

SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE *Today*

H. C. MACKEY

The Man in the High Silk Hat

THE VICTORIAN VILLAGE
OF FERNDALE

Seek the Balance

THE LOVE LETTERS OF
LORENA MINGUS AND
GEORGE GEIL

A Fine Romance

FEBRUARY 1999
Vol. 1, No. 2



Now Look Pleasant
And have your Photos made by H. C. Mackey, if you
want fine pictures. My work is as good as is made in
the Eastern cities, and my prices are very reasonable
for fine photos. My rates are fixed to please you
and to come to my gallery on the Fourth
Street Jackson Co. Bank
MACKEY

National History Day

by Dawna Curler

Amber Krick says she used to hate history. Now she says she *loves* it. What's the reason for her change in attitude? *National History Day!*

PHOTO BY DANA HEDRICK-EARP



Dawna Curler

Over the past six years, Amber and hundreds of other students from Jackson, Josephine, and Klamath counties have gathered at Southern Oregon University's Stevenson Union for the southern district competition of Oregon's National History Day. This local contest, coordinated by the Southern Oregon Historical Society, is the first level of a multilevel national contest. Winners advance to the statewide contest held at Willamette University in Salem, and then on to the national competition at the University of Maryland in Washington, D.C.

National History Day is a fun and dynamic way for middle and high school students to study and learn about historical issues, ideas, people, and events. Through their work on History Day projects, students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills in addition to acquiring useful historical knowledge. At the classroom level, students research a topic of their choice that relates to the annual national theme. ("Science, Technology, Invention in History:

Impact, Influence, Change" is the 1999 theme.) They use both primary and secondary sources, analyze what they learn, and present their findings in the form of a paper, a media presentation, a table-top exhibit, or a live performance.

Although there had been limited National History Day participation by Oregon students in the 1980s, the program at first failed to catch on. In 1993, the Southern Oregon Historical Society got the ball rolling again by organizing a contest for one sixth-grade class. The kids competed only on the local level; there was no statewide competition. By 1995, Society staff had pulled together a state task force. Three local contests and a state contest were held that year. Ten students from Oregon competed at the national level.

Today, Oregon's National History Day program is thriving. The Oregon Historical Society in Portland coordinates the state program with co-sponsorship from the Southern Oregon Historical Society, the High Desert Museum, and Willamette University. All southern district contest

expenses are paid for by the Oregon Community Foundation through a grant from the Harriet Winton Fund. Last year, more than 300 local students experienced History Day in the classroom, 63 competed in the local contest, 24 advanced to state, and 5 Southern Oregon students competed at the national contest in Washington, D.C., along with 20 others from Oregon.

Amber Krick, whose performance about Oskar Schindler took her to the national contest in 1997, says her History Day experience changed her life. "I look at history from a different angle," she says. "There is not just one side to history. For example, I can look at the war from the Germans' side, too. . . History helps us get our minds thinking. If we don't know history, we will repeat it." As a result of History Day, says the North Medford high school sophomore, "I'm more interested in government and other things. Before I didn't care."

To see what students have to offer this year, drop by the National History Day Contest in the Stevenson Union at Southern Oregon University on February 20. For more information about History Day, contact southern district coordinator Dawna Curler at the Southern Oregon Historical Society, (541) 773-6536.

Dawna Curler, Programs Associate for the Southern Oregon Historical Society, has 25 years experience in the museum field, and has been with the Southern Oregon Historical Society for 15 years.



More than 63 students participated in last year's local contest using their own creative style to present their research.

PHOTO BY DANA HEDRICK-EARP



PHOTO BY DANA HEDRICK-EARP



PHOTO BY DANA HEDRICK-EARP



Amber Krick

PHOTO COURTESY AMBER KRICK

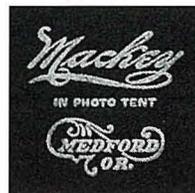
SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE Today



Our Own Voices:
National History Day

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Feature:
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BOB VON NORMANN

Sunday Driving:
Ferndale, California



SOHS #MS491

From the Archives:
The Love Letters of
Lorena Mingus and
George Geil



ASHLAND PARKS DEPT.

Rooted in History:
The Tree of Heaven



PHOTO BY DANA HEDRICK-EARP

The Pioneers:
Kubli Road

SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE TODAY

Editorial Guidelines

Feature articles average 3,000 to 4,000 (pre-edited) words. Other materials range from 500 to 1,000 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 outlines 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 submission—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.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society secures rights to full and final editing of all manuscripts, layout design, and one-time North American serial rights. Authors will be notified of acceptance of manuscripts within ninety days of receiving materials. In most cases, payment is upon publication. *Southern Oregon Heritage Today* takes great care with all submitted material, but is not responsible for damage or loss. Only photocopies of irreplaceable original historical documents should be submitted. Facts, views, and opinions expressed in signed submissions are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints or opinions of *Southern Oregon Heritage Today* or the Southern Oregon Historical Society.

ON THE COVER

"Now look pleasant" was long-time Medford photographer H.C. Mackey's advice to customers having their photographs taken. For many years Mackey maintained a photo tent as a branch studio in surrounding communities.



Southern Oregon Historical Society

Southern Oregon Historical Society

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SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Victorian Village

OF FERNDALE, CALIFORNIA

As the world rushes headlong toward the next millennium lugging along its worries about a host of political and environmental uncertainties — and with many of us wondering if our home computers and microwave ovens will survive the Y2K crisis — it is sometimes almost therapeutic to look back to what seems a simpler time and place.

There's a certain restfulness in history — no need to rush any more — and historic communities that still reflect the slower pace of yesterday help us slow down and unwind.

Such a place is Ferndale, a historic village in California's Humboldt County just twenty minutes south of Eureka off Highway 101.

Wedged between seemingly endless redwood forests and the Golden State's restless north coast, Ferndale's Victorian ambience seems to peel a century off the calendar.

On their way into town, visitors to Ferndale pass through the rich Eel River bottomlands, a checkerboard of emerald-green meadows sprinkled with the descendants of Holstein, Jersey and Guernsey dairy herds established by Danish pioneers in the 1850s. The weathered barns and Century Farms conjure up memories of milking stools and summers bucking hay, and suggest the unchanging rhythms of agriculture.

