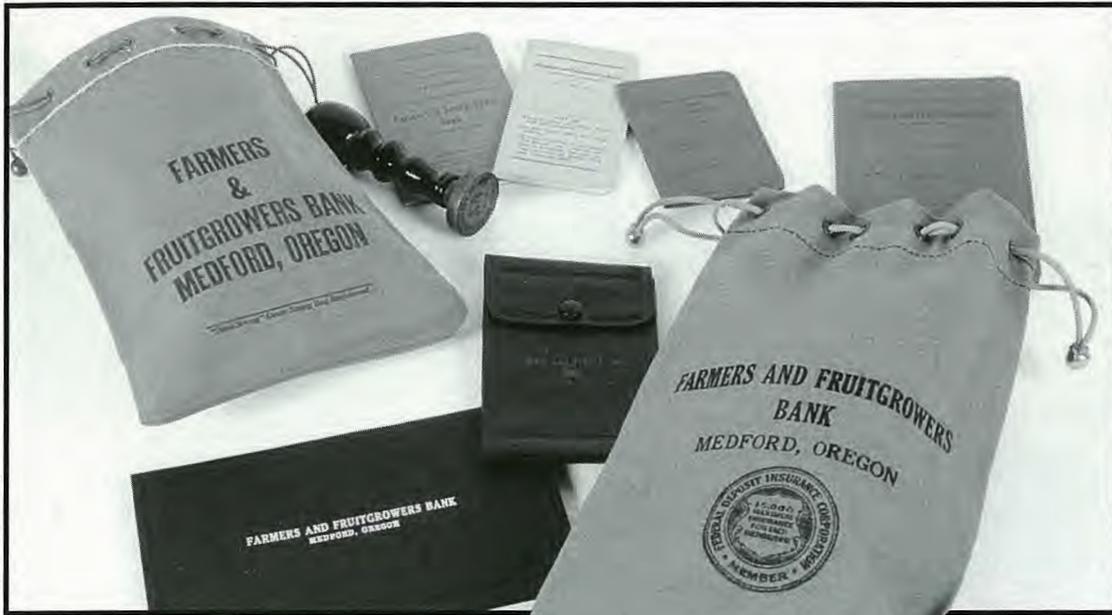


PHOTO BY DANA HEDRICK

bank remained sound. Business continued to consist mainly of checking and savings accounts, and loans for crops and automobiles. In 1920 Fred Wahl was made head cashier, a position analogous to today's branch manager. Under Getchell and Wahl, the business of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank was generally conducted on a friendly and often informal basis. In 1926, for example, Wahl wrote a customer who was behind on his car payment. "Have been wondering if you could spare us a payment on your car contract," the letter opened. "We are expecting the bank examiner most any day now and a payment at this time will help materially in getting by with my usual line of apple-sauce. Any way do the best you can." In addition to managing the bank, Wahl was very active in the financial and developmental affairs of the region. He served on numerous boards, including the Lake of the Woods Development Co., Buckhorn Springs Resort, Jackson County Amusement Co., and served as chairman of the finance committee for the Oregon State Diamond Jubilee committee. He was also secretary of the Chamber of Commerce.¹²

The crash of 1929 and subsequent depression had a major impact on all banks across the country, including the Farmers and Fruitgrowers. Heavy losses were sustained as the value of some of the paper held as collateral on loans evaporated. Banks across the country were closed by presidential order during the 1932 "Bank Holiday."

In 1933 the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank applied to reopen and, because the

institution was deemed sound, permission was granted to resume business. The soundness of the bank was affirmed when it was designated by Jackson County as a repository of county money. Throughout the 1930s Getchell's conservative management of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank enabled the institution to weather the adverse economic climate.

One bank that was unable to survive the early years of the depression was the Central Point State Bank. This bank had, for a number of years, been the repository of accounts for students at the Central Point schools. When Getchell heard of this bank's closure, he sought the permission of the State Superintendent of Banks to assume the responsibility for all of those accounts, to ensure that the children's savings remained intact. "The money you took to school and which your teacher put in the Central Point State Bank for you," Getchell wrote each student, "is at our bank in Medford—The Farmers & Fruitgrowers—and, if you need it, you may have it now. When I learned that your bank had been closed, I was given permission by the State Superintendent of Banks to assume the responsibility for your savings. The records were given to me and you may keep on saving with full assurance that your money is safe. I want you to SAVE."¹³

In late 1934 the Federal Housing Authority began to encourage the nation's banks to make home improvement loans to boost the nation's employment. Getchell

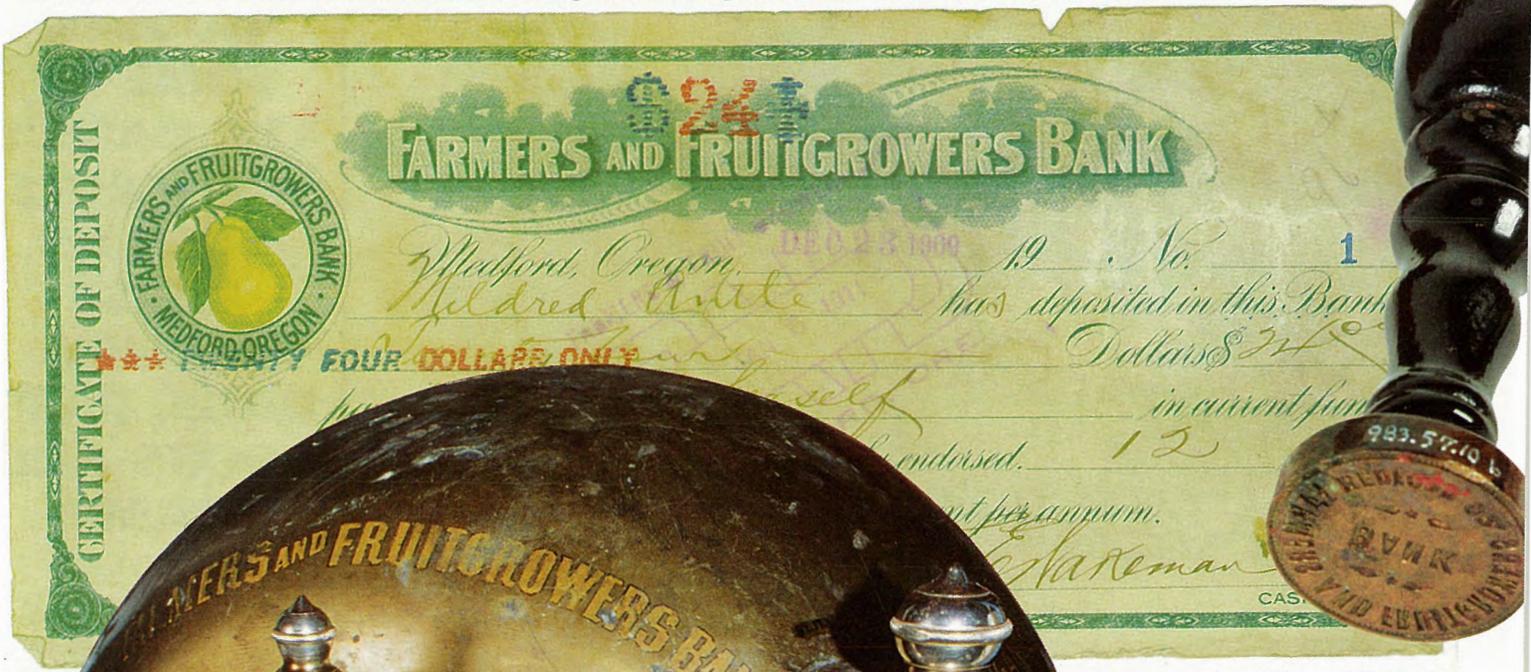
was quick to respond to the FHA Administrator. "Long before the Federal Housing Administration was heard of we advertised for people to repair, remodel, repaint and modernize," Getchell wrote. "We have on our books about thirty accounts which employ labor at times numbering about seven or eight hundred individuals. . . We did this without suggestion or solicitation upon the part of anyone, and intend to proceed in this manner in the future. We feel we have done our full duty in every way possible to help cure the depression. . ."¹⁴

Getchell himself described the progress made during the difficult years of the 1930s. "As you will recall," he wrote his chief cashier in 1935, "our low ebb occurred on December 31, 1932. Our deposits at close of business that day were \$154,227.75. Then our deposits began slowly to rise until the date of the moratorium, or bank holiday, they had risen \$19,050.11, showing a total of \$173,277.86. The bank weathered the storm under its own power without borrowing a dollar, and our deposits and earning power have been increasing ever since. Our deposits at the close of business yesterday [December 17, 1935] were \$315,743.94."¹⁵

The end for the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank came suddenly on November 18, 1939, with Delroy Getchell's untimely death after a brief bout of pneumonia. Getchell's passing was noted by many. His long service to the community in which he lived led the *Mail Tribune* to eulogize him as "One of Medford's best

Top: The first Certificate of Deposit was sold on opening day to Mildred Antle whose husband was one of the bank's initial stockholders.
 Bottom: Gold safe from the vault of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank is part of the Southern Oregon Historical Society's collections.

PHOTOS BY DANA HERRICK



known and public spirited citizens... Always thoughtful of the welfare of his bank patrons and members of his staff, his wise counsel and sympathetic interest were outstanding factors in his business career." The high regard in which he was held is reflected by those who honored his memory at his funeral. The active pall bearers were W.A. Gates, Fred Erickson, H.S. Duell, George Porter, Fletcher Fish, and George A. Coddling. The list of honorary pall bearers included Dr. F.G. Thayer, C.E. Gates, Reginald Parsons, Diamond Flynn, Fred Wahl, and Frank C. Clark.¹⁶

Fred Wahl, head cashier of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers since 1920, was appointed acting president of the bank, but Getchell's heirs chose not to remain in the banking business. The assets of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank were sold to the U.S. National Bank. On March 23, 1940, all accounts and the blocks of safe deposit boxes were moved intact to the offices of the U.S. National Bank. When U.S. National opened the following Monday, Wahl and the other employees of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers were on hand to ease the transition of their former customers.

