

# SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE

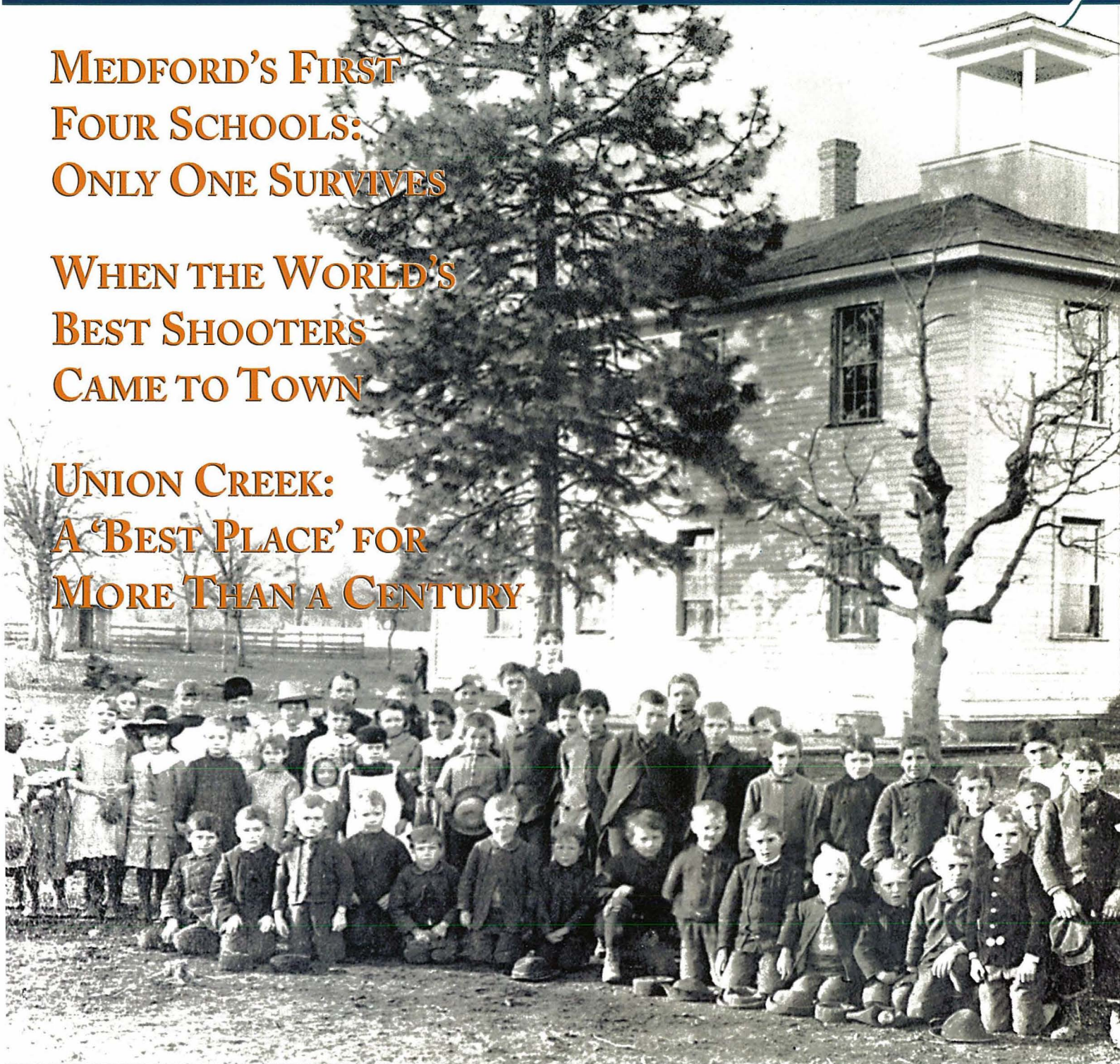
September 2001 Vol. 3, No. 9

*Today*

**MEDFORD'S FIRST  
FOUR SCHOOLS:  
ONLY ONE SURVIVES**

**WHEN THE WORLD'S  
BEST SHOOTERS  
CAME TO TOWN**

**UNION CREEK:  
A 'BEST PLACE' FOR  
MORE THAN A CENTURY**







# Historic HANLEY FARM

1053 HANLEY ROAD • (541) 773-6536 • sohs.org

BETWEEN CENTRAL POINT AND JACKSONVILLE

*Friday, Saturday, and Sunday*

through September 30

11AM - 4PM

*Admission: \$5 adults,*

*\$3 children 6-12 and seniors 65+,*

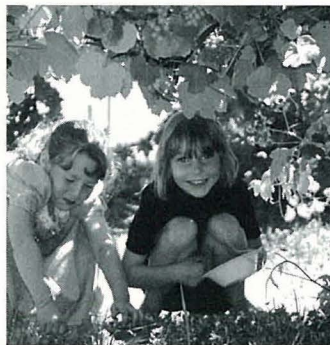
*children 5 and under and SOHS members free*



*Arrive in style!*

*Jacksonville-Hanley Farm*  
**TROLLEY**

tickets sold at the History Store  
California and 3rd, Jacksonville



## *Theme Weekends include:*

### • LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

*September 1 and 2*

*Celebrate the Labor Day weekend with us! Enjoy juicy watermelon and roasted corn. Dance and sing to old-fashioned songs played on the saw, fiddle, and keyboard from noon to 3 p.m. Make a cornstalk fiddle; play vintage games.*

### • NATIVE AMERICAN LIFEWAYS

*September 7, 8 and 9*

*Friday, 2 p.m.: "Before Fast Food: Native American and Pioneer Uses of Local Plants," by Donn Todt. Demonstrations, hands-on activities and games. Tom Smith will demonstrate flint knapping and tool making. Shasta basket maker Mary Carpelan will display many baskets from her collection and demonstrate open-twined basketry. S.O.U. Intern Justine Ritchey will interpret an archaeology site.*

### • 19TH CENTURY FARM LIFE: CELEBRATE THE HARVEST

*September 14, 15 and 16*

