

# SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE

*Today*

HOLLY

THEATRE

Cast of  
**A Dollar Down  
A Dollar A Week**

To be presented  
**WEDNESDAY**

Eve May 18<sup>th</sup>

*Auspices*  
**MEDFORD**



Photos by Shangle

**YOUR PORTRAIT IS READY**  
**The Shangle Studio**

**WHOLESOME HISTORY**  
**Butte Creek Mill**

**CROSSROADS CAPITALIST**  
**Casper Ruch**

OCTOBER 1999  
Vol. 1, No. 10





# Society's Back in Ashland

by Jay Leighton

**A**fter an absence of nearly five years, the Southern Oregon Historical Society has returned to Ashland.

Last fall, the Society opened office and exhibit space in the old Ashland Armory at 208 Oak Street in the Historic Railroad District.

Surrounded by so much history, visitors to the Society's Ashland Branch reminisce about their early experiences at the armory. Some remember rifle practice as enlistees, while others recall attending dances or being on roller-skating dates with soldiers from Camp White.

One of Oregon's oldest, the armory was constructed in 1912 as a headquarters for Ashland's National Guard company. The armory was in active use by the military on and off over the years—most recently in 1968, when it was the headquarters for the First Battalion, 186th Infantry. In 1979, a new armory was constructed on East Main, and the old armory was put up for sale.

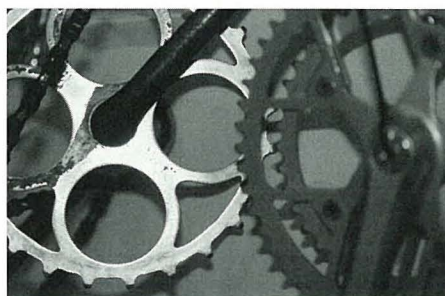
In addition to its earlier importance as a military installation, the armory has continually provided the Ashland community with a space for public events—dances, plays, shows, weddings, and fairs. Today the building houses the Historical Society, artists, businesses, and the Ashland Community Bike Program. The auditorium is available for concerts and parties.

Located on the first floor, the Society's newest branch focuses on Ashland's rich heritage and its place in Rogue Valley history. The four rooms provide plenty of display and program space, and Ashland photo murals hang in the hallway.

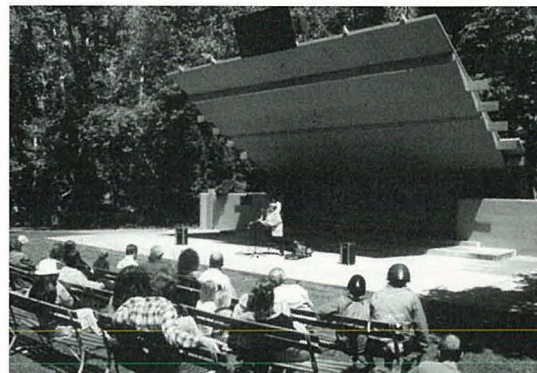
Unique to the Ashland site is the *Conversations with ...* series, designed to facilitate visitors' exposure to Ashland's culture and history.

Occurring on the first Saturday of each month, this program features community members interacting with guest speakers in a casual setting. Speakers represent a cross-section of the community.

Currently on display is *Public Places and Private Lives*, a photo exhibit that focuses on the people behind such Ashland landmarks as Will Dodge Alley, Butler Bandshell, Hunter Park, and Darex Ice Skating Rink. This exhibit runs through June 17, 2000. Related programming will occur throughout the year.



*Closing mid-October, the Wheel Crazy exhibit looks at the bicycling craze that captured the nation's fancy in the 1890s.*



PHOTOS BY DANA HEDRICK-EARP

*An exhibit now on display at the Society's new Ashland Branch focuses on the names behind Ashland landmarks, such as Butler Bandshell in Lithia Park.*

Closing this month is *Wheel Crazy: the Bicycle Boom of the 1890s*, an exhibit exploring the local and national craze of bicycling.

November will bring images from Ashland resident Terry Skibby's extensive collection of historic photographs, on display through June 2000.

The exhibit *High Water* is scheduled for June 2000 through August 2000. This traveling exhibit from the Oregon Historical Society explores Oregon's numerous floods. *Ashland Under Water* will supplement the OHS exhibit with local information about the 1997 Ashland flood.

With support of staff from the Children's Museum, the Ashland Branch also offers quarterly family events. "Spirit of Ashland" walking tour brochures and Ashland Cemetery guides are available at the Ashland Branch. Coming later this fall: a self-guided tour of the Railroad District. See News and Notes, on pages 6 and 7, for program and exhibit information. ☺

*Jay Leighton is the Ashland program associate for the Southern Oregon Historical Society.*

*The old Oregon National Guard Armory houses the Society's new Ashland Branch. The building is wheelchair-accessible through a side door.*





# SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE *Today*



Our Own Voices:  
Society's Ashland Branch

The  
Pioneers:  
Casper  
Ruch



SOHS #14402

PHOTO COURTESY OF PETER CRANDALL



Sunday Driving:  
Butte Creek Mill

## 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.

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## ON THE COVER

Medford photographer J. Verne Shangle not only took the portraits for this 1932 theater billboard, he was part of the cast, just as he was part of the community. That's him at lower right.



SOHS #14146 (DETAIL)

Feature:  
The Shangle Studio



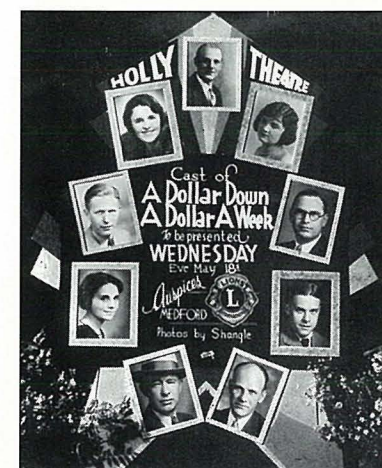
PHOTO BY BILL ALLEY

From the Archives:  
What Is An Archives  
Anyway?