It was the hard-working early immigrant settlers from Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, Germany and later, Portugal, who left an indelible European mark on this prosperous, present-day village of 1,300 people. Once a thriving trade center with its own port on the Salt River for seagoing vessels, Ferndale enjoyed great economic prosperity in the last century.

Settled in 1852 by Vermonters Seth and Stephen Shaw, Ferndale became known for producing butter — so successfully, in fact, that at the height of the period, the Portuguese and Danish dairy barons built impressive Victorian mansions that became known as "Butterfat Palaces." Their turrets, gables and gingerbread trim representing the Carpenter Gothic, Eastlake Stick, and Queen Anne styles of architecture are frosted in every color of the rainbow — nirvana for photographers.

The homes have been well cared for; *Los Angeles Times* Travel Editor Jerry Hulse calls Ferndale "California's best-preserved Victorian village."

Articles in *National Geographic* and *Sunset* magazines have echoed Hulse's accolades.

Ferndale's long tradition of craftsmanship dates to the village's founding, when it was called "Cream City." Self-guided walking tours lead past art galleries, a museum, antique and other appealing shops in the Victorian business district. Artisans in saddle-making, stained glass windows and lampshades, and bronze sculpture ply their trades here. Although the 1906 earthquake destroyed some of the original shops in this seismically active area, most of the Victorian buildings along Main Street still stand a century later, having even survived a big rumble a few years ago.

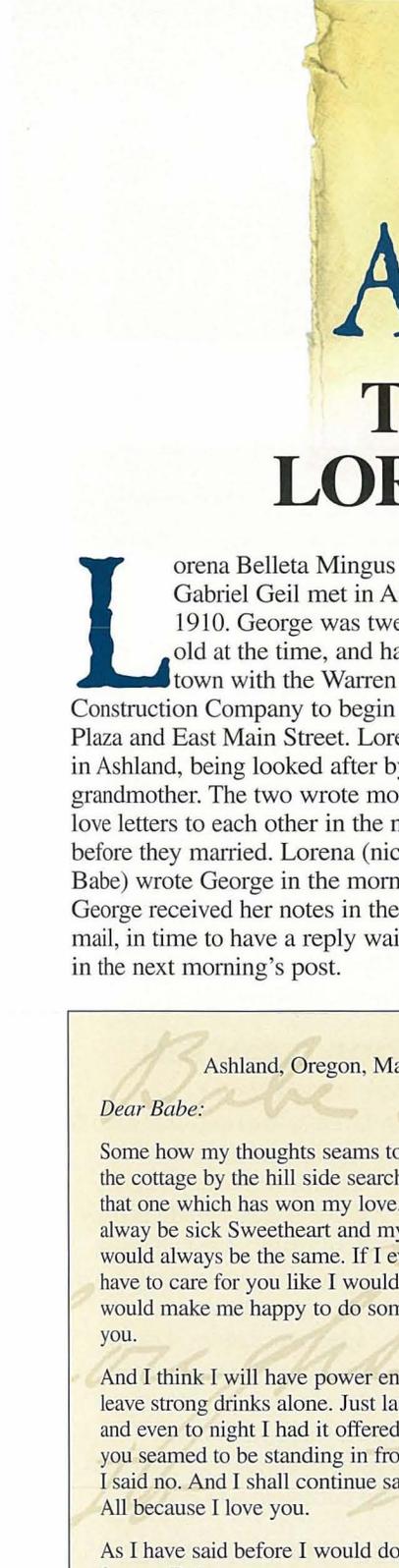
Gleaming white church steeples punctuate the skyline, and the hillside cemetery is worth a visit. Flags flutter. Second-story window boxes overflow with bouquets of brilliant flowers. White picket fences encircle elaborate, authentic gingerbread houses in perfect repair and preservation, garnering the village's designation as a California Historic Landmark.

And if all this is not enough, Ferndale schedules celebrations monthly throughout the year: bicycle tours; mystery weekends; a "Milk Run;" an Easter egg hunt; an antique show; a Scandinavian Mid-Summer Festival; and Independence Day Fire Truck Rides. All these celebrations culminate in Ferndale's Christmas Gala featuring carolers and a 165-foot tree decorated by the village schoolchildren and lighted in a special ceremony with refreshments offered by village merchants. Ferndale Repertory Theater offers eight productions each year, from contemporary American musicals to classic plays.

For those who wish to spend more than a day in the village, bed and breakfasts abound, with motels, an inn and hotels offering their hospitality. Recreational vehicles and campers can be accommodated at the fairgrounds.

So take a century off your shoulders. Ferndale awaits.

Patricia Parish Kuhn, a resident of Medford since 1959, has been a frequent contributor to Southern Oregon Historical Society publications. A published travel writer, she also is the recipient of an award from the Oregon State Poetry Association.



A Fine Romance ~

THE LOVE LETTERS OF LORENA AND GEORGE GEIL

Lorena Bellela Mingus and George Gabriel Geil met in Ashland in 1910. George was twenty years old at the time, and had come to town with the Warren Construction Company to begin paving the Plaza and East Main Street. Lorena grew up in Ashland, being looked after by her grandmother. The two wrote more than 100 love letters to each other in the nine months before they married. Lorena (nicknamed Babe) wrote George in the morning, and George received her notes in the afternoon mail, in time to have a reply waiting for her in the next morning's post.

Ashland, Oregon, May 26th, '11

Dear Babe:

Some how my thoughts seems to stray to the cottage by the hill side searching for that one which has won my love. You could always be sick Sweetheart and my love would always be the same. If I even would have to care for you like I would a child it would make me happy to do some thing for you.

And I think I will have power enough to leave strong drinks alone. Just last night and even to night I had it offered to me. But you seemed to be standing in front of me & I said no. And I shall continue saying no. All because I love you.

As I have said before I would do anything for you Babe. . . .

We will be on North Main till noon tomorrow & then we go to East Main. So I won't get to see you very often next week.