The acquisition of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank by U.S. National Bank was

the "Final chapter in home owned banking in Medford" until the post-war years. Of the four locally owned banks that had served the community since the first decade of the century, one, the Jackson County Bank, had fallen victim of the depression and failed. First National of Medford had been acquired by First National of Portland, and Medford National had been acquired by U.S. National in 1935.

The last visible reminder of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank survived until 1972. Pacific Power and Light, which had acquired the block of West Main between Grape and Holly, razed the entire block, including the Syndicate Building that had housed the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank. Much still remains, however, of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank. Approximately thirty-five cubic feet of records from the bank and other Getchell family enterprises are now housed in the Research Library of the Southern Oregon Historical Society. ■

William Alley is a Contributing Editor, and Certified Archivist and Historian for the Southern Oregon Historical Society.

1. Adam Richter, *A Century of Banking in the Rogue River Valley*, May 1967, p.45; *Medford Mail Tribune*, 23 Dec 1909; 30 Dec 1909.
2. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 23 Dec 1909.
3. *Jacksonville Post*, 4 Sept 1909.
4. *Jacksonville Post*, 12 Feb 1909. The first C.D. and the annual reports to the State Banking Commission are among the papers of the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank collection at the SOHS. MS-645.
5. *Jacksonville Post*, 6 Aug 1910; *Medford Mail Tribune*, 11 Aug 1910.
6. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 11 Apr 1912; 19 Nov 1939.
7. W.H. Ritchie to Delroy Getchell, 20 Apr 1915; Fred Wahl to O.B McClintock Co., 13 Oct 1915; O. Hall to Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank, 16 Feb 1917; SOHS MS-645. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 22 Dec 1917.
8. Richter, p.146; *Medford Mail Tribune*, 19 Nov 1939.
9. Interview with Anna Niedermeyer Wendt, SOHS Oral History Tape No. 160, p. 23-25.
10. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 23-24 Sept 1919.
11. Delroy Getchell to George A. Kennedy, 18 June 1920; SOHS, MS-645.
12. Fred Wahl to Glenn L. Terrill, 27 Mar 1926, SOHS, MS-645.
13. Delroy Getchell to Kenneth Wald, 27 Jan 1933, SOHS, MS-645.
14. Delroy Getchell to James A. Moffett, 28 Jan 1935, SOHS, MS-645.
15. Delroy Getchell to Fred Wahl, 18 Dec 1935, SOHS MS-645.
16. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 19 Nov 1939.

The Banker Poet

In addition to being a successful banker and pillar of the community, the widely popular Delroy Getchell (1861-1939) also enjoyed a reputation as a man of letters. He was considered one of the most well-read residents of Medford, and had a particular fondness for Shakespeare and history. Getchell's passion for the written word was not, however, limited to reading; he was also a prolific poet.

Getchell would compose his works whenever an idea entered his head. If working at the bank, Getchell would jot down his verse on the back of deposit slips, or on little sheets torn from a desk calendar. Occasionally his work would appear in the *Mail Tribune* in advertisements for the Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank. Getchell also composed poems to commemorate community events. One such poem was written in 1929 to celebrate the new Medford airport. So well known was Getchell's penchant for penning poetry that Arthur Perry, longtime columnist for the *Mail Tribune*, once referred to Getchell as "The Banker Poet." Such was Getchell's popularity that the nickname was widely used.

In 1925 Getchell began to contemplate the possibility of publishing some of his poetry. He worked with Charles D. Hazelrigg, a well-known musical director, who agreed to compose music for some of Getchell's lyrics. The proposed publication, however, never came about, and there is no record of Hazelrigg ever having written any music. Only a few of the poems Getchell delivered to Hazelrigg survive.

Getchell again contemplated publishing his poems in 1939. Among the papers in the "Getchell Family/Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank" collection at the Southern Oregon Historical Society is a title page of the proposed book, "Pillars of Hope and Other Poems by Delroy Getchell." The title page bears a copyright date of 1939 and a notation that the manuscript is 100,000 words long. Unfortunately no manuscript accompanied the hand-written title page. Getchell's unexpected death in 1939 ended any hope that his work would be published. All that remains are the few poems sent to Hazelrigg in 1925, several others written on the backs of deposit slips and other slips of paper, and the few verses that managed to make their way into the pages of the *Medford Mail Tribune*. The following are samples of his work. ■



RECONSTRUCTION VERSUS DESTRUCTION.

One time there was a banker
Who had some common sense,
Who would not break his comrades
By methods too intense.

Then daring legislators
Cut credit down one-half,
And caused the idle worker
To lose his cow and calf.

But came the Soldier Governor,
Who saw the people's fix,
And on the fool performance
Ho put the veto nix.

He knows that in depression
Men need some cheering up,
Not clamping down on business,
Nor drinking sorrow's cup.

He made all pay the limit
Of all that they could pay,
Nor shut the doors of commerce.
Nor stopped the growth of hay.

So still the good employers
Who keep their notes alive,
Still hire the goodly workers
Who for their children strive.

—Banker Poet

**FARMERS &
FRUITGROWERS
TELEGRAM DECODED**

Secret Codes

As Internet and electronic mail communications proliferate, there is growing concern about the security of the contents of these messages. Great effort has gone into devising systems to encrypt these communications to preserve their privacy. The privacy concerns of this latest technological advance are not new. For over a hundred years Western Union, the dominant force behind an earlier generation of cutting-edge technology, faced many of the same problems.

Businesses especially saw a need to conceal the contents of their messages from prying eyes, and most developed their own private codes. The Farmers and Fruitgrowers Bank of Medford was no exception. Pictured here is a copy of a telegram to the bank from the Irving Trust Company of New York, concerning a shipment of pears from Suncrest Orchard. In order to conceal confidential details, the message was encrypted. Once the telegram was received it was then translated. The translation is as follows:

“Notify and pay Suncrest Orchard Inc Llewellyn A Banks account Merchants Refrigerating Company New York at not exceeding \$250.00 per car of 532 standard boxes fancy and extra fancy graded bartlett pears precooled. Consigned order Suncrest Orchards [sic] account Merchants Refrigerating Company Jersey City, N.J. Routed Penn Railroad against sight drafts on us accompanied by negotiable order Railroad B/L properly endorsed manifests and US Government certificate shipments must not exceed 25 cars shipped latest September 5th all drafts must be marked our reference W12332.

Irving Trust Company”



PATRONS ARE REQUESTED TO FAVOR THE COMPANY BY CRITICISM AND SUGGESTION CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">CLASS OF SERVICE</p> <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable sign above or preceding the address.</p>	<h1 style="margin: 0;">WESTERN UNION</h1> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT J. C. WILLEVER, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT</p>	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">SIGNS</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">DL = Day Letter NM = Night Message NL = Night Letter LCO = Deferred Cable NLT = Cable Letter WLT = Week-End Letter</p>
---	--	---

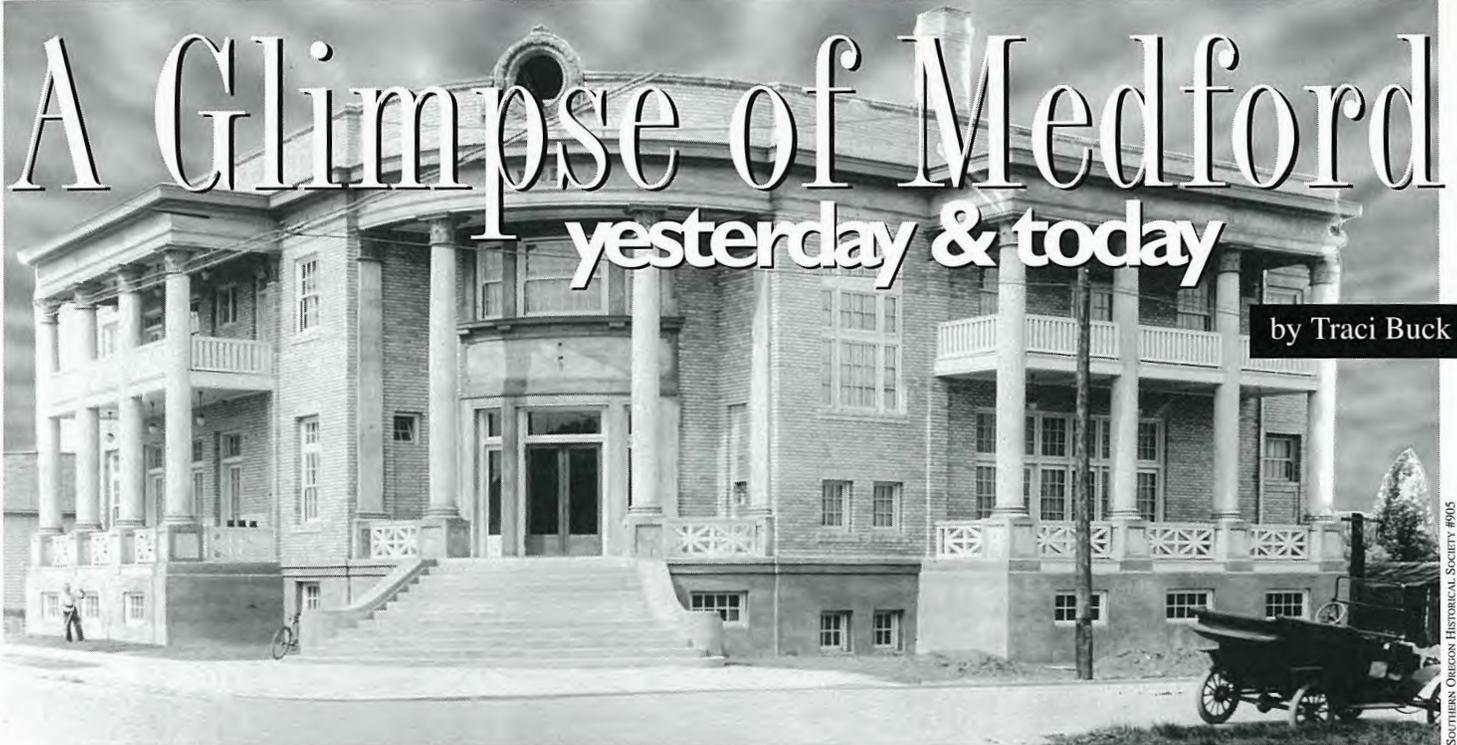
The filing time as shown in the date line on full-rate telegrams and day letters, and the time of receipt at destination as shown on all messages, is STANDARD TIME.