Rooted in  
History:  
Matsutake  
Mushrooms



PHOTO BY BOB PENNELL/MAIL TRIBUNE



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY #14146

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**Southern Oregon Heritage Today** is published monthly by the Southern Oregon Historical Society.  
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(541) 773-6536

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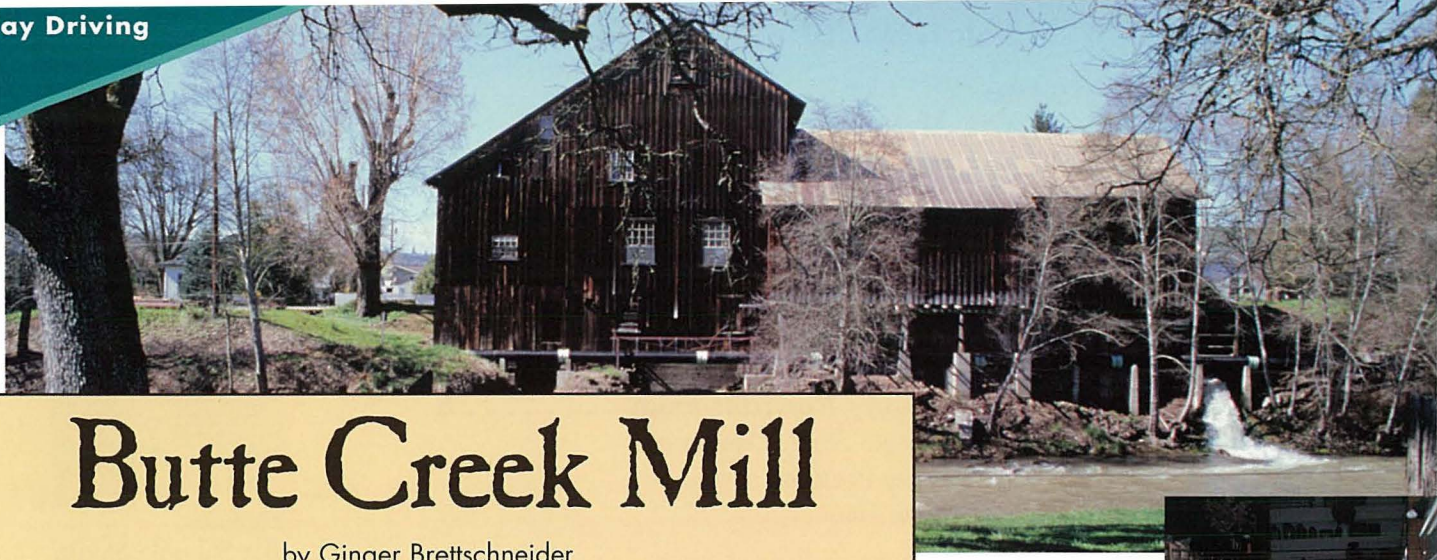
**Southern Oregon Heritage Today** is produced using Quark XPress on Macintosh computers and is printed by Ram Offset Lithographers.

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SOUTHERN  
OREGON  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY





PHOTOS BY DANA HEDRICK-EARP

# Butte Creek Mill

by Ginger Brettschneider

If you've ever passed along Little Butte Creek in Eagle Point, you've probably noticed the weathered, yet charming, structure housing the oldest operating grist mill in Oregon.<sup>1</sup> If you look closer, you'll find a unique story of a business passed from family to family throughout the twentieth century.

The Butte Creek Mill, built by John Daley, Sr., and Eber Emery in 1872, remained in the Daley family for twenty years. The Holmes brothers then tried their hand at the mill, followed by the Brandon brothers. During the Depression, the bank assumed ownership until George Putman purchased the mill in 1932.<sup>2</sup> Peter Crandall, a former engineer with North American Rockwell, purchased the mill in 1972. Crandall learned the skills of a miller from George Frances "Frank" Putman, Jr., who had assumed ownership from his father.

The rustic design of the mill reflects the technology of its original time. Water from Little Butte Creek is the main energy source, being channeled into the mill's basement through a millrace. The water flow then activates a turbine that turns the wheels, supplying power to the multiple shafts and pulleys. This water-powered machinery lifts grain to the upper-level storage bins via elevators—cups attached to canvas belts. The gravity-dependent system then allows grain to slide back down to the lower level for grinding between the four-foot diameter millstones.



*This 1875 overpainted tintype shows the mill in its earliest years.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF PETER CRANDALL

The stones have a unique history. They were quarried in France, assembled in Illinois, and shipped around Cape Horn to Crescent City. From there, the 1,400-pound stones were freighted by wagon train over the mountains through Jacksonville to Eagle Point.

The mill remains true to its legacy, still depending on Little Butte Creek for its power supply as the huge millstones continue to turn grain into flour. Water flows through the original half-mile of hand-dug canal that has served the mill for 127 years. The old floorboards continue to pulsate as the stones and gears turn. Breezes often sweep through the mill's interior, stirring up the sweet smells

of corn, wheat, and rye grain. In an average eight-hour shift, the mill is capable of producing 2,500 pounds of flour or meal.

The building itself also has quite a history. The pine lumber used to build the sturdy, four-story structure was cut near Butte Falls and hauled to Eagle Point by wagon. The structure is built around a framework of square posts and beams, joined together in a cross pattern and held together with oak pegs, called *tree nails*. Some of the sixteen-inch foundation pillars were hewn at the millsite, the jagged marks of the broad ax still revealing their roots.

The mill itself has had an economic impact on the region throughout its history. In earlier days, many traveled long distances to utilize the mill's resources. On their annual fall wagon trip to the valley, Klamath Indians often stopped at the mill to have grain ground or to purchase flour.

Although Frank Putman spent many of his years building new wheels to replace broken ones, replacing gears and pulleys, and maintaining other equipment and structures, the exterior of the mill looks much as it did in 1872.

During his tenure as miller, Crandall also has put great effort into maintaining and preserving the mill and its heritage. His ingenuity and technical expertise also allowed him to carefully restructure old rooms, build a store, and even assemble new machines to increase the mill's efficiency.

The structure was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. Crandall and his wife, Cora, have expanded the small mill into a mail-order business that ships grain products to consumers nationwide. They sell their whole grain flour, cereals, and mixes under the original *Butte Creek Mill* label. 🍳

*Ginger Brettschneider, an editorial intern with the Society last spring, has a journalism degree from Southern Oregon University.*

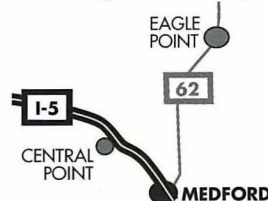
#### ENDNOTES:

1. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 21 September 1980.
2. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 16 July 1972.
3. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 19 January 1976.
4. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 6 June 1976.
5. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 18 March 1976.

**Directions:** At Eagle Point, turn right on Linn Road; left onto Royal. The Mill is .8 mile on the right at 402 North Royal.



*The Butte Creek Mill still graces the banks of Little Butte Creek in Eagle Point. Inside, the mill's shelves bulge with fresh and wholesome flours and grains.*





# What Is An Archives Anyway?

## (Part 1)

By Jacque Sundstrand

**P**revious "From the Archives" stories have piqued readers' curiosity about what an archives actually is. Here are answers to some frequently asked questions about the Society's collections.

**What is an archives, anyway?** While the term has multiple definitions, we use it to generally mean "the documents created or received and accumulated by a person or organization in the course of the conduct of affairs, and preserved because of their continuing value." In the Research Library, we basically divide our archival collections into two areas, the

Manuscript Collection and the Photograph Collection, and highlight materials from these collections in this column every other month.

**How do you decide what to collect?** The Society has a collection policy that helps to guide the staff in decisions about what to add to either our artifact or library collections. Since its founding in 1946, the Society is the only institution comprehensively collecting and interpreting the history and culture of Southern Oregon.