What will life be to me without you Babe? I will give up anything for you so don't be afraid.

Good night dear girl

Your anxious boy

[No date (postmark May 27)] Saturday Afternoon

Dear Gabriel:

Rec. your dandy-fine letter a little while ago. My! It seems years since I saw you. I had an invitation to go to Central Point & stay over till Monday to night. But I couldn't let our dear old Sunday's pass by, dear, so said no it was impossible to go. Which it is; is it not? What will I do those Sundays you are gone? Die with grief I'm afraid.

Do be so careful that nothing happens to you love. We will finish taking that film tomorrow, so you can have a picture of me. I will let you take one of me in my blue silk dress. Do come as early as you can.

My little man I am so proud that you love me this way & I never did feel so happy in my life.

Have finished our first piece of linen for our little home & every stitch is interwoven with love for you.

My Aunty Dee at Portland the one I think of so much wrote me a letter today about us. I will send it to you so you can read it too. Please bring it back to me tomorrow, for I always want to keep it. I wish you knew her dear. I haven't heard from Mamma yet. Feel sort of worried.

My! I do hope you get another contract here. It means so much to me if that Co. only knew it.

I think I[ll] get out & be a booster for having more streets paved. Its a shame dear for you to give up your little friends the Vance girls for a girl like me. I really thought you were more senseable. Think what a charming wife one of them would make. I am sure you would be so happy. Perhaps if I don't give you a kiss tomorrow they may win you away yet. When you get over there on East Main you see I can't watch you & there is no telling how many girls will be after you.

Good bye little man.

Your girlie

Babe

The letters are a wonderful collection rich in material about Southern Oregon early in the twentieth century, full of information on books, early motion pictures, operas, working conditions, standards of living, social mores and rules of courtship. These two letters were chosen because they are from the time the couple were both in Ashland and their love had progressed beyond the timid first steps, and because from today's perspective the letters speak humorously of the distance these two perceived between the Plaza and East Main Street — a world apart for this couple.

The collection has been transcribed and edited by George and Lorena's grandson, John Waade Geil, and the original letters are on file with his transcript in the Southern Oregon Historical Society's archives. The transcript, available in the Society's Research Library, gives readers a look at the lost art of letter-writing, a blooming courtship and the social history of the times. The library is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 1 to 5 p.m., and is free to all Jackson County residents. 📖



News & Notes

of the Southern Oregon Historical Society

February 1999

BECOME A SUPPORTING MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY

Find out more about how you can support the programs, exhibits, and many other aspects of the Southern Oregon Historical Society. Call Membership Coordinator Susan Cox-Smith at 773-6536 for full details about membership categories and benefits or visit the membership page at the Society's website, www.sohs.org.

Program Schedule

CONVERSATIONS WITH . . .

Saturday, February 6; Free
Ashland Branch
1:00 p.m.

Join us as we begin the first in a series of monthly "Conversations With . . ." This series will introduce residents of the Ashland community as they explore their community history. This month's speaker, long-time resident Michael O'Brien, was born in Ashland's Railroad District and will recount stories of Ashland.

PACIFIC PERSPECTIVES ARCHAEOLOGY SERIES

Tuesday Evenings
History Center, Medford
7:30 to 9:30 p.m.
\$40 members/\$50 nonmembers

The Society and Southern Oregon University present "Pacific Perspectives: The Culture, History, and Environment of the Oregon Coast," a series of lectures by archaeologists, ethnohistorians, and Native American scholars. The lectures consider the diversity of Oregon Coast cultures through time and the events that shaped the region's history. Topics include the antiquity of human use of the coastal zone,

human responses to earthquakes over the last 10,000 years, cultural adaptations to the rich maritime environment, history of the fur trade, and Native American traditions. Preregister by February 5. Call 773-6536 or email program@sohs.org.

February 9

Introduction: The Culture and Environment of the Oregon Coast

The Archaeology of the Oregon Coast

February 16

Cascadia Earthquakes and the Prehistory of the Northern Oregon Coast

February 23

History of European Fur Trading in Southwestern Oregon

March 2

Memories of the People: Enduring Oral Traditions of the Southern Oregon Coast

VICTORIAN VALENTINES

Saturday, February 13;
Free

Rogue Valley Mall, Medford
11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Give your heart away! Families are invited to create a variety of historic valentines for their loved ones. Co-sponsored by the Rogue Valley Mall.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

February 24, 5:30 pm

GENEALOGY FAIR

Saturday, February 13; Free
Smullin Center, 2825 Barnett Rd.
Medford
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Learn more about your family history during medical genealogy lectures, how-to genealogy workshops, displays, and genealogy on the Internet. A complete list of events is available at the History Center. Co-sponsored by the Society, Rogue Valley Genealogical Society, and the Central Point, Grants Pass and Medford Family History Centers.

GOOD CLEAN FUN

Wednesday, February 17
Children's Museum, Jacksonville
3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
\$3 members/\$4 nonmembers

To the great delight and joy of many young children, baths were once reserved as a once-a-week event or for special occasions. During

this workshop youth ages 3 to 6 will explore the art of soap making in different colors, shapes and sizes. Preregister before February 12. Call 773-6536 or email educate@sohs.org.