Received at
 R92 78 DL=CD NEWYORK NY 22 504P
 1932 AUG 22 PM 2 29

FARMERS AND FRUIT GROWERS BANK=
 MEDFORD ORG=
 3 1/2
 ALMANCHAR INSECURITY SUNCREST ORCHARDS INC
 LLEWELLYN A BANKS ACCOUNT MERCHANTS REFRIGERATING
 COMPANY NEWYORK AT FORMLESSLY ALANINE PER CAR OF
 ASEPTICITY STANDARD BOXES FANCY AND EXTRA FANCY
 GRADED BARTLETT PEARS PRECOOLED X CONSIGNED ORDER
 SUNCREST ORCHARDS ACCOUNT MERCHANTS REFRIGERATING
 COMPANY DOCTISSIMO ROUTED PENN RAILROAD AGAINST
 FERVIDNESS ON US ACCOMPANIED BY NEGOTIABLE ORDER
 DEPASCENT PROPERLY ENDORSED MANIFESTS AND US
 GOVERNMENT CERTIFICATE SHIPMENTS MUST NOT EXCEED
 ABDERITE CARS SHIPPED LATEST COLOSIC³ ALL DRAFTS
 MUST BE MARKED OUR REFERENCE W BOUNCINGLY
 ALLUREMENT=)

IRVING TRUST COMPANY.

THE QUICKEST, SUREST AND SAFEST WAY TO SEND MONEY IS BY TELEGRAPH OR CABLE



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #905



PHOTO BY TRACI BUCK

The Medford Elks' Lodge #1168, at the corner of 5th and Central, was designed by Frank C. Clark and dedicated in 1915. This Neo-Classical Revival structure is a landmark in Medford's downtown district.

While looking at a "then and now" photo essay of Paris, the old adage, "the more things change the more they stay the same," kept coming to mind. I found myself inspired to create a similar photo essay. I wanted to show what had remained unchanged in Medford from the early 1900s.

Unfortunately, after my initial search for remaining structures, I found that the old saying didn't hold as true for Medford as it did for Paris. What I had expected to find were churches, schools, parks and buildings, all still standing and in their original construction. Perhaps it was my own naiveté that led to my disappointment when I realized that most of early Medford was no longer. The brick buildings that once lined the streets of downtown Medford were simply gone.

After searching and researching I did find a few relatively unchanged views. The hubbub of everyday life had blinded me to the quiet presence of the past. Armed with knowledge and an observant eye a glimpse of early Medford was revealed. The following photos are visions of Medford that have traveled through the century unharmed.

Traci Buck is a photojournalism major at S.O.U. This article was a project she did while interning for Heritage during the summer of 1997.



Southern Oregon Historical Society #6679

Wilkinson-Swem building, 217 E. Main, circa 1898.

“

The hubbub of everyday life blinds most to the beauty of yesteryear. It certainly did for me.

”



PHOTO BY TRACI BUCK

Built in 1894 the Wilkinson-Swem building at 217 E. Main is a fine example of a Queen Anne structure containing both residence and shop. Street level was a meat market, the second story was the Wilkinson family home. Today “Hot Pots” occupies the retail space.



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #575



PHOTO BY TRACI BUCK

Built as the West School in 1884, and later becoming the home of A.A. Davis, the building at 517 W. 10th Street was converted into offices in 1971. Today it is the home of the Britt Festival offices. [The building was moved in the early 1900s from a site near the county courthouse to the location shown here.]



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #15540



PHOTO BY TRACI BUCK

Library Park became the home of the Charles W. Palm statue in 1934 when Callie Palm “dedicated” it to the city of Medford as a memorial to her husband and two cocker spaniels. The well-to-do local couple treated their two dogs like the children they never had. Now called Alba Park, it has changed little over the years.



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #9553

PHOTO BY TRACI BUCK

Medford's Southern Pacific Depot on Front Street was built in 1910 in Mission Revival style with tile roof and outlined doors. 1955 was the last year Medford served as a Northbound passenger stop. Freight trains, however, which transport the Valley's products, can still be seen passing through. The depot is undergoing complete restoration and may soon be a restaurant.



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #15780

The Methodist Episcopal Church on West Main was dedicated in 1924, replacing the one built in 1892. The Spanish Renaissance style structure was sold at auction in 1932, when the church failed to make mortgage payments. With the inspiration of the church's children, the "Let's Redeem Our Church" project raised enough money to pay off the mortgage in 1944.



PHOTO BY TRACI BUCK

Oakdale Street was one of the neighborhoods of distinction in the early 1900s. It is now one of Medford's two historic districts 🏠.

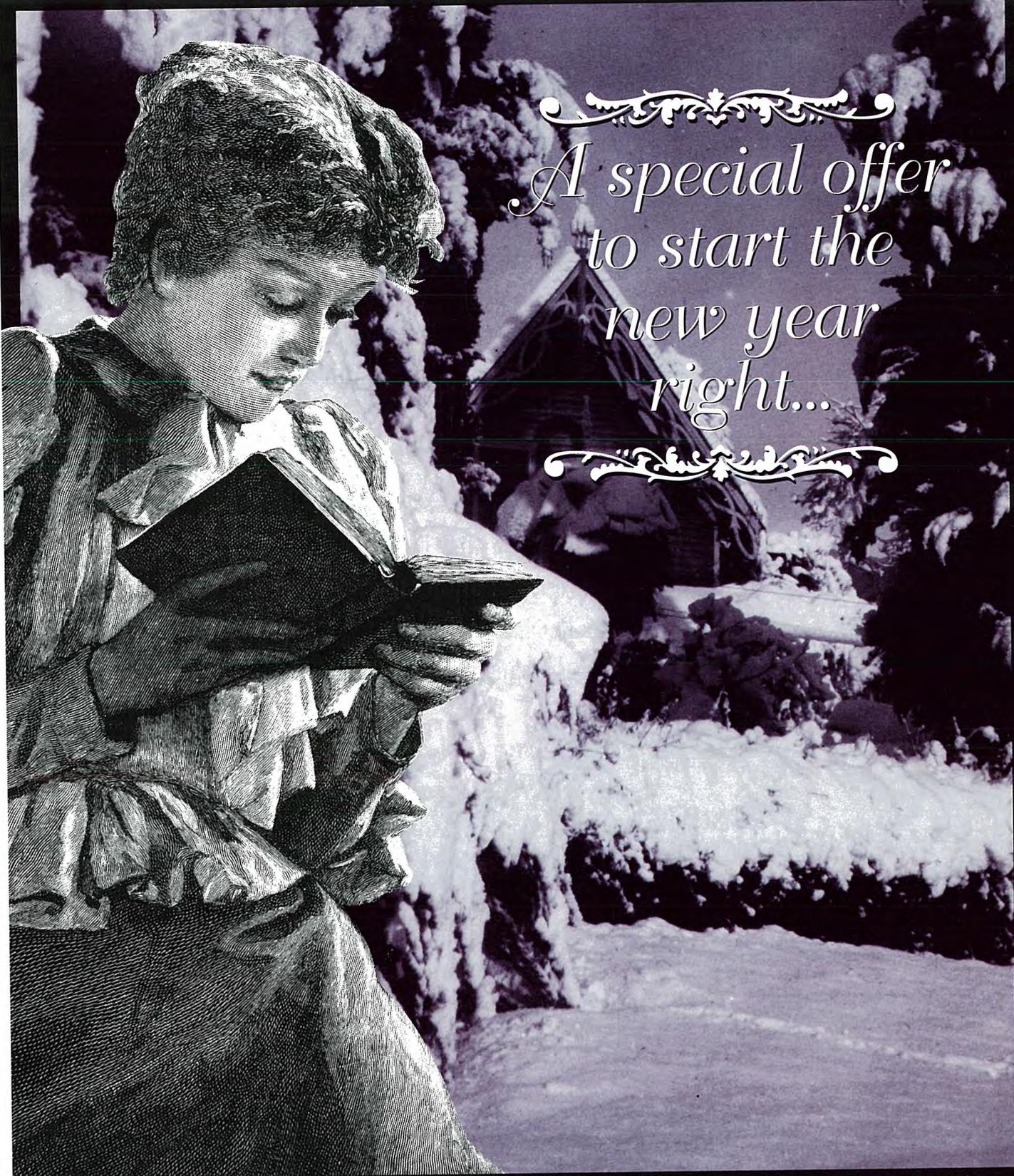


Enkering - Medford, Ore.



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #8053

PHOTO BY TRACI BUCK



*A special offer
to start the
new year
right...*

Southern Oregon **\$19**
Heritage for only

offer ends 1/19/98

SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE

FRIENDS at REST

by Eliot Diamond

A WALK THROUGH ASHLAND'S MOUNTAIN VIEW CEMETERY BECOMES A TRIP BACK IN TIME



View of the historic Mountain View Cemetery in Ashland.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KAY ATWOOD

There's a graveyard near our house. I like graveyards. Each afternoon I take our dog Feather for a walk through the forest of trees and granite headstones. Feather likes the graveyard too. She runs and sniffs and explores. I think the folks resting there look forward to our visits.