**What do you do with the things that come in?** Using our collection policy as a basis, we evaluate all items to see what sort of historical or research value they have. Generally, the manuscript and photographic items come to us as single items or in small lots. Occasionally, we receive quite large collections. We have an internal committee of staff members that meets to determine whether or not the materials fall within the scope of our collection policy. This committee then makes a recommendation to the Society's Board of Trustees for a final decision on whether to add the items. Once the board agrees, each donor is asked to sign a "deed of gift" to transfer all rights, title, and interest the donor may have to the Society.

**Then what do you do with it?** First we collect background information about the people, events and/or areas relating to the items in the collection, and from the "temporary receipt" we fill out with every donation. Photographs are put into sleeves. For manuscripts we clean the materials, if needed, and remove rusty paper clips, acidic folders, etc.; place the items in acid-free folders and boxes; arrange the materials in a usable order for the researcher; and create a detailed "finding aid," listing the contents of each folder in each box, as well as background information about the collection. Researchers interested in a particular collection can review the finding aid before asking to see all of the files or boxes. 📁

To be continued—in the November issue.

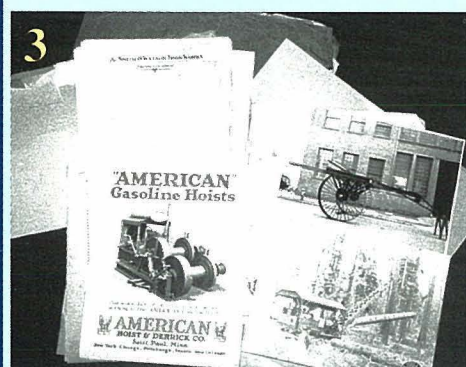
*Jacque Sundstrand is archives/library coordinator for the Southern Oregon Historical Society.*



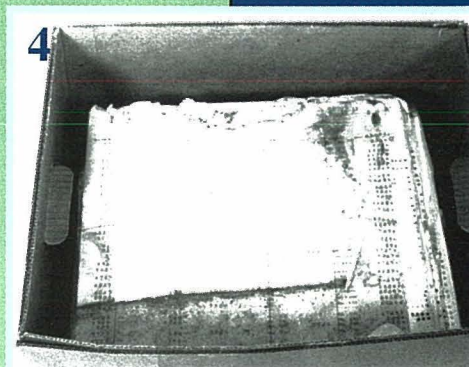
**1** We never know what will be donated or how it will be packaged. Large collections, as above, are often received from businesses.



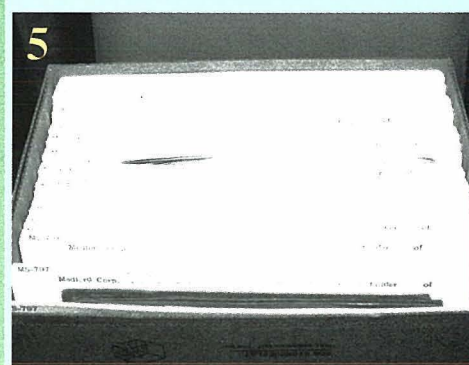
**2** Donations of artifacts and library materials are reviewed by staff each month and presented to the Trustees for approval.



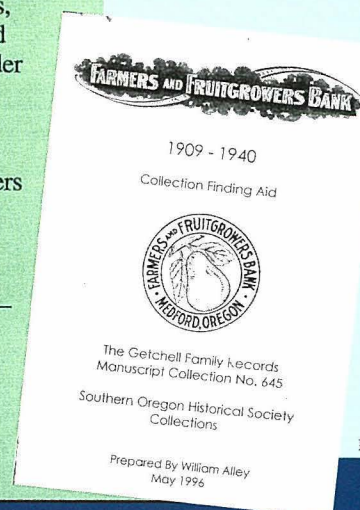
**3** Staff reviews each folder for the contents and for special handling needs.



**4** Materials may need to be cleaned thoroughly before being handled and are checked for insect infestations.



**5** Items are placed in acid-free folders, labeled in pencil, and stored in acid-free boxes.



**6** Good finding aids assist the user in learning more about a collection without having to look at every item, folder, or box.

PHOTOS BY WILLIAM ALLEY





# News & Notes

## of the Southern Oregon Historical Society

October 1999

### Program Schedule

#### OCTOBER CRAFT OF THE MONTH "Pumpkin Faces"

Children's Museum

Families; free

Celebrate the harvest by creating a pumpkin face to add to the museum's pumpkin patch.



#### CONVERSATIONS WITH...

Saturday, October 2, free

Ashland Branch, 1:00 p.m.

The Billings Farm has been owned and operated by the same family for over 100 years. Farmer, businessman and civic leader, John Billings, will share stories of his active life and that of the Billings and Myer families.

#### HOW TO DO ORAL HISTORY

Saturday, October 2

History Center, Medford, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

\$10 members/\$15 non-members

Society Oral Historian Marjorie Edens presents a workshop in collecting oral histories. To pre-register and prepay for this program by September 29, call 773-6536.

#### CYCLING ACROSS AMERICA

Wednesday, October 6, free

Ashland Branch, 7:30 p.m.

During a two-month vacation from IBM, Bill Skillman, and his brother and sister-in-law, fulfilled a dream. Starting in Neskowin, Oregon, on May 4, 1986, they endured the demoralizing headwinds of Wyoming and celebrated the beauty of spring in Kansas as they traveled to Virginia Beach. Join Bill for stories, photographs and a bit of advice from his cross-country trek.

#### ACORNS AND ARROWHEADS

Saturday, October 9

Families, free

Rogue Valley Mall, Medford

11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Explore the food, clothing and shelter of the region's Takelma Indians through storytelling and hands-on activities, including "tattoos," games, basket making and acorn grinding. Artisan Tom Smith will demonstrate Native American stone tool construction. Storytelling sessions will be at 11:30, 12:15 and 1:00 p.m.

#### HOW TO START A COLLECTION

Saturday, October 9, free

History Center conference room

2:00 p.m.

Southern Oregon Antiques and Collectibles member and native Oregonian, Alice Grimes, presents ideas and suggestions, ranging from the inexpensive to expensive, for starting a collection for children or grandchildren. Alice has several collections, but her prized possession is a water bottle brought by her ancestors in a wagon to the Rogue Valley in the 1880s. Please pre-register for this free program by calling 773-6536 by Friday, October 8.

#### WE KNEAD BREAD:

##### Bread Making Workshop

Saturday, October 16

Ashland Branch

2:00-3:30 p.m.

Ages 3-6

\$3.00 members/\$4.00

non-members

Discover how bread was made before bread machines. Participants will churn butter and mix a loaf of



bread to take home and bake in their oven. Please bring a measuring cup, wooden spoon, dishtowel, and a mixing bowl from home. All other ingredients will be supplied. Must pre-register by Wednesday, October 13 by calling 488-4938.