*Saturday, September 15, a free admission day. Celebrate the Harvest with Hanley Farm neighbors. The trolley will transport you to the O.S.U. Extension Service, Hanley Farm, and Herbert J. Stone Nursery for a day of fun and entertainment. Hanley activities include farm chores and games. Saturday and Sunday the Southern Oregon Draft Horse Association features threshing, hay baling, and wagon tours. Saturday features quilting, blacksmithing, and pottery; Sunday, a carpentry demonstration.*

### • 20TH CENTURY FARM LIFE

*September 21, 22 and 23*

*Friday, 2 p.m.: "Heritage Barns in the Rogue Valley" by Scott Clay. Make cornhusk and applehead dolls; guided garden tour. On Saturday and Sunday the Early Day Gas Engine and Tractor Association visits the farm.*

### • NATIVE AMERICAN LIFEWAYS

*September 28, 29 and 30*

*Friday, 2 p.m.: "History of the Shasta People," by a Shasta representative. Demonstrations, hands-on activities and games. Tom Smith will demonstrate flint knapping and tool making. Shasta basket maker Mary Carpelan will display baskets and demonstrate open-twined basketry. S.O.U. Intern Justine Ritchey will interpret an archaeology site. Saturday and Sunday, 2 p.m.: Exhibition of native dances by representatives of the Southern Oregon Indian Center.*

• REMEMBER: FRIDAYS AT 2 PM IS  
STORYTELLING TIME FOR AGES 3-6.



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 cutlines using the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The author is responsible for verification of cited facts. A selection of professional, unscreened photographs and/or line art should accompany 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.