CHANGES ON THE LAND

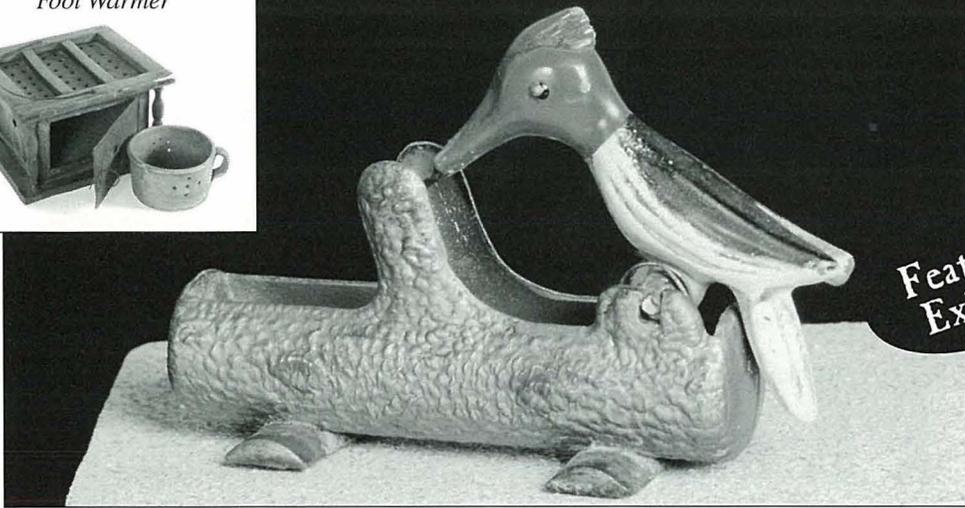
Saturday, February 27; Free
History Center, Medford
1:30 p.m.

Follow the history and changes to Southern Oregon's Evans Creek area from its early landscape through man-made changes such as roads, structures, and utilities. Includes a slide presentation followed by questions and answers.

For more information about the Southern Oregon Historical Society, contact us at:

106 North Central Avenue · Medford, Oregon 97501 ■ Phone 541 · 773 · 6536 ■ Fax 541 · 776 · 7994 ■ Email info@sohs.org ■ Website www.sohs.org

January's Mystery Object
Foot Warmer



Featured Exhibit

Exhibition Schedule

What's important about your community? What has changed? What are some of your community's traditions? How would you answer these questions? Find out how your neighbors answered these questions in the Society's newest exhibit, "Faces in Places," on display at the History Center in Medford through June 1999.

Created as a continuation of the history of Jackson County which was published by the Society in *Land in Common* in 1993, "Faces in Places" tells the story of Southern Oregon's recent history through a series of 12 exhibit panels. One side of the panels depicts a community's history and is illustrated with historic images from the Society's collection. The other side of the panels features contemporary images and quotes from residents creating a sense of each community's unique character.

A WOMAN'S TOUCH

New this month in the History Center's Medford Community Collects Gallery is "A Woman's Touch," just in time for Women's History Month! Be sure to stop by and see the Southern Oregon Antiques and Collectibles Club's display which includes small Fenton vases, cowslip Spode, and Fostoria candlewick. "A Woman's Touch" is on display through April.



WHAT WAS CAMP WHITE?

Who occupied the facility and where did they go? The Camp White Historical Association's latest exhibit in the windows at the History Center includes early photos of Camp White along with the history of the 91st Division as it trained at Camp White and in Central Oregon. Also on display are uniforms worn by personnel stationed at the facility. "What Was Camp White?" is on display all month.

MYSTERY OBJECT OF THE MONTH

February's Mystery Object: This little item sat on the dining room table. It's metal and the redheaded woodpecker moves up and down into the log. It measures 3" H x 1.5" W x 4.5" L. What did the item hold? A winner will be drawn from all correct answers received by February 26 and will be awarded \$5 in "Applegate Trail Scrip" good toward any Society purchase. Send your answer on a 3" x 5" card with your name, address, and phone number to: *News & Notes* Mystery Object, SOHS, 106 N. Central Ave., Medford, OR 97501, or by email to info@sohs.org.

January's Mystery Object was a foot warmer. Used on carriage rides, the punched tin door and sides allowed enough room to hold an earthenware cup inside which contained hot coals. The foot warmer was brought to Oregon from Massachusetts. The winner will be announced in the April edition of *News & Notes*.

FORGING THE THUNDERBOLTS

Saturday, February 27; Free
U.S. Hotel, Jacksonville 4:30 p.m.

A bit of drama exploring the 50-year friendship and association of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, two first-generation woman suffrage pioneers. Presentation includes excerpts from speeches, letters and diaries which reflect on the ways the early women's movement and historians have presented and interpreted the work of these early feminists.

This program is made possible in part by the Oregon Council for the Humanities, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society is proud to co-sponsor KTVL-TV 10's year-long campaign

"10 COUNTRY PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE"

Watch Channel 10 for a look at Southern Oregon's history and development as we examine the region's early transportation, agriculture, logging, arts, media and those people and businesses that have contributed to the economic growth of the region.

Stop in for an Hour; Learn for a Lifetime

HISTORY CENTER

106 N. Central Avenue, Medford
Mon - Fri, 9:00am to 5:00pm
Sat, 1:00 to 5:00pm

RESEARCH LIBRARY

106 N. Central Avenue, Medford
Tues - Sat, 1:00 to 5:00pm

THE HISTORY STORE, MEDFORD

Rogue Valley Mall,
Lower Level
Daily, Mall hours

JACKSONVILLE MUSEUM

5th and C streets, Jacksonville
Wed - Sat, 10:00am to 5:00pm
Sun, 12:00 to 5:00pm

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

5th and C streets, Jacksonville
Wed - Sat, 10:00am to 5:00pm
Sun, 12:00 to 5:00pm

THIRD STREET

ARTISAN STUDIOS & JACKSONVILLE HISTORY STORE
3rd and California streets, Jacksonville
Thurs - Sun, 11:30am to 4:30pm

U.S. HOTEL

3rd and California streets, Jacksonville
Upstairs room available for rent.
Call 773-6536 for information.

ASHLAND BRANCH

208 Oak Street, Ashland
Wed - Sat, 12:00 to 4:00pm

HANLEY FARM

Open by appointment. Call 773-2675.