#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

October 27, 5:30 pm

Children's museum

### Exhibition Schedule

#### THIRD STREET ARTISAN STUDIO

3rd & California, Jacksonville

October through November

Exhibit of tapestries woven by members of Southern Oregon guilds (Rogue Valley Handweavers, Saturday Handweavers and Far Out Fibers) on display. Studio open for viewing; weaver, spinner and potter demonstrations; and sales, on Saturday from 11:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. through November-Saturday and Sunday in December.

#### AT&T TREASURES OF OREGON

October 18, 19, 20, 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Winburn Way (near ice rink), Ashland

October 22, 23, 24, 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Fifth & "C" streets, Jacksonville

This traveling exhibit celebrates the Oregon Historical Society's 125th anniversary of collecting and preserving Oregon's history. Housed in an enormous trailer, the "museum on wheels" will be open to the public in Ashland through October 20. Featured will be 19th century Native American dance aprons, a concertina brought across the Oregon Trail by Reverend John Spencer, ancient Columbia River petroglyphs, stone sculptures from the mid-Columbia region and many other treasures unique to

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



Oregon. the exhibit opens in Jacksonville on October 22. Admission is free. For more information, call the Society at 773-6536.

## Continuing Exhibits

### HISTORY CENTER:

**G**oing Places: Travel To and Through the Rogue River Valley, 1826-1996, continues through 1999.

**C**ollecting During the 20th Century: The Southern Oregon Antiques and Collectibles Club display in the "Community Collects" gallery features items from members' collections.

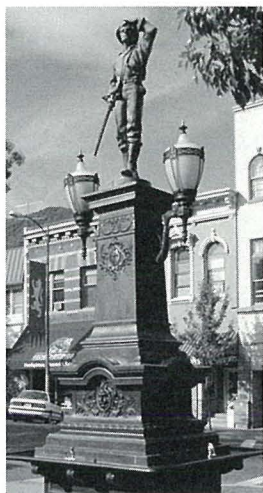
**T**he Masters of Ceremony exhibit celebrating life's passages and traditions, continues through October on the mezzanine. Produced by the Oregon Historical Society's XZBTS TO GO program and sponsored by Portland General Electric; Jeld-Wen, Jackson and Lamb foundations.

### JACKSON COUNTY HISTORY MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION EXHIBITS AND COLLECTIONS:

**G**old Hill Historical Society presents Go for the Gold in the north window of the History Center. The exhibit features mining and gold panning and highlights some of the choice nuggets of Gold Hill's past. On display through January 2000.

### JACKSONVILLE MUSEUM

**M**iner, Baker, Furniture Maker explores the development of the Rogue Valley and the impact the industrial revolution had on the settlement of Southern Oregon.



**A** Time to Mourn: Death and Mourning in the Jewish Tradition, uses dioramas, photographs, voices, and text to explore traditional Jewish family mourning practices and the history of the Jewish community. Continues through 1999.

**J**acksonville: Boom Town to Home Town traces the development of Jacksonville.

**P**olitics of Culture: Collecting the Native American Experience, offers a glimpse of the cultural history of local tribes and discusses contemporary collecting issues for museums, private collectors and archaeologists.

**H**all of Justice reflects the history of the former Jackson County Courthouse. Featured: architecture of the building; important events; influential people.

### CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

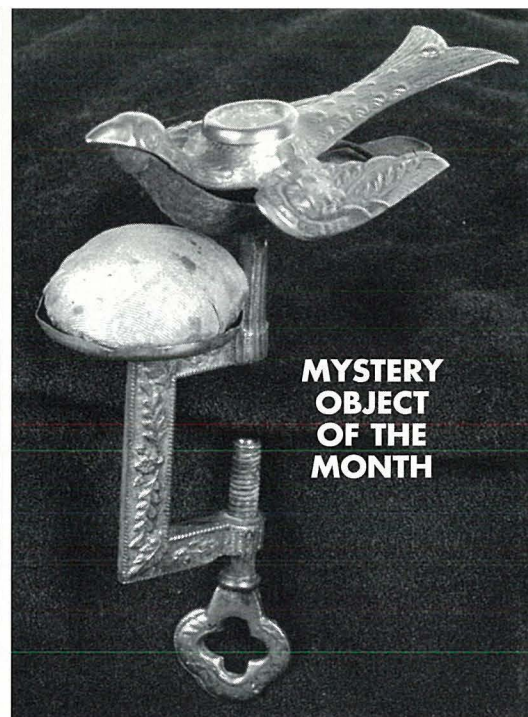
**E**xplore home and occupational settings from the 1850s to the 1930s through Hands on History.

View the miniature train diorama depicting the Rogue River Valley in 1911.

### ASHLAND BRANCH

**C**ome see Wheel Crazy: the Bicycle Boom of the 1890s before it closes October 16. How Things Have Changed, an exhibit which compares bicycle components from the 1930s through present day, closes the end of October.

**P**ublic Places and Private Lives focuses on people and landmarks of Ashland and continues through June 17, 2000.



**MYSTERY OBJECT OF THE MONTH**

**T**his small, stamped brass item is in the shape of a bird and was clamped to a work table. It has a spring-operated tail feather and a pincushion under the bird's beak. It was first made in the 1850s. It measures 5"high x 4"wide. What was it used for? Send your answer on a 3-1/2 x 5 card with your name, address and phone number to: News & Notes Mystery Object, SOHS, 106 N. Central Ave., Medford, OR 97501



*September's Mystery Object Soap Saver*

**S**eptember's mystery object was a soap saver. Soap scraps were put into a wire cage and swished around in the dishwasher to make suds. Congratulations to July's Mystery Object Winner, Louise Duncan of Medford, who identified the hammer-powered nail gun.

**CORRECTION:** September issue of Southern Oregon Heritage Today contained misspelled names of two trustees and one staff member. Correct spelling for trustees is Stuart Allan and Judi Draais; and Carol Samuelson for the staff member.

## Southern Oregon Historical Society sites

Phone: (541) 773-6536 unless listed otherwise

### HISTORY CENTER

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

### RESEARCH LIBRARY

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

### JACKSONVILLE MUSEUM & CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

5th and C, Jacksonville  
Wed - Sat, 10:00am to 5:00pm  
Sunday, noon to 5:00pm

### THIRD STREET ARTISAN STUDIO

3rd and California, Jacksonville  
Oct.-Nov., Saturdays,  
11:30am to 4:00pm

### U.S. HOTEL

3rd and California, Jacksonville  
Upstairs room available for rent.