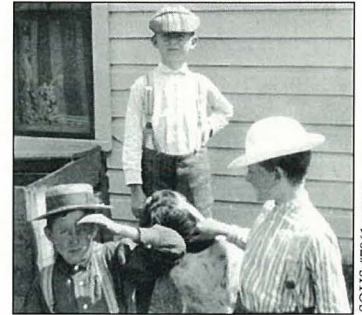
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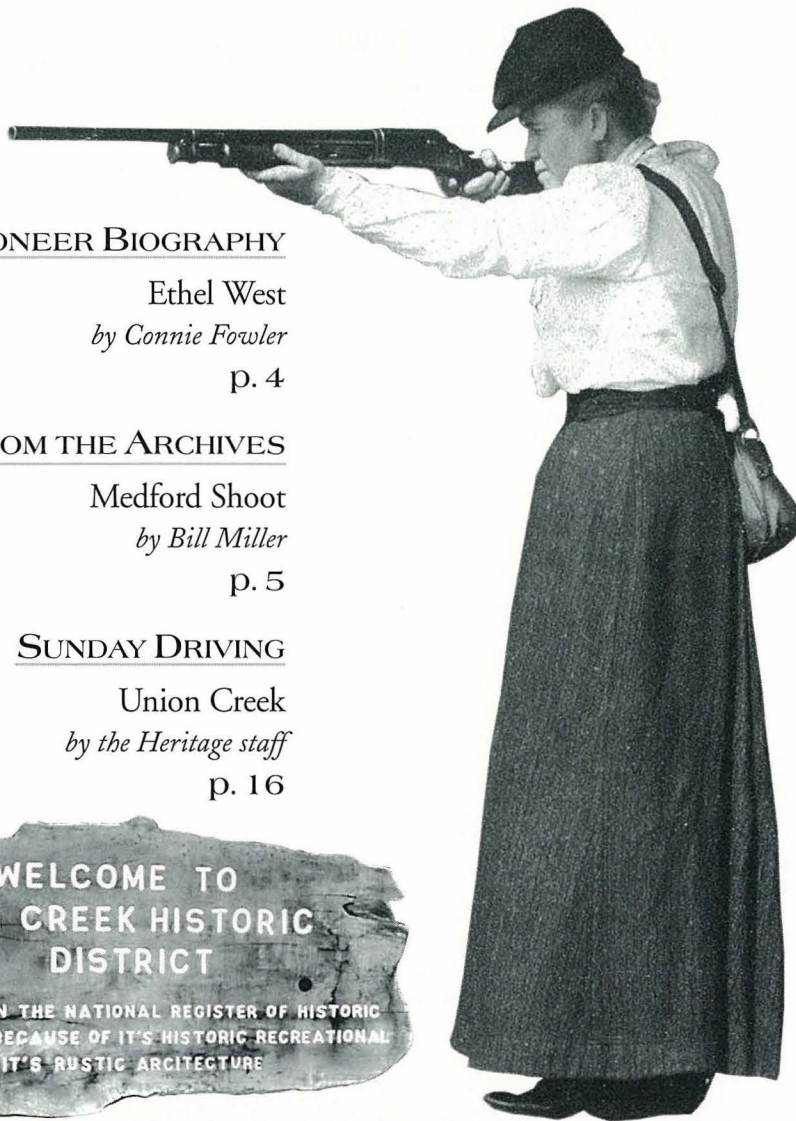
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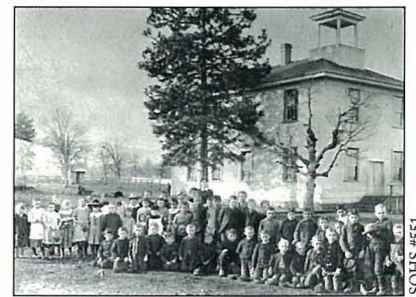
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SOHS #551

ON THE COVER

School students pose in front of Medford's second public school circa 1887; long since moved to Tenth Street, the building is now the Britt Festivals headquarters.



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# Ethel West

by Connie Fowler



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

**E**THEL WEST, A REAL LADY, HIRED HAND, ARTIST, AND important historical reference passed away on April 29, 2000. Ethel's excellent memory of past events made her a great source of information on Southern Oregon and the Applegate area in particular.

Ethel came from pioneer stock. Her father, Nelson Pursel, was born in Jacksonville in 1887, the son of Charles C. Pursel who arrived around 1880, and Mary Abigail Lowden. Charley built several houses in Jacksonville, one of which still stands next to the Stage Lodge Motel.