I'm not sure exactly what it is. Maybe it's the quiet, the peace and serenity, the solemnness and solitude. . . Cemeteries give me a sense of clarity and a certain perspective about the importance of life. It's funny how we need to get close to death in order to understand the meaning of life.

I walk the dog down the dirt road which runs to our home in Ashland, across the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks, and under the huge oak tree on the corner, into the Mountain View Cemetery. The first burial plaque we come upon has always attracted my attention. Two brothers, Alfred N. and Leroy E. Dobbins, born in 1900 and 1896 respectively, lie side by side. One marker for both men. Mysteriously, both died on the very same day, May 6, 1936.

Each day Feather and I pause before their final resting place and I wonder what could possibly have happened to take the

lives of these two brothers on the very same day.

Curiosity finally got the best of me. One day I walked up to the Southern Oregon University Library to check through the old local newspapers stored there on microfilm. I flipped casually through May 1936. Coffee sold for twenty-seven cents a pound—you can't even buy one cup of the stuff at that price today. Sugar was six cents a pound, soap four cents a bar, and a brand new 1936 Chevrolet could be purchased for a mere \$495. I'll take two, thank you. Suddenly and unexpectedly the headlines of the May 6th *Daily Tidings* jumped out at me. "ONE MAN KILLED WHEN CIRCUS TRAIN HITS TRUCK. Two Companions Seriously Hurt." In dark print below that it read, "Al G. Barnes' Train Strikes Pickup Truck at Talent Crossing; Al N. Dobbins is killed, dragged 500 feet; Leroy Dobbins and A.E. Ingersoll taken to hospital."

I sat there dumfounded and shaken. I stared at the article, rereading the headlines a half dozen times before I could go on with the story.

As Talent, Oregon, residents lined the tracks that day, preparing to get a glimpse of the long and colorful circus train, tragedy struck. At 9:45 a.m. a Buick pickup truck

started across the tracks at the main Talent crossing and was struck by the train. Present at the scene a few minutes after the wreck were Coroner Frank Perl, Deputy Coroner Will Dodge, a state policeman, two doctors, two undertakers and numerous train and circus officials. The two injured men were taken to Ashland Community Hospital, where x-ray examinations were scheduled to determine the extent of their injuries. Leroy Dobbins was believed to be injured more seriously than Ingersoll. I already knew — he wouldn't make it. I suddenly felt like a soothsayer able to predict the future. I didn't feel at all comfortable with the role.

The Dobbins brothers and Mr. Ingersoll had been painters. They had just

“...headlines...
jumped out at me.
“ONE MAN KILLED
— WHEN CIRCUS
TRAIN HITS TRUCK.
Two Companions
Seriously Hurt.”

HITS TRUCK

TWO COMPANIONS SERIOUSLY HURT

AL G. BARNES TRUCK
AT
K

at the city hall in Ashland
er Will Dodge announced

LOCAL GRANITE
MADE

left hand was severed from the
body, nearly all the bones in
both arms and legs were broken,
and the head was badly crushed.

Tragedy marred circus at its
Jackson county Wednesday
As residents re-na-



finished painting the Talent, Oregon, municipal water tank. After cashing their paychecks, they were heading out of town towards Tule Lake, in Klamath County. Al was driving, Leroy rode shotgun, and Ingersoll sat between them.

Maybe they were going hunting or fishing. Who knows. I suspect they were in high spirits, having just finished a job and gotten paid. Witnesses said they apparently didn't see the circus train until it was too late. Their truck was destroyed,

“Somebody asked me if I were on the track when the train hit us. What the hell would the train want to jump the track and chase us through the field for, I'd like to know!”

and although Leroy Dobbins and Ingersoll were thrown clear, Al's mutilated body was found underneath a circus car, four cars from the engine and five-hundred feet from the crossing.

I numbly turned the microfilm to the next day's paper, May 7th. The headlines read, "LIFE OF LEROY DOBBINS ADDED TO TRAIN TOLL." And in smaller print, "Inquest Frees All Of Blame In Collision. A.E. Ingersoll, Only Survivor of Tragedy, Tells Own Story to Jury; Didn't See Train, He Said."

Leroy Dobbins had passed away the previous evening at 5 p.m. He died calling out for his dead brother. I felt as though this had happened yesterday, and I somehow knew these men personally. It was as if they were my friends – my good friends. After all, I visited with them almost every day. Now each ensuing visit would take on a whole new meaning.

The day after the accident A.E. Ingersoll, who had only suffered minor injuries, told the following to the inquisition jury that was called together to investigate the accident:

"I was sitting in the middle and was busy rolling a cigarette or lighting one, I don't remember which. Suddenly Leroy hollered, 'Step on it, Al!' I looked out the side window of the truck and saw the engine almost on us. Al tried to speed up,

but the truck couldn't go very fast. I think he turned to the left a little. Then Leroy shouted, 'Look out!' I looked out the back window, just as our front wheels were on the track. We were going probably 10 or 15 miles an hour."

"I saw a lot of stuff coming down on top of me and then heard a crash. I think I first heard the train whistle when it was almost on top of us. That's all I remember until I was sitting on the running board of a truck, dazed. Somebody asked me if we were on the track when the train hit us. What the hell would the train want to jump the track and chase us through the field for, I'd like to know!"

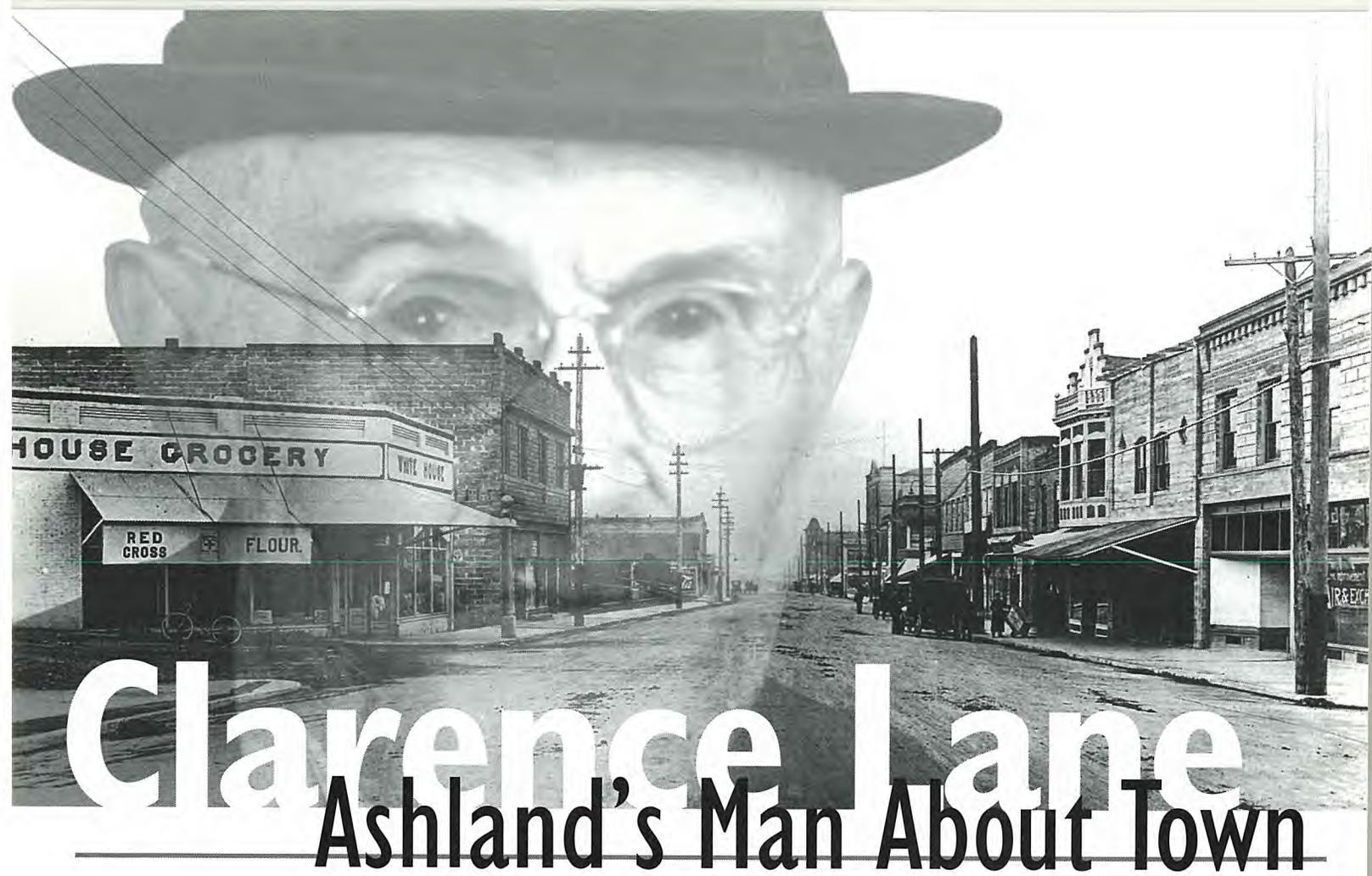
To look over your shoulder and see a train locomotive bearing down on you. . . I'm having a hard time imagining anything worse.

Al Dobbins left behind a wife and three children; an eight year-old boy, and two girls, ages twelve and one. They'd be in their late sixties today. Leroy was not married. On Friday, May 8, 1936, a double funeral was held at the J.P. Dodge and Sons funeral chapel for Leroy E. and Alfred Newell Dobbins. Robert Dodge sang two hymns, "The Old Rugged Cross," and "Abide With Me." Many beautiful flowers expressed the sympathy of friends. Sixty years later, after discovering the brother's fate, Feather and I left our own flowers on the gravesite.