### HANLEY FARM

1053 Hanley Road (between Central Point & Jacksonville) Open by appointment.  
(541) 773-2675.

### HISTORY STORE

Rogue Valley Mall, Medford  
Daily, Mall hours  
(541) 774-9129

### ASHLAND BRANCH

208 Oak, Ashland  
Wed - Sat, 12:00 to 4:00pm  
(541) 488-4938



# PERSONALITY PORTRAITS FROM THE



SOHS #16417

## SHANGLE STUDIO

by William Alley



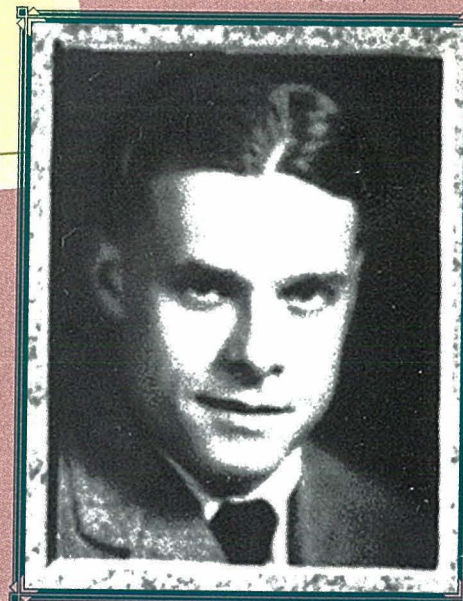
Among Shangle's unique photo services was his offer to shoot aerial photographs for clients. His skills helped document the American Fruitgrowers packinghouse fire that destroyed Medford's warehouse district in 1946.

SOHS #14146 (DETAIL)

Above, This photograph of a young Medford boy, possibly Shangle's son, is an example of the work Shangle billed as a "personality portrait." At left is the stamp found on the backs of his portrait photos.

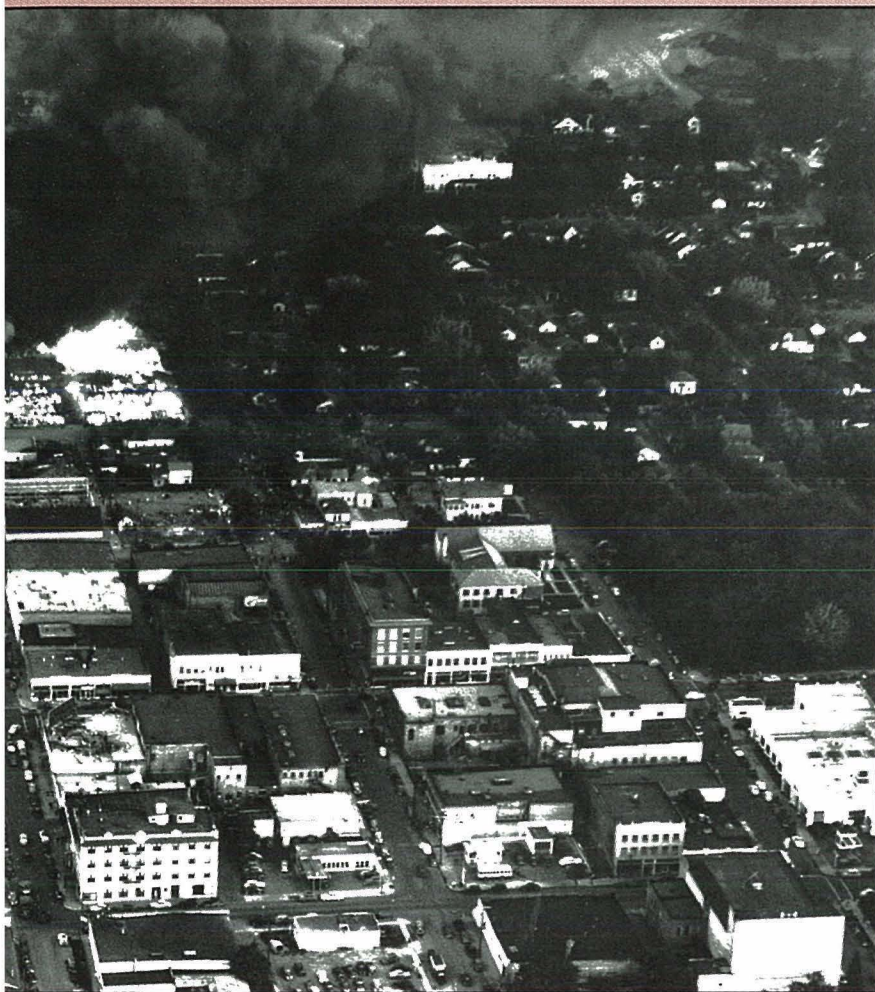
FROM THE STUDIOS OF  
**J. Verne Shangle**  
The Home of  
"PERSONALITY PORTRAITS"  
318 Medford Bldg., Medford, Ore.

Shangle took this self-portrait, right, for use as a publicity photo with a local theater production. As one of the city's leading photographers, and later as a nutrition activist, Shangle was active in community affairs.



SOHS #16417 (BACK)





Lamport's Sporting Goods store. Shangle had originally intended to name his new enterprise the Brownie Studio, but better judgement prevailed, and he used his given name instead. To assist with the bookkeeping and business end of the studio, Shangle recruited Juenesse Butler as a partner, and opened under the name Shangle-Butler Studio.

The new studio opened on the third floor of the Medford Center Building on January 14, 1928. The spacious accommodations included a reception area and a thirty-four by eighteen-foot studio proper, as well as a dressing room, and a well-equipped lab. Shortly after the new studio opened, Butler returned to her journalism career, and she would soon be named society editor of the Medford *Mail Tribune*. With Butler's departure, the studio would thereafter be known as the Shangle Studio.

Once settled in Medford, with his practice in full swing, Shangle married Ruth Galliher in Ashland on June 10, 1928. The two moved into a house on Dakota Street in Medford. They would later move to a larger home on King's Highway.

Shangle's skills as a photographer were immediately apparent. His images were sharp, clear and well-composed. Even today staff at the Southern Oregon Historical Society welcome the opportunity to work with Shangle images because of their consistently high quality. In addition to his "Personality Portrait" work, Shangle also documented the community in which he lived, taking photographs of groups, buildings and events. Not content to keep his feet on the ground, Shangle even advertised his willingness to take "Aerial Survey and Air Views of Your Property."

Within two years of establishing his studio in Medford, Shangle was the recipient of a distinct honor. He received word that he had been selected to sit on the program committee organized by the Pacific International Photographers Association, which was preparing to hold its annual convention in San Francisco. "This is a signal honor," the

For more than twenty-five years, the name Shangle on a photographic print was a sign of quality rarely equalled among Southern Oregon photographers. These prints, including the trademark "Personality Portraits," were the work of one of the region's youngest and most energetic photographers, J. Verne Shangle.

James Verne Shangle was born in Portland on August 18, 1902. At the age of fifteen he moved with his family to Alaska, settling down in the small community of Glenora, on the Stikine River, during the winter of 1917-1918. He attended high school in Juneau in 1918, and the following year took a position as an assistant engineer on the Hazel B, a Stikine riverboat.

In 1920 the Shangles returned to Portland, and Verne enrolled in automotive school to learn a trade. Over the course of the next few years he took a variety of jobs, including working on the steel bridge at Oregon City and a railroad construction job in Vernonia. It was the memories of his time in Alaska, however, that would steer the young man into a career in photography. Shangle had been so impressed with the Last Frontier that he longed to record the territory's beauty on film. He joined the Oregon Camera Club and embarked on a study of the photographic arts. His hobby soon turned into a career in 1927 when the young man accepted a position with the Stiffens-Colmer Studio in Portland.