Later Charley moved the family to the Applegate Valley. Near where McKee Bridge is, he built a sawmill and established the Pursel Post Office in 1898.<sup>1</sup> In those days, the sawmills followed the log supply, so Charley later moved his mill to Yale Creek. Ethel's dad, Nelson, carried on his father's work.

Ethel's mother, Ina Stoker, taught school at Watkins and Beaver Creek. Ina met Nelson Pursel while she boarded with the Lowden family. They married and Ethel arrived on March 9, 1911. The family lived up the Little Applegate River. Until fifth grade, Ethel rode a horse to Little Applegate School. The family moved to Medford where she graduated from high school in 1928.

When Ethel was growing up in the Applegate Valley, her family farmed and raised hogs and sheep as well as logged.

Ethel often spoke fondly of both the hardships and the good times.

"Dad would cut ice from the dammed-up Yale Creek in hard winters," she said. "He'd store them in a shed with sawdust walls." Ethel recalled that the ice lasted until the Fourth of July. Nelson gave ice to anyone who wanted to make ice cream.

"My grandfather had one of the first cars in the area," Ethel said, recalling that it was an Oldsmobile with carbide lights and the gas tank on the back. "If we went up the hill to Jacksonville, the gas would run back, so you had to pump air into the tank with a rubber bulb. My grandmother would reach across my grandfather and say, 'Pump it Pa, we ain't gonna make it!'"<sup>2</sup>

Ethel married Fred West on April 29, 1929, in Medford. The Wests farmed several places on the Little Applegate including the old Kleinhammer place, called the Circle G. The couple had two children, Gary and Colista.

Times were hard, but it was just a way of life. The women often had to help with the outside work as well as raise the kids and take care of the house.

"I happened to be the hired man wherever we went," Ethel laughed.

"She was good," her late husband, Fred, who passed away July 18, 2001, recalled. "She set the nets" used to lift loose hay up into the barn.<sup>3</sup>

Ethel probably did make a good hired man, but she is remembered mostly for being a lady who never begrudged her way of life. 🏡

*Connie Fowler is a free-lance writer from the Applegate.*

## ENDNOTES

1. Lewis McArthur, *Oregon Geographic Names*, Fourth Ed. (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974) p. 605.
2. Author interview with Ethel West, 1994.
3. Connie Fowler and J.B. Roberts, *Buncom: Crossroads Station* (Medford: Buncom Historical Society, 1995), pp. 127-130.

*Above, Ina Pursel holds young Ethel on her lap, circa 1911. At left, Fred and Ethel West married in 1929. Their marriage lasted more that seventy years.*





# Medford Shoot

by Bill Miller

**C**RACK TARGET SMASHERS WILL BE with you ... I've been working tooth and nail for your shoot." Quoting from the letter he had just received from the Winchester Firearms Company, banker Jesse Enyart continued to outline his elaborate plans for the late September shooting tournament to local sportsmen. As vice-president of the Medford Bank, one might think that he was an improbable choice for president of the Medford Gun Club. But Enyart loved to shoot trap and, over the previous sixteen years, was consistently one of the best shots in the valley. As he told the *Medford Mail* reporter, lovers of shooting would not only find "plenty of enjoyment" at the two-day event, they would also be able to see some of the world's greatest shooters.

At the head of the Winchester team was W. R. Crosby, who earlier in the year had set the record for the longest straight run with a shotgun: 419 targets broken without a miss. His stiffest competition would come from "The Dude," Fred Gilbert, who was the British, United States, and world champion trapshooter of 1901. A contingent of ladies, including Oregon and Northwest champion Mrs. W. F. Sheard, would also compete. Local club members were anxious to test their abilities and pull the trigger against fifty of the world's best shots. Over the years, whether the targets were glass balls, clay pigeons or the occasional stray goose, these Medford gentlemen thoroughly enjoyed their competitive sport.<sup>1</sup>

The tournament began on Friday,

September 22, 1905.