They are interred, of course, in the Mountain View Cemetery. They lie in the extreme northern corner of the grounds, not far from the big oak tree. Ironically enough, of all the hundreds of plots available there, they were placed closest to the railroad tracks. Eighteen years would pass before another body would be laid to rest in that section of the cemetery.

Feather and I still visit the Dobbins brothers on our daily walks through the cemetery. My wife, Ellen, often accompanies us. We stop at the brothers' resting place, leave our regards and move on. I often wonder about all the other untold stories resting here, ever so patiently waiting to be discovered or forever forgotten

Eliot Diamond is an architect and writer, now living in Westlake, Oregon.



Clarence Lane

Ashland's Man About Town

by K. Gabrielle

Not so long ago, Clarence Lane, a man known as “Mr. Ashland” for many of his ninety-seven years, walked downtown each morning greeting fellow Ashlanders. He carried with him photographs and scrapbooks that offered glimpses into Ashland’s past, dating back to the 1800s. He pulled back the layers of time for a moment, welcoming those he met to visit another era. Mr. Ashland could tell you of a time when Central Avenue was known as Factory Street, and Van Ness was called Mechanic Street.

Born near Talent on August 19, 1870, Clarence Lane was orphaned as an infant and raised by his grandparents in the Eagle Mill area of Ashland. His brief school career began at Ashland’s first school house (constructed in 1860) where later the White House Grocery stood. More recently, Namanny’s Market, Lithia Sports, Lithia Sourdough, and now the Village Baker, have called this East Main Street site home. Later, Clarence attended the Ashland Academy, located on the current grounds of

Briscoe School.² At eleven, Clarence began his first job as a delivery boy for a bakery. When he left he took the harness bells from the great black horse he had driven, and eventually used the bells on his own delivery team.

Long before he was known as Mr. Ashland, Clarence Lane was involved in civic events. When the Masonic Temple was built in 1879, Clarence watched the cornerstone being laid. In 1954, he was on hand to see the capsule within opened when the building was under reconstruction. He remembered well its contents which included a jar of Mrs. Mary E. McCall’s grape jelly which had spilled and fermented, ruining a pair of leather gloves and most of the papers.³ Clarence was seventeen when the railroad came to Ashland. He had vivid memories of the Golden Spike that symbolized the Oregon to California link of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1887. His stories of the early days of the Railroad District could almost cause even the most recent newcomer to smell the evergreen boughs arched over the tracks welcoming in the new era of

transportation. That era did not last as long as some had anticipated, and Clarence, accompanied by his wife Minnie, were among passengers on the farewell run of the Southern Pacific over the Siskiyou to Dunsuir in 1952.⁴

In 1898 Clarence Lane started The Confectionery Shop in the Masonic building on the plaza. It was a popular ice cream parlor that also sold cigars. Two years later, he and Minnie Rockfellow, an Ashland native, born in a large house on Oak Street, across from the Old Armory, were married. In 1924, several years after selling The Confectionery Shop, the Lanes acquired Charlie Loomis’ confectionery store and home adjacent to the junior high school. Safeway and two single story office buildings now stand on this Siskiyou Boulevard site. Clarence and Minnie Lane enjoyed the children and ran the business until 1939, when they sold the shop to Harold Merrill. Clarence was

Above: Clarence Lane lived in Ashland from 1870 to 1968. Avid storyteller and local history lover, he was a well-known presence on Main Street in Ashland.

ABOVE PHOTOS: SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #0952, 15717



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #15715

Above and below: It seems the Lanes were always game for group adventures. Here they celebrate Fourth of July at an Elks picnic at Mile High near Parker Mountain, Highway 66, circa 1926.



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #15716, BELOW: #426



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #15713

Clarence and Minnie
Clarence and Minnie posed on this rock in Lithia Park circa 1915.

sixty-nine and he and Minnie were ready for the retired life.

Clarence held many different jobs during his working life, including selling newspapers, working in the Ashland Woolen Mills, and in Amos Nininger's store. Retirement was just as varied. Clarence had a minor interest in a ranch and also took in sewing machine repair work.

Retiring from the workaday world gave Clarence more time to spend in civic service. He and Minnie were involved with the Women's Civic Club (Clarence was the only male member in the country) and with the Elks. He proudly and regularly wore his sixty-year Elks pin. In appreciation of the Lanes' service, the Elks Lodge 944 named them Sweethearts



SOHS #426

Center: Clarence married Minnie Rockfellow on October 18, 1900.

of the Valentine's Ball in 1956.⁵ Clarence was the official coffee maker at lodge dinners and picnics. His visits cheered

Ashlanders in hospitals and those shut in at home. He brought bouquets of flowers from his garden to the ill and to downtown businesses.

Clarence tirelessly picked up litter, swept the sidewalks, and polished the fountains downtown. He thoughtfully gathered mail from businesses and delivered it to the post office. His favorite tales were of the social events, dancing, and music of the early 1900s.

His interest in music and dance included square dancing. His dedication to calling for square dances was so great that he once was very late for a busload of Elks Lodge members headed for the baseball games in San Francisco. Clarence apologized for keeping the others waiting until



Lane started his confectionery in the Masonic Building on the plaza in Ashland in 1898.

Southern Oregon Historical Society #15714



Students from the nearby Junior High School congregated at Lane's on Siskiyou Boulevard from 1924 to 1939.

Southern Oregon Historical Society #1622

after midnight. He just could not bear to leave the dancers until the evening was finished. He was in his late 80s at the time.⁶ Minnie and Clarence Lane also loved to waltz and would dance gracefully together to even a hint of music at a gathering.

An extremely social person, Clarence's love of people helped him achieve success in several businesses as well as in life. Friendliness seemed to run in the Lane family. Newspaper articles note Clarence's "cheery whistle."⁷ He

spoke of his grandfather, David P. Walrad, as being "remembered for his cheery greeting and cordial handshake."⁸

A sense of humor was another of Clarence Lane's gifts to Ashland residents. In "A Fish Lie," Mr. Ashland tells a tall tale purported to have occurred in 1866 (four years before he was born). While fishing the plentiful Crooked Creek, birds stole the many fish Clarence had tossed up on the bank. Suddenly, a hurricane with rain and a ninety-mile-an-hour wind came up and

washed the creek banks away. This revealed the birds' nests in deep holes. The holes were filled with Clarence's fish. He gathered some of them and had his revenge on the birds. This tall tale is signed "C.E. Lane, The Biggest Liar."⁹

During her high school years, Mrs. Richard R. Renstrom, the former Miss Geraldine Gunn, made her home with the Lanes. Clarence moved to Geraldine's home in Los Alamos, New Mexico, and a year later Ashland's self-proclaimed



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #1571

“Sweethearts” still. Elk’s Lodge Valentines’ Ball, 1956.

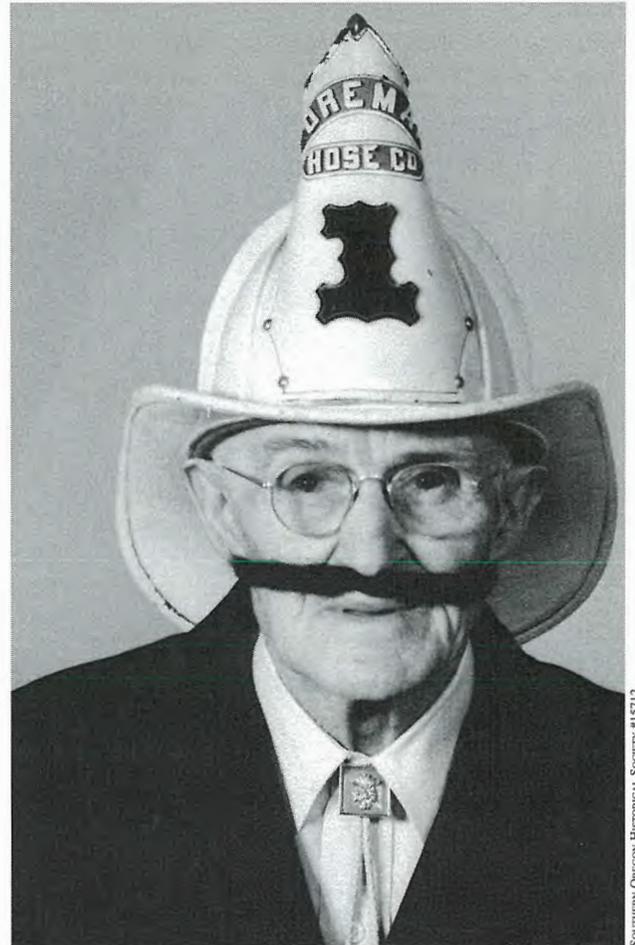
“biggest liar,” photographer, kind-hearted spirit, and keeper of the town’s past died August 8, 1968.

The face of Ashland has changed many times over the years. There are small changes as businesses begin, grow, move, and fade. Greater changes occur when buildings are torn down or remodeled. The passage of time can be seen as an overlay of natural land, farms, wooden structures, more permanent buildings and all the people who lived, worked in, or used these sites. Peel back a layer and see what was happening in downtown Ashland forty, fifty, or even one hundred years ago, by taking a look at Clarence

Lane’s scrapbooks and photo collection now housed at the Southern Oregon Historical Society 🏠.

K. Gabrielle is a businesswoman and freelance writer living in Ashland.

1. Southern Oregon Historical Society. Oral History 42, p.8.
2. Southern Oregon Historical Society. Oral History 41, p.1.
3. Faith McCullough, “There’ll Never Be Another



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #15712

Clarence in hat and moustache à la Ashland Fire Brigade. He was probably dressed for the Fourth of July Parade along Ashland’s Main Street.