Buoyed by the confidence his first professional photography job had given him, Shangle came to Medford in the fall of 1927 with the intention of setting himself up in his own studio. While in the process of preparing his 1300 square feet of space in the Medford Center building, Shangle shared space with Medford photographer Burhl Harwood in the latter's studio above

*Shangle used this large-format Eastman Kodak Century view camera for his studio portrait work. Shown here is a detail of the front lens.*



SOHS Acc. #1996.15





*Shangle took this photo of a group of Army Air Corps bombers parked at the Medford Airport in 1938. The airport often hosted military aircraft during stopovers on training missions along the West Coast.*

Medford Mail Tribune reported, "in as much as he is not only the only one chosen from a small town, but is probably the youngest member serving on any committee for the convention."

Photography was not the sole interest of this young photographer with an abundance of talent as well as drive. Before moving to Medford in the fall of 1927, Shangle had played semiprofessional baseball on a team in Portland. His interest in America's national pastime never wavered. Throughout the 1930s Shangle coached American Legion baseball and was one of the organizers of the Medford Athletic Association.

Shangle was also active in other civic affairs. In 1929, "in spite of his youth," Shangle was appointed deputy governor of the Lions International for the Southern Oregon district. He served on the board of directors of the Medford Chamber of Commerce and was president of the Medford Lions Club when that organization hosted the annual state convention in 1937.

As the decade of the 1920s came to a close, Southern Oregon had a number of established professional photographers. In January of 1929 several of these professional men and women met in Ashland with the intention of forming a local branch of the Pacific International Photographers Association, which had recently held its annual convention in the Medford Hotel. The following March the local photographers, joined now by some of the local photo-finishers, met again at the Medford Hotel to complete the plans to form their own organization, to be known as the Southern Oregon Photographers Association. The stated purpose of the organization was to "further co-operation between the

photographers of the district, and to get acquainted with local conditions, and endeavor to raise and maintain the standard of work." After the election of the group's charter officers, Shangle, the youngest of the members at twenty-seven, was appointed chairman of the Portraits Committee.



*This coupon advertisement for portraits by the Kennell-Ellis studio represented the kind of out-of-town competition that Shangle and the Southern Oregon Photographers Association tried to stop.*

In addition to their publicly stated goals, the new association would also serve as a lobbying group to seek a means of limiting competition from itinerant photographers through municipal regulation. In the spring of 1931 the Southern Oregon Photographers Association successfully lobbied the Medford City Council to pass an emergency ordinance that would impose heavy license and bond requirements on "so-called fly-by-night" and "coupon system" photographers who wanted to operate within the city limits. This new ordinance was similar to one passed in 1923 that set a ten-dollar annual license fee for local photographers and ten dollars per day for transient and non-local photographers. This new ordinance, however, added a \$1,000 bond on itinerant and coupon photographers and, significantly, included local photographers using coupon sales in the same category as itinerant photographers. This ordinance was passed by the council on April 7, 1931. Its avowed purpose was to protect the public from being fleeced by unscrupulous itinerant photographers. Concurrent with the passage of this new ordinance, a new advertising campaign was launched by the association in



*Shangle captured this group of surviving Southern Oregon pioneers assembled for the dedication of the new Jackson County Courthouse in 1932.*



Medford's newspaper, encouraging people to "deal with an ESTABLISHED and ETHICAL photographer" and listing the members of the Southern Oregon Photographers Association.

The new emergency ordinance had another, immediate effect, however, that was to generate a great deal of controversy. On April 31, 1931, shortly after the Photographers Association lobbied for the ordinance, a new photography studio, the Kennell-Ellis Studio, was opened in Medford. Unlike the other local studios, which were all locally owned and operated, Kennell-Ellis was a chain of six studios in the Northwest, owned by E.W. Ellis and E.E. Kennell. The Kennell-Ellis studios advertised their businesses through the use of coupons, which made them subject to the stiff licensing and bond requirements of the new city ordinance, even though they were not itinerant photographers. Ellis and his local attorney challenged the ordinance, which the city council referred back to committee. A new bill was introduced out of that committee that would have rescinded the strict provisions of the original bill but it failed in a vote of the city council. Association members Alfred Peasley and Verne Shangle were on hand at the meeting to support the council's decision.

Faced with this setback in the council chambers, Ellis and his attorney, Frank Newman, sought redress in circuit court, which ultimately ruled in their favor. In November of 1931 the council passed a new ordinance that retained the annual ten-dollar license fee for all photographers practicing within the city limits, "putting all on an equal footing," and "drawn in accordance with the recent decision of the circuit court." It was never really clear whether or not the Southern Oregon Photographers Association's original lobbying was aimed specifically at the new chain studio, known to utilize coupons as part of its advertising, that was planning to open up in Medford. In the midst of this controversy, Shangle was elected president of the Southern Oregon Photographers Association.

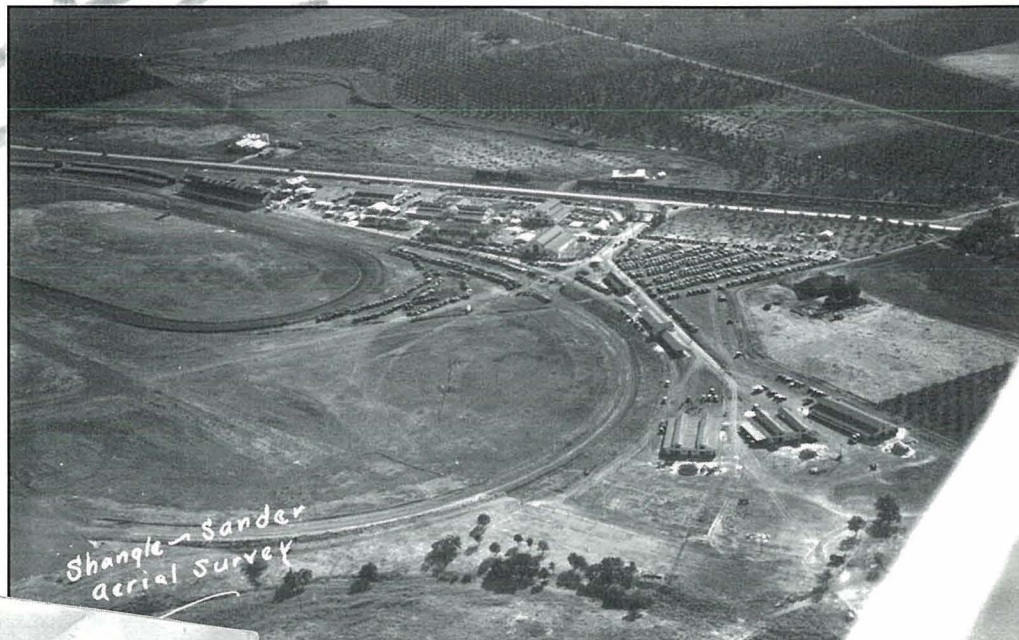
In spite of the considerable skill Shangle brought to his work, he continued to find ways to improve his art. In 1932 he travelled to San Francisco to study illumination and portraiture with two of the Pacific Coast's leading photographers, Ralph Young and Larry Morton. New skills acquired during these junkets were shared with local high

school students, who were welcomed into Shangle's studio each year to learn about the business of photography. In 1936 the Shangle Studio introduced a new photography lamp, producing a broader, more even level of illumination, "similar to the light given through a skylight." Shangle hoped to be able to develop an even smaller version of the light for home portrait use. By this time Shangle had secured the services of Al Kroemer as photographic technician, and Edith Wingfield as receptionist.