The Man in



by William Alley

Many nineteenth century photographers were itinerant, or traveling photographers. Small towns often could not support a photographer full time, so the artists would load up a wagon and travel from town to town, practicing their trade until they had saturated the market before moving on to the next town. One such photographer came to Medford before the turn of the century, but this one stayed—for more than forty years.¹

Henry Clinton Mackey was born in Missouri in 1866. He came to Medford in 1893, he set up a photography studio in a tent just west of the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks on Main Street, across from the Clarendon Hotel. Mackey began advertising his services in the *Medford Mail*, claiming “Superior Photographs. . . At Mackey’s Photo Tent.” Toward the close of 1895, the tone of Mackey’s newspaper advertisements hinted that the young photographer was planning to stay awhile. “Mackey, the Medford photographer, now has on exhibition the largest selection of Photos [sic], also views of the fruit orchards, that has ever been displayed in the Rogue river valley,” one ad read. “Give Mackey a call and examine his artistic work. His prices are reasonable. Photo tent west of S.P.R.R. depot.”²

Another indication that Mackey intended to remain in Medford came to light in the fall of 1895, when it was announced that he had leased the photo studio vacated by two other Medford photographers, Tyler & Miser. This studio was located on the second floor of the Hamlin Block on East Main Street near Central. Sittings were held in the rear of the studio, which had a large wall of windows and an ample skylight. “I have fitted this place up in excellent shape and especially for the photographic trade,” Mackey announced. “I am, therefore, enabled to execute the finest work ever

made in the Rogue river valley.”³

Surviving imprints on photographs in the collection of the Southern Oregon Historical Society indicate that Mackey had a couple of partners during his tenure as a Medford photographer. For a time imprints from Mackey’s studio read “H.C. Mackey and Boyd, Hamlin Block, Medford.” It is possible that Boyd is Henry J. Boyd, who went on to open his own studio in Ashland. A second imprint, also on undated photographs, advertises, “Mackey & Weston, Medford Studios, Medford, Oregon.” Weston is surely Edgar Weston, who later operated his own studio above the Isis Theater, located at 210 West Main Street in Medford, from 1911 to 1917.

George W. Mackey, Henry’s brother, also worked as a photographer in Medford. In the years prior to 1906 the two Mackeys frequently worked together and at times maintained separate studios, working under their own names.

When H.C. Mackey set up a studio in Gold Hill in the fall of 1898, George remained in charge of the Medford studio. During this period the two operated under the name Mackey, Bros. George is also



SOHS #12115

the High Silk Hat

H. C. Mackey, ARTISTIC PHOTOGRAPHER.

known to have filled in for his brother while the latter was away on vacation.

After a number of years in Tyler & Miser's old studio, Mackey relocated to newer quarters across Central Avenue, where Vogel Park is now located. He sold his old studio in 1908 to fellow photographer Frederick Lesmeister, who utilized the rooms until he moved to Central Point in 1909. The studio was later used as the Kunselman Gerking and Gerking Harmon studios in 1912-1913. Eventually, the skylight studio in the rear of the building was bricked up.⁴

Although Mackey had settled down in his new studio on Main Street, he did not completely give up his traveling. For a number of years he maintained his well-known photo tent, which he would set up temporarily in the surrounding communities as a sort of branch studio. Maintaining his tent, however, was not without its hazards. In January 1903, someone broke into Mackey's photo tent and stole "quite a number of valuable articles." Upon hearing of the theft, Mackey rushed back from Gold Hill, where he was visiting, arriving just in time to see his tent collapse under high

winds and an accumulation of snow. In spite of losses estimated at \$250-\$300, the photographer, "with characteristic grit," relocated his tent studio to a nearby storefront and carried on, "ready to do business with his friends, both old and new and you are expected to look pleasant while the erstwhile red headed photographer presses the button."⁵

Photography was not Mackey's sole interest. On August 20, 1899, the photographer married Miss Mary Walker. After nine years of marriage, however, the relationship turned sour and Mary left her husband in January of 1908, taking up residence in California. Mackey filed for a divorce, which was granted in February 1909. Although notified of the action, Mary refused to appear to answer the allegation that she "wilfully, and without cause, deserted and abandoned" her husband. There were no children from the Mackeys' marriage, and Mackey never remarried.⁶

A tall man with a full head of red hair, Mackey added to his conspicuous look with the dashing clothes he wore, even long after they had gone out of fashion. Long-time Jacksonville resident Vance "Pinto" Colvig reminisced about the photographer when discussing some of the more colorful characters he remembered from his youth. "We had a Mr. Mackey, tall, redheaded, morning, noon and night — no matter where — we'd see him prancing on the job at any function with his camera. Prince Albert coat (with chrysanthemum in buttonhole) flashy, Ringling Red cravat, fancy brocaded vest, dove-colored gloves, striped trousers, grey spats, and always wearing a shiny Hi Silk hat cocked at a rakish angle."⁷

When asked why he dressed the way he did Mackey replied, "I am what you might call an 'off-the-press' advertiser. That is, I don't believe in newspaper advertising. I spent a fortune on it an' it



Now Look



And have your Photo want fine pictures. In the Eastern cities, and for such fine photos. so do not neglect to c of July. All work is Studio in Hamlin Bl

The Red-Headed F

done me little or no good. Now, if I dressed natural, like other business and professional men, no stranger or newcomer to town would know who I am, or what I do. But with these fancy duds, the minute a stranger spots me he becomes curious and inquires 'Just who is

that gentleman in the stovepipe hat?' No one answers 'That's Mr. Mackey.' Oh no! They always say, 'Why that's Mr. Mackey, the photographer.' See what I mean? Free mouth-to-mouth advertising from all the best mouths in the valley. . . and it doesn't cost a stinkin' dime."⁸

Even toward the end of his career as a photographer, Mackey maintained his colorful and distinctive garb, although not to the degree he did in the earlier years. In 1920 Arthur Perry noted in the *Medford Mail Tribune* that Mackey had been so busy plying his trade that "he

has no time to keep his silk hat slicked up properly." Three years later it was reported, somewhat tongue in cheek, that Mackey had begun to slip a bit in his adherence to his own personal dress code, venturing out on occasion in a common fedora and plain coat, "until life long friends began to coldly pass him by thinking that another stranger had come to town." Soon, however, the paper was able to report that Mackey was again "resplendent on the streets with his sylph-like form encased in a charming new Prince Albert coat and topped with his almost omnipresent silk hat."⁹

During the mid-1920s Mackey made the decision to retire from photography. Medford by that time had a number of new photographers and the competition for business was stiff. For more than thirty years Mackey was



Mackey's old glass and skylight studio, in the rear of the Hamlin building, can be seen in this photograph taken during a Fourth of July parade (year unknown).