Mr. Ashland,” *Medford Mail Tribune*. 7 Feb. 1967, p. 18A.

4. Marjorie O’Hara,

5. Faith McCullough, “Here ‘n There,” *Ashland Daily Tidings*. 20 Feb. 1956.

6. Southern Oregon Historical Society. Oral History Interview with Harold Merrill. Tape 59, Jan. 1978, p.8.

7. Faith McCullough, “Here ‘n There,” *Ashland Daily Tidings*, 20 Feb. 1956.

8. Southern Oregon Historical Society. Interview with Clarence Lane. Tape 41, 30 Apr. 1953.

9. C.E. Lane, *A Fish Lie*, SOHS MS 407.

LAKE CREEK

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

So, on a soft, end-of-summer afternoon, I follow her directions. She's right. Lake Creek is an easy drive from Medford. And easy to find.

Pioneer Hall is on the left side of the road. A comfortable, weathered building surrounded by flowers and bright green grass. Ivy geraniums cascade out of baskets hanging from hooks on the trees. Butterflies dip daintily between the bushes. The only sounds are the constant ripple of the creek behind the hall and the background buzzing of insects. This is a peaceful place.

I pull open the door by the huge iron handle that surely must have been made by a local blacksmith. Susan is waiting for me in her office.

"Do you want to come with me while I turn the water on?"

she asks.

"Who keeps up the grounds?" I inquire, following her from one faucet to another.

"Oh, I basically do the watering. A boy from Cascade Ranches mows. People help."

"Well, the grounds are beautiful," I say, sincerely.

We move back into the building. "Tell me how the Lake Creek Historical Society got started," I say. "And what is your job?"

Susan perches on the edge of a folding table. She grins. "I guess you could call me the Executive Director. I write grant proposals, and water the lawn, and make sure the building gets cleaned. I sort of do whatever needs doing. But about how we got started. . ."

It's officially called Bridge Number 239. It straddles Lost Creek in a quiet, secluded section of the county, about four miles from Pioneer Hall. Well over one hundred years old, it was slated for demolition. But a group of community-minded citizens

by Linda Carlyle

I don't even know where Lake Creek is. But I refuse to feel guilty about it. The editor giving me this assignment is new to the area and doesn't know either. She gives me Susan Shoemaker's phone number on a piece of pink paper and says, "Don't worry, you'll find it."

"Just take Highway 62 to Highway 140 toward Fish Lake," Susan says when I reach her on the phone. "Soon after you pass the twelve mile marker, you'll see the Lake Creek sign. Turn right, go one mile, and you're here. It's easy. I'll meet you at Pioneer Hall."



After preserving a covered bridge, the Lake Creek Historical Society took on the Community Hall pictured here behind Executive Director Susan Shoemaker.

PHOTOS BY DANA HERRICK

EXHIBIT FEATURE



Lake Creek's Board of Directors: Back Row: Ron Walch, President, Mick McCulloch, Secretary Treasurer, Dwight Pech, Bill Jackson. Front Row: Greg Grissom, Teresa Schleigh, Susan Shoemaker, Executive Director, and Maxine Jackson. Loren Walch is absent.

banded together and determined that this part of their history would be preserved. Lost Creek Covered Bridge, built in 1874 or 1881 (history can be a little fuzzy about exact dates), was restored. It is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

Lost Creek Covered Bridge is one of only four covered bridges in Jackson County, and is possibly the oldest span in Oregon. The citizen's group responsible for saving it filed articles of incorporation in May of 1990 and, thereby, officially became the Lake Creek Historical Society.

"And this was our next project." Susan gestures around the wood paneled room. "This building was called the Lake Creek Community Hall. It was built in the early 1940s, and by 1990 it was in a state of considerable disrepair. There was no foundation, and the back of the building and the footings were beginning to rot. It soon would have been condemned. The Lake Creek Historical Society took over the building's lease and began restorations."

Grant money, donations, funds from the Jackson County Historical Fund, and gifts were used to renovate the hall. The Society insulated the building, put a foundation under it, installed a heating and air conditioning system, and added restrooms.

They also built a kitchen, storage area, and space for the Lake Creek Historical Society office.

The Society's initial projects involved architecture, and its interests continue in that direction. "Did you see the cabin?" Susan asks. She points out the window. "It was located on the old Nimrod Charley homestead up Lake Creek Road. It was built about 1870, and it's the only cabin of its kind in our area that's still standing and in good shape. So we relocated it here next to the Pioneer Hall. We are planning to refurbish it as it would have been when it was a home."

Preserving the past can be bittersweet. One resident wrote to the Society, "I had mixed feelings about it (the Charley cabin) moving down to Lake Creek, but I know it would never have lasted much longer where it was. I loved the cabin in that beautiful meadow surrounded by the apple trees. Many times I searched out boards to block the door so the cattle wouldn't get in and destroy it... Much good luck with your continuing plans for the Lake Creek Historical Society."

Society members are gathering oral histories from the long-time residents of the area. They want to capture the wonderful stories these old-timers have to tell. The

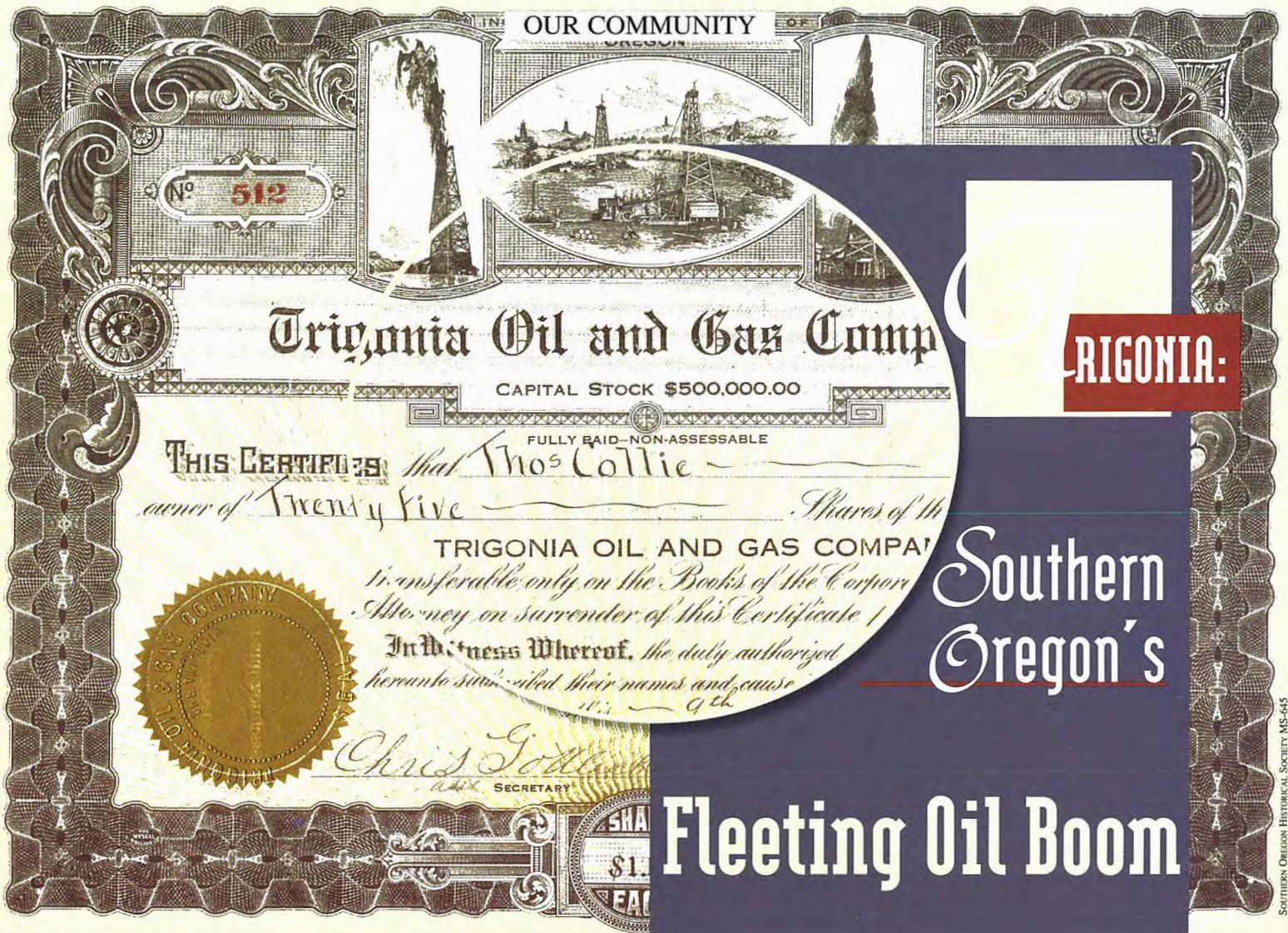
Society is also collecting historical photos to have on file and to display at Pioneer Hall. "We're not set up to be a traditional museum," Susan says. "We don't have the space for it. Although we do have some display cases in the hall, and we do host special exhibits, our basic mission is to preserve historic sites and structures and document our colorful history."

There are approximately 290 residents within the boundaries of the Lake Creek Historical Society. Presently, the Society has ninety members. A family membership costs only \$5.00 per year and includes receiving the biannual newsletter.

I thank Susan for sharing her insights and showing me around. I say goodbye and add, "I'll see you later." I'll be back again. Next time I'll bring the family, and we'll have a picnic in the park by the old covered bridge. Now I know where Lake Creek is. ■

Linda Carlyle is a freelance writer and photographer living in Medford. This is her first story for Heritage.

For more on this and other sites of historic interest call (541) 773-6536 for a free copy of *Discovery Drives*.