Long interested in organic gardening, the Shangles were active with the Natural

After a quarter century as one of Southern Oregon's most active photographers, Shangle made the decision to retire. Among the national awards which Shangle could boast were the "Salon Honor" winner in Pacific Coast competitions and the production of both of the first-place winners in the Oregon State division of the 1934 Sears National Baby contest. In 1953 Shangle sold his studio to Carl Landis, who continued to operate for a number of years as the Shangle-Landis Studio. Until he could establish himself in his own right as a talented photographer, Landis

SOHS #16420



*Pilot Harold Sander was in the cockpit and Shangle was behind the lens for this aerial view of the Jackson County Fairgrounds taken in the late 1920s. The Medford Armory stands on the site today. That's South Pacific Highway at the upper center of the image.*



SOHS #16425

*Shangle sent portrait proofs for the customer's approval before making the final print.*

Foods Associates, which organization he served as Oregon chapter president for a number of years. His interest in healthy and natural foods also led him to chair the opposition to the fluoridation of Medford's water system in the 1950s. Shangle was so successful in this effort that to this day Medford's water is without fluoride.

wanted to ensure that he reaped the benefits of his predecessor's reputation.

When Shangle retired as a photographer in 1953, he was only fifty-one years old. He turned his energy and drive into new fields, which included oil exploration and real estate sales. After the successful conclusion of this second career, Shangle again retired. He died in a local nursing home in 1982 at the age of eighty.

*William Alley is archivist/historian for the Southern Oregon Historical Society.*

*Those interested in the Rogue Valley's early photographers will have the chance to view their work starting in January, when the exhibit A Century of Photography opens in the History Center.*



# Matsutake Mushrooms:

## FOREST GOLD

By Donn L. Todt and Nan Hannon

*A picker lifts his prize, a matsutake mushroom, from the forest duff near Chemult. Gatherers often use rakes to reveal the fall-fruited fungi, which grow just under the pine needles.*

mid-1800s, with tales of high-stakes gambling, drunken brawls, shootings, and prostitution.

While "striking it rich" was always a possibility, sober calculation showed that most mushroom pickers made little more than average day laborers.<sup>3</sup> The price for mushrooms fluctuated and mushrooms varied in abundance through the season and from year to year.

What is the attraction of gathering matsutakes? Many people in rural areas supplement their incomes by gathering and selling a variety of plants that grow in the forest. Matsutakes add another source of income. Quite a number are attracted by the opportunity to work for themselves, and by the possibility of making a large sum of money in a short time.

Many commercial matsutake pickers are of Southeast Asian descent, originally from such countries as Laos and Cambodia. Most are refugees of the Vietnam War era, currently living in cities such as Seattle, Sacramento, and Fresno.

*A mushroom picker shows off a valuable harvest of carefully-cleaned matsutakes, ready to be sold and shipped to markets as far away as Japan.*



PHOTO BY DONN L. TODT

The matsutake, an inconspicuous mushroom species growing in the Cascade and Klamath Mountain ranges of Southern Oregon and Northern California, connects the cultures of Japan and Southeast Asia to those of the American Far West.

The Japanese word matsutake translates as pine mushroom.<sup>1</sup> It is one of the many mushrooms that quietly shoulder their way to the ground surface around the time of the first autumn rains. Despite an inconspicuous presence, with its cap hidden by duff and pine needles, the matsutake mushroom has garnered front-page coverage in West Coast newspapers during the 1990s.

The matsutake has long been considered an autumn delicacy in China, Korea and Japan. Increasing demand and decreasing supplies of the mushroom in Asia resulted in prospecting for closely-related species in the American West. During the nineties, the matsutake business literally mushroomed from western Canada to Northern California. Within this vast region a center for harvesting mushrooms emerged within a circle connecting the small towns of Cave Junction and La Pine, Oregon, and Weaverville and Happy Camp, California. The mushrooms are gathered and sold to buyers who air-freight them to Japan, where they command prices as high as \$500 per pound.<sup>2</sup>

The rapid development of commercial gathering in the past few years resulted in an unrestrained "wild west" atmosphere in some of the mushroom camps, as diverse peoples assembled to gather the suddenly valuable mushrooms. The press likened the atmosphere to gold rush camps of the

By pooling resources and profits and by camping together with friends and family, they economize and even out the risks involved in individual enterprise. In contrast to their current urban situation, the camps are a reminder of village life.

Traditionally, Native Americans of the Far West avoided most mushrooms as food, though the matsutake mushroom was esteemed by some tribes. For example, the Karuk near Happy Camp, have likely been gathering these mushrooms for centuries. Though no longer important for subsistence, the mushrooms are gathered for traditional and ceremonial reasons. Individual "patches" are handed down through generations. Where market gatherers of Southeast Asian descent pick near Native American communities, tensions sometimes develop. Some Native Americans are concerned that the Southeast Asian newcomers won't take care of the resource as they have been taught to do.

In 1998, two events, one biological and one economic, upset the patterns of mushroom gathering. Throughout the region, the pine mushroom crop failed to materialize. At nearly the same time, Japan entered an economic recession. Until the Japanese economy strengthens, it is unlikely that the market for mushrooms will be as strong as in previous years. But in the meantime, matsutakes will continue to push to the surface with the autumn rain. ☐

*Ethnobotanist Donn L. Todt and anthropologist Nan Hannon garden in Ashland.*

#### ENDNOTES

1. Wang Yun, Ian R. Hall and Lynley A. Evans, "Ectomycorrhizal Fungi with Edible Fruiting Bodies," *Economic Botany*, Volume 51, No. 3, p. 312.
2. "Pickers Shoot To Be Heard," *The Oregonian*, 24 September 1996.
3. Rebecca T. Richards and Max Creasy, "Ethnic Diversity, Resource Values and Ecosystem Management: Matsutake Mushroom Harvesting in the Klamath Bioregion," *Society and Natural Resources*, Volume 9, p. 370.