Pleasant

made by H. C. Mackey, if you
 y work is as good as is made in
 y prices are very reasonable
 y rates are fixed to please you
 ne to my gallery on the Fourth
 ictly First-Class.

7th St., next Jackson Co. Bank

H. C. MACKEY
 otographer



perhaps Medford's most colorful and prolific practitioner of the photographic arts. He had been around so long that the newspaper once described him as the man "whose first photographs taken in Medford were found recently in King Tut's tomb in Egypt." By 1927 Mackey was out of the studio and well established in the insurance business. Mackey continued to sell insurance until his death in 1935.¹⁰



Today, many examples of Mackey's work are preserved in the Southern Oregon Historical Society's collection and doubtless among the personal collections of many of Southern Oregon's older families. As a photographer, Mackey is described as "an excellent craftsman, showing considerable skill in portrait lighting, retouching and print processing." As an enduring legacy he left behind invaluable photographic

documentation of Medford's early residents and formative years.¹¹ ■

William Alley, Southern Oregon Historical Society historian and archivist, is a frequent contributor to Society publications.

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7. Vance de Bar Colvig, *Clowns is People Too*, unpublished manuscript, Southern Oregon Historical Society, p.159.
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SOUTHERN OREGON

ANNUAL REPORT FOR

As the next century approaches, the world has begun to reflect on the accomplishments and challenges of the last 100 years. Without written history, reflections on the past would not be possible. However, it isn't just every 100 years that history matters. History always matters!

Closer to home, since 1946 the Southern Oregon Historical Society has reflected on the accomplishments and challenges of the past. The Society's efforts have focused on preserving and celebrating the legacy of Southern Oregon, because history always matters. Join us in celebrating the past twelve months as we take a look back at fiscal year 1997/98.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING & EXHIBITS

Much of the programming and exhibitions for the year centered on The Whole Cloth Project. Workshops and exhibits by the Society celebrated a year of fiber arts with museums and galleries throughout Southern Oregon. The Society was a recipient of the "Best Collaborative Effort" award for its dedication to the project.

In partnership with the Rogue Valley Mall, the Society conducted six special programs at the Mall that gave families the chance to enjoy crafts and learning together, celebrating family genealogy, Valentine's Day, May Day and the Good 'ol Summertime.

Living history character C.C. Beekman helps make Family Fun Day special at the Jacksonville Museum.

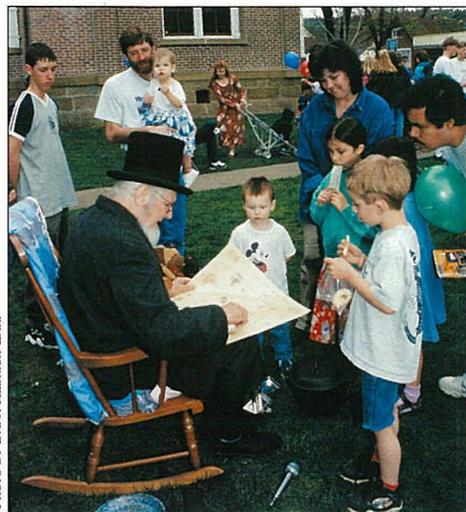


PHOTO BY DANA HEBRICK-EARP



PHOTO BY DANA HEBRICK-EARP

The new HO-scale model train pulled into the Children's Museum in March.

The Exhibits Department managed the development of the new HO-scale model train exhibit, "The Rogue River Valley and the Railroad: 1911," at the Children's Museum. Several sections of the museum were also remodeled. The History Center took on a new look with a window exhibit reflecting a department store theme along with space for showcasing the collections and work of Jackson County's historical organizations.

Attendance at Society programs and exhibits totaled more than 360,000.

PUBLICATIONS

The Publications Department was honored with an Apex 1998 Award of Excellence for graphic design, editorial content and communications excellence for the quarterly magazine *Southern Oregon Heritage*. Work began on a plan to return the magazine to the benefit package of all Society members. The Society's Board of Trustees approved a new version of the magazine, *Southern Oregon Heritage Today*, to be published monthly and delivered to all Society-supporting and associate members. The new monthly magazine will incorporate the monthly newsletter, *ArtiFACTS*, yet will remain true to the award-winning qualities of the quarterly magazine.

The youth newsletter, *Hooked on History*, will become a quarterly eight-page newsletter. The newsletter will explore Southern Oregon's history in a new and exciting format that will include stories, crafts and activities to do at home, and a calendar of upcoming youth workshops.

Those interested in Ashland's rich history welcomed the publication of *The Spirit of Ashland*, a walking tour brochure produced by the Society in June.



Unique educational opportunities are being planned.

FACILITIES & SITES

The Society continued to manage and maintain ten county-owned properties in addition to the Society-owned History Center and Hanley Farm. Major projects included the Children's Museum renovation, made possible by a grant from the Cheney Foundation. Upgrades included a larger reception area and renovation of the public restrooms. The U.S. Hotel was upgraded to Americans with Disabilities Act standards with the installation of a chairlift. ADA work also began at the Beekman House.

During the year, the Society began searching for a location in Ashland. Various meetings with the Society board, city officials and community residents helped to outline the Society's future in Ashland, which will include exhibits, programs and retail sales.

The master plan was completed for the Hanley Farm, outlining the vision for this historic agricultural property: to serve as an educational and interactive center for the public while encouraging further exploration of the farm's natural, cultural, and material resources.



HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1997 - 1998 IN REVIEW

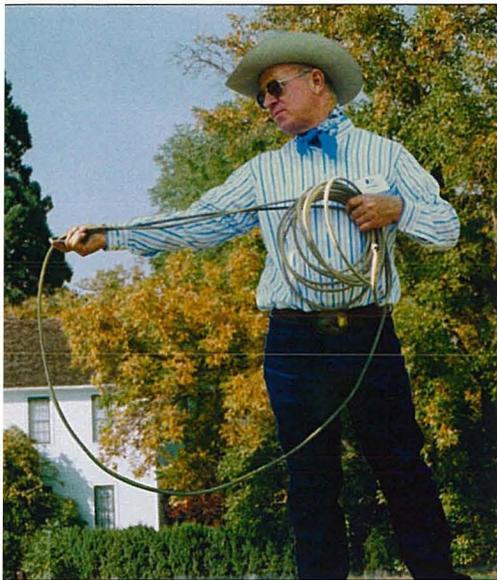


PHOTO BY DANA HEDRICK-EMER

the future at Hanley Farm.