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY MS-645

by William Alley

Precious metals and vast expanses of timber were not southern Oregon's only natural resources to catch the attention of developers and promoters.

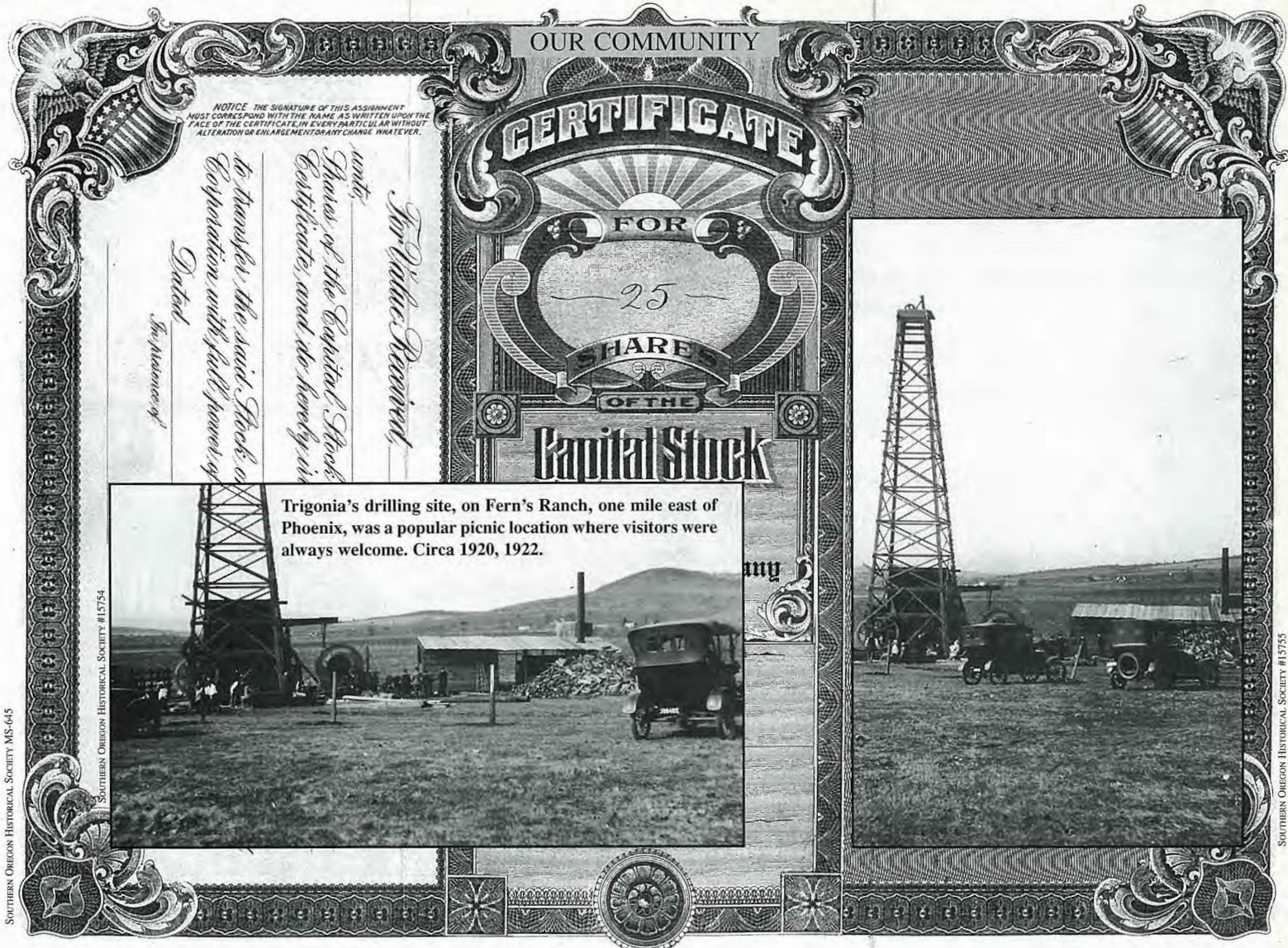
As the nation's industrial sector switched to a petroleum based economy in the early years of the twentieth century the fossil fuel deposits known to exist in the hills along the east side of the Rogue Valley came under intense scrutiny. By 1909, Col. F.J. Mundy and his associates had taken out numerous leases and had three coal mines operating in Jackson County. Because of the high ash content of the region's coal, however, none of these mines ever met their developer's expectations.

The same geologic conditions that led to the sinking of coal mines also indicated the possible presence of petroleum. In November of 1919, E.N. Liliagram and

Associates organized the Trigon Oil and Gas Company and sought out local backing to drill a well. Friday, November 14, was billed as "Oil Day" in Medford, with a large public meeting scheduled at Medford's Commercial Club, forerunner of today's Chamber of Commerce. Mayor C.E. Gates opened the meeting. It was so heavily attended that many had to listen from the sidewalks outside the building. Medford attorney Porter J. Neff, representing the newly formed oil company, addressed the audience and assured them that the approval of the state's Corporations Commissioner, as well as the laws of the State of Oregon, protected any potential stockholders from falling victim to any stock selling scheme. He also outlined Trigon's program of bonus shares of stock to original subscribers. Liliagram then described his findings. "In addition to outcroppings of oil sand and shale, par-

rifine [sic] and small oil deposits have been found and in many ways the geological formation is similar to that of the oil fields in California."

Local interest in the oil company was strong and sales of stock were brisk. By mid-December a used oil rig was purchased and shipped to Medford. Another large public meeting was held at the Page Theater in January to announce both the arrival of the new rig, and that drilling would begin as soon as enough cash had been raised. With stock sales of five hundred dollars per day at the company's office in the Palm Building (now the Goldy Building on East Main) the required capital was soon raised. It was also announced that Col. Mundy was preparing to drill for oil on one of his leases and that another company, the Vulcan Oil Company, was preparing to drill a test well in Sam's Valley. To reassure the public, and to attract additional



Trigonía's drilling site, on Fern's Ranch, one mile east of Phoenix, was a popular picnic location where visitors were always welcome. Circa 1920, 1922.

investors, additional geologists were brought in to report on the company's prospects, their glowing reports duly published in the *Medford Mail Tribune*.

The site selected by Trigonía for their first well was on the Fern's Ranch, one mile east of Phoenix. After a delay in securing the required casings for the well, Trigonía's field manager, Frank Rose, was able to begin actual drilling in March. Planned activities at the well's dedication included the raising of the U.S. flag to the top of the derrick, the christening of the well, and an address by "that popular and well known orator, Professor Irving Vining."

Progress on the drilling was slow, and each new report found its way into the pages of the *Mail Tribune*. In May, after a three week suspension in drilling, a new foreman was hired, W.P. Shaffstall. A new water supply, boiler and other improvements were made and drilling was resumed. The reported depth was 270 feet.

After a year of drilling, enthusiasm for the area's oil prospects had yet to dim. At the December 29, 1920 meeting of the Chamber of Commerce Forum, members were treated to an original song penned for the occasion. Sung to the tune of "There's A Girl in the Heart of Maryland," this song was titled, "A Gusher for You and Me."

Out on Fern's Ranch drilling continued. In March of 1921 the well had reached 825 feet; by the end of April it was down to 1058 feet. July saw the depth reach 1350 feet. September saw little significant gain. Although each new progress report was accompanied with favorable "signs" of the presence of oil, the public's interest in the project eventually began to wane. Soon drilling was suspended.

In August of 1922, Col. Mundy took over the operations of the Trigonía well. His contract stipulated that he would be paid only if he found oil in "paying quantities," at which time he would receive \$200,000

shares of Trigonía stock. Once again the drilling resumed. This renewed interest resulted in an additional \$3,000 being raised by some of the stockholders. Another year later, however, in spite of the positive reports, the Trigonía well had yet to produce any oil. By this time popular interest had shifted to oil shales and the plans of the Hartman Syndicate to develop their properties at Shale City. Interest in Trigonía had fallen to the point that the cessation of operations was not even reported in the *Mail Tribune*. All that remains today of the great excitement generated in 1919 are a few surviving stock certificates and some photographs of the derrick.

William Alley is a contributing editor for Heritage.





THE DOLLS of DISTINCTION

by Mary Ames Sheret

Anne Butcher Davis of Medford made “Dolls of Distinction” from soft cloth, silk, paper mâché, and dried pears. In the 1940s, Anne discovered that pears, like apples, shrink and turn brown while drying. They were perfect for creating small faces for dolls. Through trial and error she learned which varieties were best for carving. A touch of paint, beaded or paper eyes, and hair completed the face. A preservative helped insure the longevity of her “little people.”

Anne’s pear head novelty dolls stand four to thirteen inches high. The bodies were made from copper wire, padded with cotton batting, wound with strips of nylon stockings, and covered with flesh colored knit rayon. Anne paid special attention to the figure’s hands which, as she wrote in 1948 for *Profitable Hobbies*, should be as expressive as the faces. Some hands were made from pear slices, others from a framework of tiny wires that formed fingers. All of Anne’s dolls show character through their hands; whether they’re holding a book, sewing, or carrying an item.

Anne created a distinct personality for each doll. She disliked the “saccharin sweet vacant stares” of pretty dolls, preferring to create as many different characters as possible. Some of the dolls were named after pear varieties, such as Comte D’Anjou, Madame D’Comice, Mr. Bartlett, Winter Nell, and Grandma Howell. Other pear figures represented everyday historical people including the

Hermit of the Rogue, Prospector, Shopper, Egg Lady, Rag Picker, Mme. Clairgeau on her way to church, and the Drummer or traveling salesman. The Pear Picker in blue jeans, bobby socks, and saddle shoes was Anne’s modern day figure.