# MEMBER SURVEY

*The Southern Oregon Historical Society has designed this survey to learn more about members' and supporters' opinions of the Society and how you use what the Society has to offer. Please help us by completing this questionnaire and returning to us before November 1. When you have completed the questions, simply detach this page, fold it so the prepaid mailing portion is to the outside and tape the edge. Then drop it in the nearest mailbox. We thank you for taking the time to assist us in shaping the Society's future.*

**1. In the past two years, which Southern Oregon Historical Society locations have you visited?**  
(please indicate how many times you have visited each location)

	0	1-3	4-6	7+
History Center				
Research Library				
Jacksonville Museum				
Children's Museum				
Beekman House				
Ashland Branch				
Medford History Store (Mall)				
Jacksonville History Store				
3rd St. Artisan Studio (J'ville)				

**2. How would you rate the level of customer service you've received at each location?**

Excellent	Fair	Poor	Unknown

**3. What was your reason for visiting?** (please check all that apply)

- ☐ General interest/curiosity   
 ☐ Education   
 ☐ Entertainment   
 ☐ To see a specific exhibit  
☐ To attend a specific program   
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**4. If you have not visited the Southern Oregon Historical Society in the past two years, please indicate why.**

- ☐ Unaware of   
☐ Too busy, not enough time   
☐ Not interested   
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Do you feel the Southern Oregon Historical Society provides a valuable service to the region?**

- ☐ Yes   
☐ No   
☐ Unsure

**6. The Society has the opportunity to fully develop the Hanley Farm, an original nineteenth century farmstead near Jacksonville, into a living history farm and learning center. Do you support this type of development?**

- ☐ Yes   
☐ No   
☐ Unsure

**7. Which sources do you use to find out about community activities?** (check all that apply):

- ☐ Medford Mail Tribune   
☐ Tempo   
☐ Ashland Daily Tidings   
☐ Revels   
☐ Radio   
☐ TV  
☐ Word of Mouth   
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Recently, the Society began charging local residents an admission fee (\$2 adults/\$1 children) to some sites to help offset a cutback in funds received from Jackson County. Will this discourage you from visiting?**

- ☐ Yes   
☐ No   
☐ Unsure



**9. In January, the Society unveiled *Southern Oregon Heritage Today*. Please describe how thoroughly you read the magazine:**

- ☐ I read the entire issue    ☐ I read most of the articles    ☐ I read the feature only    ☐ I do not read it at all.

**10. How would you rate your level of satisfaction with the new format of *Southern Oregon Heritage Today*?**

- ☐ Very satisfied    ☐ Fairly satisfied    ☐ Slightly satisfied    ☐ Unsatisfied

(please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Have you attended any programs offered by the Southern Oregon Historical Society in the past two years? (if no, skip to question 13)**

- ☐ Yes    ☐ No

**12. What type of programs interest you most? (check all that apply)**

- ☐ Lectures    ☐ Hands-on    ☐ Tours    ☐ Video/slide presentations    ☐ Family    ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Please tell us a little about yourself (all information is kept strictly confidential):**

**13. Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**14. I have resided in Southern Oregon for: (if you do not live in Southern Oregon, skip to question 15):**

- ☐ Less than 5 years    ☐ 5-10 years    ☐ 11-20 years    ☐ 21-30 years    ☐ 31+ years

**15. My age is:**

- ☐ 20 years or under    ☐ 21-30    ☐ 31-40    ☐ 41-50    ☐ 51-60    ☐ 61-70    ☐ 71+

**16. Are you a member of the Southern Oregon Historical Society?**

- ☐ Yes    ☐ No

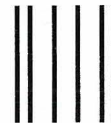
If yes, please indicate membership level:

- ☐ Associate    ☐ Friends    ☐ Family    ☐ Patron  
☐ Curator or Business    ☐ Director    ☐ Lifetime

**17. Gender:** ☐ Male    ☐ Female

I've got more to say: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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# Casper Ruch: CROSSROADS CAPITALIST

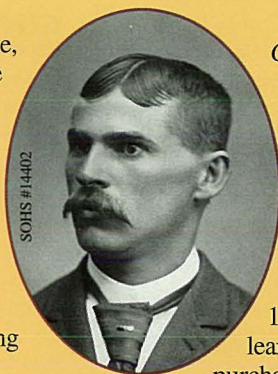
by Connie Fowler

**R**uch: a funny name, a wide spot in the road in the Applegate Valley on the Jacksonville- Crescent City route, now called Highway 238. The little unincorporated town is typical of mid-1800s "one-store map names" that sprang up during the Gold Rush—usually named for the person who founded them.

The name Ruch, pronounced "roosh", is Swiss, and appears in many cantons of Switzerland. To Southern Oregonians today, the word denotes a small community in the heart of the Applegate mining area, whose stony, hard-to-work ground Fritz Ruch first encountered when he came to mine in the valley more than a century ago<sup>1</sup>.

Fredolin (Fritz) Ruch (1821-1875) immigrated from Switzerland sometime in the 1860s. He married another Swiss immigrant, Anna, in Iowa and they settled in Jackson County around 1870. That year the Jackson County census listed five Ruch children: Fritz, Katherine, Casper (Cap), Elizabeth, and Henry. Another child, William, arrived later.

Fritz settled the family on one John Johnson's mining claim up Humbug Creek. Apparently the two men mined together and records show that in 1875, Ruch purchased a half-interest in the claim and tools. The day after the purchase, Ruch took strychnine and died. The family said that he had been having some "spells". Overcome with grief, Anna Ruch, drowned herself and four-year-old



SOHS #14402

## Casper "Cap" Ruch

William in a mining reservoir. Peter Britt took guardianship of the boys and the Kasper Kubli family raised the girls.<sup>2</sup>

Not much is recorded as to where Casper Ruch grew up until 1880. He finished grade school and learned blacksmithing. In 1896, "Cap" purchased ten acres of land, and built a blacksmith shop, a store, and a house at the junction of what is now Highway 238 and Upper Applegate Road.<sup>3</sup>

In his shop, he sold supplies including tobacco and candy. Across the road, Ruch built a smokehouse and sold hams and bacon to his neighbors. Business grew until he had no time for blacksmithing. Seeing the need for a post office, he applied, and on May 4, 1897, the Ruch Post Office opened with Cap Ruch as postmaster.<sup>4</sup>

The neighbors talked when the bachelor built a nice modern home behind the store, but they nodded approval when he married Anna Boylan on June 11, 1913.<sup>5</sup>



PHOTO BY DANA HEDRICK-EARP

SOHS #11483



*Originally a blacksmith, Cap Ruch found greater prosperity operating a general store, smokehouse and post office at what is now Ruch.*

Ruch built a large hall, aptly named Ruch Hall, where the people danced, voted, and held meetings and programs. The little community thrived and even grew a bit after World War I.<sup>6</sup>

Cap Ruch died of cancer on June 10, 1930. His wife, Anna, continued to run the store and post office until 1939. She died April 1, 1945. Their home still stands.<sup>7</sup>

*Connie Fowler is a freelance writer and ranches in the Applegate.*

## ENDNOTES

1. From a one-page history of Ruch posted in a local café. Author unknown.

2. Marguerite and John Black, *Ruch and the Upper Applegate Valley*, Webb Research Group (1990), pg.43-52.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

*Cap Ruch built this home, still standing, near the intersection of Highway 238 and Upper Applegate Road.*



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