Television to begin production of the video documentary, "An Air Minded City."

The dream of computer-cataloging the Society's photographic archives was made possible with a Meyer Memorial Trust Small Grant Award. The grant allowed the Society to upgrade equipment to begin the cataloging project.

VOLUNTEERS, SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

During the last fiscal year, 323 volunteers donated more than 14,603 hours to the Society, reflecting a 25 percent increase in donated hours over the previous year. The volunteer program provided the structure through which community residents became active participants in helping the Society provide programs and services. One such program that relied almost entirely on volunteers was the Oral History program. The Beekman Living History program and Children's Heritage Fair were two more important programs supported by a strong volunteer force.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society Foundation and the Society's Board of Trustees are additional support groups consisting of volunteers. The Southern Oregon Historical Society Foundation instituted the first year of the Circles of Giving program, developed as an annual giving campaign designed to provide long-term monetary support to the Society. The Board of Trustees began work with Society staff to develop a Strategic Long Range Plan to help guide the Society through the next five years while preparing for the challenges ahead.

The Jacksonville Museum Quilters and the Gold Diggers' Guild have provided volunteer and monetary support for many special activities. The Quilters contributed proceeds from their annual quilt show for U.S. Hotel upgrades. The Gold Diggers provided major funding support for the Children's Museum's new train exhibit.

New partnerships were developed with several outside organizations that helped the Society continue to further its mission. These organizations include KSYS, KTVL-TV10, the Rogue Valley Handweavers and Spinners guilds, Southern Oregon Antiques and Collectibles Club, Rogue Valley Mall, Rogue Valley Cloth Doll Club, Southern Oregon

Stitchers and Southern Oregon Women's Access to Credit.

MEMBERSHIP

In an effort to continue to provide the best value to its 1,400 supporting members and 5,000 associate members, the Society evaluated its current membership packages, comments received from present and past members, as well as membership programs from around the country. By the end of the fiscal year, the Board approved a new package designed to offer the most value to its supporting members while providing financial support to the Society.

HISTORY STORES

In October 1997, the History Store in the History Center made a bold move to the Rogue Valley Mall. Since then, sales have increased and the store has brought added community recognition for the Society. The store features history-related merchandise, but also displays "mystery objects" from the Society's artifact collection along with copies of photographs from the Society's archives.

The Jacksonville History Store and Third Street Crafts Gallery continued to offer a unique blend of traditional crafted items relating to the Society's mission. Demonstrations, including weaving and pottery throwing, were provided in the gallery's studios.



PHOTO BY DANA HEDRICK-EMER

Artists demonstrate traditional craft methods at the Third Street Crafts Gallery.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Efforts continued throughout the fiscal year to cement the relationship of all Jackson County historical organizations. Eleven groups came together and formed the Jackson County History Museum Association. The association shares information and artifacts, as well as assisting Jackson County in fulfilling its goals relating to history, education, and historic preservation. ☸

Zoning limitations on permitted activities at the farm are currently being considered and reviewed. A capital campaign for raising funds to complete the necessary infrastructure upgrades will begin in the near future.

ARTIFACT COLLECTIONS & RESEARCH LIBRARY

The Collections Department worked to identify areas where the Society's collections could be used and exhibited in new and innovative ways. The staff began taking steps to improve accessibility to the collections while ensuring their condition, utility and security in accordance with professional practices.

The Research Library embarked on two new projects drawing heavily from its extensive collections. The first project was the reproduction of a 1910 map of Jackson County which was made available for sale to the public. The success of the map project made it possible to begin identifying more maps for reproduction. The second large-scale project was a new collaboration with Southern Oregon Public



A Tree Grows in Southern Oregon

THE HISTORY OF THE “TREE-OF-HEAVEN”

by Nan Hannon and Donn L. Todt

First welcomed into the American landscape two centuries ago, a tree popularly associated with Chinese immigrants still flourishes in pockets around the Rogue Valley — when public works crews don’t cut it down.

Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) aggressively colonizes disturbed and challenging locations. In fifteen years, an *Ailanthus* seedling can grow to thirty feet in height and four feet in circumference, providing beauty, shade and good, hardwood fuel. These virtues prompted the Chinese to name it “Heaven tree,” and plant it near Buddhist temples.¹ Tolerant of drought, desiccating winds, pollution and poor soils, *Ailanthus* suckers, self-seeds and stump-sprouts when cut down. The toughness of this tree prompted Betty Smith to use it as a symbol of human resilience in her best-selling 1943 novel, “A Tree Grows in Brooklyn.”

Gardeners introduced the Chinese native to the United States in 1789. Horticulturists and city planners quickly recognized its utility as a street tree, praising it as tough, insect-resistant and attractive. It became one of the most common street trees in eastern cities, as well as a popular landscape planting in the expanding nation.²

In the West, Oregonians and Californians chose tree-of-heaven for home and street plantings because its rapid growth helped transform raw yards and new town centers into established landscapes. Its drought tolerance also allowed it to flourish despite the West’s dry summers.

As plantings matured, however, people discovered that the male flowers had a repellent odor and that the pollen could trigger hay fever. Some people cut the trees down, only to find the original tree replaced within a year by vigorous clumps of ten-foot stump sprouts, and that the winged seeds of the parent tree had produced hundreds of seedlings capable of growing to four feet in two years.³ *Ailanthus* acquired a reputation as a “weed tree.”



PHOTO BY DONN L. TODT

A tree-of-heaven graces the historic Chinese Joss House at Weaverville, CA.