Anne researched each character for months before she began creating it. Photographs, fashion books, old magazines, and the museum in Jacksonville, gave her information from which to draw. Each doll was clothed in historically accurate costume, and the details extended even to the shoes, made from discarded leather gloves or belts and trimmed with bead buttons or lacings. Anne also spent hours finding just the right prop for an individual to hold or to set a scene. Pear head doll “Grandpa” reads a miniature photocopy of the *Medford Mail Tribune*, dated November 16, 1947.

Anne’s doll making talents extended to materials other than pears. A cloth family complete with hats, jewelry, shoes, and embroidered faces, takes their baby for a stroll. Anne’s earliest dolls were crafted from paper mâché made of salt, paper, and flour. She carved the head with a grapefruit knife, covered it with a silk stocking, painted the eyes and mouth, and added crepe wool for hair. She made a series of older couples dressed in folk costumes, including a pair of Dutch peasants wearing wooden shoes.

Other Anne Davis dolls were made of paper mâché covered with a skin made

from silk stockings. This group includes George Washington, pilgrims, a Hoosier schoolmaster, Betsy Ross sewing the American flag, an Indian scout, Father Junipero Serra, and even Wild Bill Hickock and Calamity Jane. Their faces are amazingly expressive.

In all, The Southern Oregon Historical Society owns forty Anne Davis dolls. Each is truly whimsical, distinctive, and a work of art ■.

Mary Ames Sheret is Curator of Collections for the Southern Oregon Historical Society.



Madame D’Comice

PHOTOS BY DANA HEDRICK

THE DOLLS OF DISTINCTION



George Washington



Pear Picker

Cloth family



Madame Clairgeau

Cloth doll in feather boa



Egg Lady





Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane



Dutch peasants



Grandpa reading the Medford Mail Tribune

Hoosier Schoolmaster



Close-up, Dutch peasant



Drummer or traveling salesman





The Railroad diorama opens soon at the Children's Museum.

REAL HEADLINES FROM THE MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE

"Bombs in Pants Ruins Business"

"Dr. Funk Will Give Cure For Depression"

"Cow Attends Church and Creates Trouble"

"Man's Finger is Grafted on Nose, Works Perfectly"



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MUSEUMS, SITES, AND EXHIBITS

• The History Center

106 N. Central Ave., Medford
Going Places: Travel To and Through the Rogue Valley, 1826-1996 – ongoing; *"Artists and Explorers - Picturing The West"* art of the new frontier, and Community Collects. Gallery and office hours: Monday through Friday, 9-5. The gallery is also open Saturday, 1-5.

• Research Library

The History Center, Medford
A large manuscript and historic photo collection covering topics of local history, open Saturday, 1-5.

• The History Store, Medford

Toys and gifts reminiscent of another era. Holiday location at the Rogue Valley Mall. Call (541) 773-6536 for updated information after January 10.

• Jacksonville History Store

Corner of California and Third streets, Jacksonville
The works of regional artists and artisans presented for sale in this gallery-like setting. Wednesday through Saturday, 10-5; Sunday 12-5.

• Jacksonville Museum of Southern Oregon History

206 N. 5th St., Jacksonville
Miner, Baker, Furniture Maker; Southern Oregon Brides; Politics of Culture, Hall of Justice, a history of the county courthouse in Jacksonville, and more. Wednesday through Saturday, 10-5; Sunday 12-5. Closed the first two weeks in January.

• Children's Museum

206 N. 5th St., Jacksonville
Hands-on history for the entire family. Wednesday through Saturday 10-5; Sunday 12-5. Closed the month of January.

• C.C. Beekman House

California and Laurelwood streets, Jacksonville
Beekman House is closed for the winter season.

• C.C. Beekman Bank

California and 3rd streets, Jacksonville
See the interior of this turn-of-the-century bank and Wells Fargo Office from viewing porches year-round.

• SOHS Online

Visit our website at www.sohs.org

Society Facts

The Southern Oregon Historical Society manages and maintains 10 county properties, and cares for a total of 12 historic properties. Really. They are as follows:

In Jacksonville:

- Catholic Rectory, 1861
- C.C. Beekman Bank, 1863
- C.C. Beekman House, 1873
- U.S. Hotel, 1880
- Jacksonville Museum of

Southern Oregon History (former Jackson County Courthouse), 1883

- Children's Museum (former Jackson County Jail), 1911
- Bridge Crew Barn, 1911
- Ferguson Building, 1957
- Hanley Building, 1964

In White City:

- Collections Storage, 1979

The Society owns and maintains:

- History Center, Medford, 1948
- Hanley Farm, Central Point, 1857

Society Fun

MINIATURE RAILROAD

Follow the miniature 2-8-0 steam locomotive and tender as it chugs through a compressed version of the towns and industries along sixty miles of track running through the Valley. A diorama featuring The Rogue River Valley and the Railroad, circa 1911, opens in 1998 at the **Children's Museum** in Jacksonville.

The train stops at miniature Ashland and Woodville depots. It passes through orchards in Phoenix, a box mill near Medford, trundles over the Rogue and its fishermen, and rolls by farms, gold mines, and logging operations. Much time, research, and talent went into creating this visual treat. It would not have been possible without funds raised by the **Gold Diggers' Guild**, the **Jacksonville Museum Quilters**, and many other generous individuals. Come and enjoy!

PRESERVING PAPER

"Turn the heat up!" Not around great grandma's marriage license you don't. The useful life of paper is cut in half with every ten degree increase in temperature. Learn what you can do to help preserve your documents at the Society's **How to Preserve Family Documents** workshop.

Jacque Sundstrand, the Society's library/archives coordinator, will present many practical ideas on how to handle some common problems. Participants will learn how to flatten rolled documents, remove surface dirt, revive tired scrapbooks, and properly store books and other materials. Each person will learn to "encapsulate" a sample document, a simple technique designed to protect documents from physical wear and tear, as well as grime and pollution. The workshop is Saturday, February 7, from 1-4 at the **History Center** in Medford. Call (541) 773-6536

RELATIVES IN TOWN?

Take them to *Miner, Baker, Furniture Maker* at the Jacksonville Museum. This exhibit featuring 19th century life in the Rogue Valley is a wonder of history and imagination, with plenty of hands-on activities, and demonstrators regularly

showing off their crafts and trades.

ENJOY THE RIDE

Enjoy a rainy day, come see *Going Places*, a spectacular view from the trail, track, and roadside depicting the growth of this region from 1826 to 1996. Now at the **History Center** in Medford.



The Black Dog on Barnett

At lunch the other day I asked a fellow diner what history meant to him. It's a question that we've been asking ourselves and others of late. My lunch-friend's family has lived in the Valley since 1900. He has been an archaeology student for awhile, and has taken the required history courses, including the one taught by Society Historian Margaret Watson. He had all the schooled answers. "History is a continuum," "a record of change," etc., etc. "No, no, no." I said, "What does it mean to you personally?" Then he launched into the good stuff. This was the tale that I walked away with that day.

My fellow luncher had a friend back in the fifties who took the bus everyday to Medford Senior High School, over on the west side of town. Every morning, the bus driver would pick up the high schoolers on the east side, and drive back down Barnett to school. Every morning a black dog sat at the edge of the road waiting. Every morning the bus driver pulled his vehicle to a stop, opened the door, and gallantly welcomed the pooch aboard. The dog would ride to town with the kids, cruise around, and be back at the high school in the late afternoon to take the bus back home again.

It is a fragment, a small window, open for just a moment, allowing us a glimpse into Medford in the 1950s. I love it, because it's how I want life to be. I want our towns to be slow enough, and friendly enough, that when a proverbial black dog is sitting out on the street we don't run it over, curse at it, and blow right past. Even if we don't know that the mutt belongs to Dr. Smith, and has a dalmatian girlfriend over on Oakdale Street, we know to slow down, and work around him. I want a community where there is a bus driver, who not in too much of a hurry, not worried about losing his job, or being written up for picking up animals, stops every day and courteously chauffeurs a polite black dog and the children safely to school. It is too easy these days, wrapped in our cars and schedules to forget that we are a community, and that our individual actions make a difference.

How is this history? This interchange in time was not the Battle of the Bulge. The dog and the bus driver were not heroes or conquerors. They remain, however, examples of the culture of southern Oregon, and of Medford, some forty years ago. Not that long ago really, but a world away. This little story reminded me that how we treat each other matters. When we don't know the old woman standing out at the bus stop in the cold rain, and we don't know the person we just cut off on Central Avenue it becomes easy to dismiss each other. We forget we are a community. The bus driver and the black dog from the 1950s can be guides for us, as individuals and as a community. A people, a pace, and place worth emulating, striving to become...again.

Marcia Somers La Fond
 Marcia Somers La Fond, Editor

Southern Oregon Heritage Editorial Guidelines

Feature articles average 3,000 to 4,000 (pre-edited) words. Standard articles range from 1,500 to 2,000 words. Other materials range from 100 to 1,500 words. Electronic submissions are accepted on 3-1/4-inch disks and should be accompanied by a hard-copy printout. Cite all sources and construct endnotes and cutlines using the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The author is responsible for verification of cited facts. A selection of professional, unscreened photographs and/or line art should accompany submissions—black-and-white or color. The Southern Oregon Historical Society reserves the right to use Society images in place of submitted material. All material should be labeled with author's name, mailing address, and telephone number. Manuscripts will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed envelope stamped with sufficient postage. Authors

should provide a brief autobiographical note at the end of manuscripts.

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Today, in times that are changing ever faster, we need things which preserve life's moments — wondrous, simpler, moments like these.



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #124

Sledding down Pine Street, Jacksonville, Oregon, circa 1879

Join the Southern Oregon Historical Society and enjoy the benefits of preserving southern Oregon's special moments. Let life's pace slow down, ease back in time, and experience many wondrous moments through the Society's exhibits, workshops, publications, and collections. For more information complete the card inside, or call Susan Cox-Smith at (541) 773-6536.



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