Manufacturers of firearms and ammunition scattered their white exhibition tents amongst groves of massive oak trees on the gun club grounds south of town. The Medford Ladies' Booster Club set up long banquet tables and served the visiting sportsmen free lunches. Fruits, melons and other good things to eat were also available to the general public, who paid their twenty-five-cent admission fee. The boys marching drill team, the "Hoo Hoo" squad, regaled everyone with its complex maneuvers. Music was provided by the city band.

No one was surprised at the final results in the shooting contest. After shattering 394 birds to Gilbert's 392 out of a possible 400, Crosby accepted the winner's trophy, a mounted Mongolian pheasant. Though likely intimidated by their professional guests, the local shooters managed respectable scores, Otis Helman posting 347 and Jesse Enyart 339. Following the tournament, family members were allowed to shoot. Enyart's sixteen-year-old daughter, Hazel, fired the first shot of her life at a clay target and succeeded in "killing" it. Her achievement brought her the honor of killing a bear, which was butchered into steaks and served at the Friday evening banquet.

Following the banquet, the Andrews Opera Company presented "Martha" at the



*Target shooting was considered an appropriate sport for ladies as well as gentlemen at the turn of the century. Here, an unidentified woman trains her shotgun on a clay pigeon at the covered trap range.*

Wilson Opera House, with local talent filling some of the minor roles. Saturday's program was filled with exhibitions by trick-shot artists, fancy rifle shooting demonstrations, and a festive social dance. At the afternoon closing ceremonies, the Ladies' Booster Club awarded honorary membership to the visiting competitors, who responded by saying that they had never been entertained in such a charming manner. The *Medford Mail* newspaper declared the event "an unqualified success in every way." The paper predicted that Medford and the Rogue Valley would be remembered and talked of favorably in every state of the Union and that the region's growth and prosperity could only be enhanced.<sup>2</sup> ■

*Bill Miller is a library assistant with the Southern Oregon Historical Society.*

#### ENDNOTES

1. *Medford Mail*, 15 September 1905.
2. *Medford Mail*, 22 September 1905, 29 September 1905.

*Members of the Medford Ladies' Booster Club prepared a huge luncheon spread in a grove of oaks near the shooting range for the 1905 tournament.*



BOOSTER CLUB  
AT THE

SOHS #7253



# SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Things To Do in September

PROGRAMS : (see listings below for complete descriptions)

	<u>DATE &amp; TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Craft of the Month	Museum hours	CHILDREN'S MUSEUM	Paper Bag Puppets; 50¢
Story Time	Fri., Sept. 7, 14, 21, 28; 2 p.m.	HANLEY FARM	Farm Stories; ages 3-6
Living History Program	Sept. 1, 2, 3; 1 - 5 p.m.	BEEKMAN HOUSE	Enter the year 1911; fee
Jacksonville-Hanley Farm Trolley	Fri., Sat., Sun., 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.	3RD & CALIFORNIA STREETS	Guided tour; fee
Hanley Farm	Fri., Sat., Sun., 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Fri., Sept. 7, 2 p.m.  Fri., Sept. 21, 2 p.m. Fri., Sept. 28, 2 p.m.	HANLEY FARM	Activities, programs; fee "Before Fast Food: Native American and Pioneer Uses of Local Plants" "Heritage Barns in the Rogue Valley" "History of the Shasta People"

## PROGRAM DETAILS

FOR TIMES AND LOCATIONS, SEE SCHEDULE ABOVE.

### SEPTEMBER CRAFT OF THE MONTH

#### *Paper Bag Puppets*

Create your own cast of puppet characters to put on a play in the Children's Museum.

### BEEKMAN HOUSE LIVING HISTORY

Step back in time to the year 1911 and enjoy a visit with costumed interpreters portraying Cornelius C. Beekman (Jacksonville's first banker) and his family members.

Admission: \$3 for adults; \$2 children and seniors; ages five and under free; Society members, free.

### JACKSONVILLE-HANLEY FARM TROLLEY RIDES

The trolley will tour hourly—11 a.m.-4 p.m.—between Jacksonville and Hanley Farm on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through September 30. Tickets: adults, \$4; children six-twelve, \$2; ages five and under, free. Purchase of trolley ticket at History Store provides \$1 off Hanley Farm admission.