At the same time, ugly prejudice against new immigrants was growing in the United States, and the notion that “native was better” extended to plants. In August of 1852, even as Chinese immigrants were playing a pivotal role in the development of today’s West Coast, garden experts vilified *Ailanthus* for its Asian origins. Horticulturist Andrew Jackson Downing described tree-of-heaven as a “usurper . . . which has come over to this land of liberty under the garb of utility, to make foul the air with its pestilent breath and devour the soil with its intermeddling roots.” He pronounced it to have the “treacherous heart of the Asiatics.”⁴

Several states and the District of Columbia actually passed legislative bans on *Ailanthus* in reaction to claims that the pollen not only caused hay fever but a host of serious ailments, including tuberculosis.⁵ *Ailanthus* is unlawful to plant in the city of Medford, but only because it is unfriendly to curbs, sidewalks and utility rights of way.

Ailanthus still had its fans, but by the 1920s American nurseries had dropped it from stock. For most of this century, the tree-of-heaven has spread on its own, expanding into disturbed and neglected areas. In the West, the trees are often found in the oldest parts of a town, descended from a few ancestors planted for their beauty and toughness.

A tree-of-heaven over a century old stands near the entrance to Ashland’s Lithia

Park. In 1989, Ashland residents voted it the tree of the year. Local folklore that the tree was planted by the Chinese cook of pioneer Abel Helman is untrue,⁶ but the belief does underscore the popular recognition of the tree’s Asian origins. *Ailanthus* trees dot Ashland’s historic districts, sprout from the asphalt of West Medford parking lots, shade Jacksonville alleys, and are a dominant roadside tree along Highway 99 around Phoenix and along the south side of Jacksonville Highway near Hanley Road. Trees-of-heaven ring the old railroad depot in Medford, probably descendants of the venerable *Ailanthus* on Front Street.

To contemplate *Ailanthus* in a more tranquil setting, visit Tree-of-Heaven Campground along the Klamath River. Take I-5 across the California border. Past Hornbrook, turn off on Highway 96. Within five miles you will arrive at this shady recreation area.

In an even more peaceful and appropriate setting, a tree-of-heaven grows at the temple built by Chinese miners in Weaverville, west of Redding. The Northern California gold rush town sprang up at the same time as Jacksonville. Both towns owe much to their early Chinese communities, which called *Ailanthus* “Heaven tree.”

Anthropologist Nan Hannon serves as education coordinator for the Mail Tribune. Ethnobotanist Donn L. Todt is horticulturist for the City of Ashland.

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The Ailanthus that still stands at the entrance to Ashland’s Lithia Park was already a mature tree when this commercial photo was taken around 1918.



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*Dear Son,
For a long time we waited for a
letter from you and finally got a
message thru Peter Britts letter. It
made us very happy and we are
glad that you are in good health
and going to come and see us
New Years 1856. Our open arms
awaiting you and we look
forward to our Reunion.*

Kaspar Kubli

by David Sundstrand



Kaspar Kubli
SOHS #14823

down, he went to work as a trader and packer on the supply route between Jacksonville and Crescent City. He was joined in this enterprise by two fellow immigrants

from Switzerland, Viet Schutz and Peter Britt, both known to the Kubli family back home.

Leading pack trains of mules laden with supplies over the mountainous trail from the coastal port to the mining camps was a difficult and dangerous task, but the trading venture must have been profitable, for it enabled Kubli to purchase land and begin another venture as a stockman and merchant on the Applegate River with a new partner, John Bolt.

Kubli and Bolt founded a store and trading post on the old Applegate trading road between Jackson and Josephine counties. It was here that Kubli built a ranch house, store and mill — a place to bring his growing family. And it was here that the family endured the hardships of pioneer life in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Elinore Jane Kubli must have been a remarkable woman, every bit as steadfast and brave as the redoubtable Kaspar. She was the mother of seven children and the keeper of the farm located far from the comforts and security of town. Tragedy was never far off. The Kubli family lost two daughters to fever in 1871. Francis was only nine and Manerva ten.

Kaspar Kubli left a record of pioneer achievement. He was postmaster of the Applegate district from 1868 through 1872, with the post office located at the Kubli and Bolt store. During his early years, he managed to save \$1,000 to send home to his family in Switzerland and to provide funds for his brother Jacob to immigrate to Oregon, where he joined Kaspar at the ranch just north of Missouri Flats. Jacob Kubli was cut from the same cloth as Kaspar. The Kubli postal district was named for Jacob, and Jacob's son Kaspar J. Kubli was postmaster from 1891 to 1907, when the post office closed.

In 1872, Kaspar and Elinore moved back to Jacksonville, where Kaspar prospered in the hardware business. By the time of his death in 1897, he had gained recognition for both his courage and humanity. Elinore lived to see one of her sons, Kaspar K. Kubli, become a state legislator and speaker of the Oregon House. 🏠

David Sundstrand, a new contributor to Southern Oregon Heritage Today, is the author of scholarly articles ranging from literary history to contemporary book reviews. He teaches philosophy and humanities for Rogue Community College in Jackson and Josephine counties.

Kubli Road



PHOTOS BY DANA HEDRICK-EARP

— From a transcription of a letter from Heinrich Kubli, written to his son Kaspar in November of 1856 from Netstal, Canton Glarus, Switzerland. Southern Oregon Historical Society.

Only half of Kaspar Kubli's story is here in Oregon. The content of the letters Kaspar wrote to his family in Switzerland can only be inferred from the letters the Kubli family wrote back to their prodigal son, who set out to make his fortune in America in 1852.

Kaspar Kubli, for whom Kubli Road near the town of Applegate is named, arrived in New Orleans by ship in 1853, crossed the Great Plains by wagon train, and arrived in Jacksonville on October 1, 1853, shortly after his twenty-third birthday. On the trip, the young man fell in with Daniel Newcomb, the leader of the wagon train and the father of Elinore Jane Newcomb, who was to become Kubli's wife in 1857.

Following the lead of many young male immigrants, Kubli tried his hand at mining, working the diggings of Jackson Creek during the winter of 1853-54 and again the following year. Apparently, he didn't strike it rich. But intending to settle



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