### TALENT HARVEST FESTIVAL

September 8, Saturday, in Talent after the parade, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., the Talent Historical Society celebrates the harvest with Mexican-American cultural events, a photo booth, art exhibit, storytelling by Tom Doty, and more. Call 541-512-8838 for more information.

### HISTORIC HANLEY FARM EVENTS

Visit Hanley Farm by way of the trolley and receive \$1 off admission. All events are free with price of admission.

FRIDAYS are designed for young children and adults. Each Friday at 2 p.m., a special story hour for ages 3-6 will be held.

#### *Special Friday Programs Include:*

- 2 p.m. on Friday, September 7: "**Before Fast Food: Native American and Pioneer Uses of Local Plants.**" Donn Todt, a local ethnobotanist, will use slides and samples to explore early relationships between plants and peoples of the Rogue Valley.

- 2 p.m. on Friday, September 21: "**Heritage Barns in the Rogue Valley,**" a slide program presented by Historic Preservationist Scott Clay.

- 2 p.m. on Friday, September 28: "**History of the Shasta People,**" presented by a Shasta representative.

(Plan to arrive 15 minutes early as there is a limit of 20 participants for Friday programs.)

#### *Special Theme Weekends Include:*

**September 1, 2**—Bring a picnic and blanket and celebrate the Labor Day holiday weekend with us! Enjoy juicy slices of watermelon and roasted ears of corn. Dance and sing to old-fashioned songs played on the saw, fiddle, and keyboard from noon to 3 p.m. Make a cornstalk fiddle. Play old-fashioned games.

**September 7, 8, 9**—Explore Native American lifeways through a variety of demonstrations, hands-on activities and games. Tom Smith will demonstrate flint knapping and tool making. Shasta basket maker Mary Carpelan will display many baskets from her collection

and demonstrate open-twined basketry. S.O.U. Intern Justine Ritchey will interpret an archaeology site with hands-on activities.

**September 14, 15, 16**—Late 19th century farm life. *Celebrate the Harvest* with Hanley Farm neighbors on Saturday, September 15, **free admission day!** The trolley will transport you to the O.S.U. Extension, Hanley Farm, and Herbert J. Stone Nursery for an activity-packed day of fun and entertainment. Activities include farm chores and games. Saturday and Sunday the Southern Oregon Draft Horse Association will feature threshing, hay baling, and provide wagon tours of Hanley Farm. Saturday features heritage crafts such as quilting, blacksmithing, and pottery. Sunday features a carpentry demonstration.

**September 21, 22, 23**—Activities focus on early 20th century farm life, orchards, and the harvest. Try your hand at making cornhusk and applehead dolls, and enjoy a guided garden tour. On Saturday and Sunday, the Early Day Gas Engine & Tractor Association will visit the farm.

**September 28, 29, 30**—Explore Native American lifeways through demonstrations, hands-on activities and games. Tom Smith will demonstrate flint knapping and tool making. Shasta basket maker Mary Carpelan will display baskets and demonstrate open-twined basketry. S.O.U. Intern Justine Ritchey will interpret an archaeology site. Saturday and Sunday, 2:00 p.m.: Exhibition of native dances by representatives of the Southern Oregon Indian Center.



# EXHIBITS : (see listings below for complete descriptions)

	LOCATION	MUSEUM HOURS
Century of Photography: 1856-1956 The History of Southern Oregon from A to Z	HISTORY CENTER	Mon. - Fri., 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
History in the Making: Jackson County Milestones, Phase I Miner, Baker, Furniture Maker Native American Experience Pioneer Potters on the Rogue Hall of Justice	JACKSONVILLE MUSEUM	Wed. - Sat., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday, noon - 5 p.m.
Ongoing 'hands on history' exhibits	CHILDREN'S MUSEUM	Wed. - Sat., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday, noon - 5 p.m.
Weaving Demonstrations/Sales	3RD STREET ARTISANS' STUDIO	Sat., 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

## EXHIBIT DETAILS

FOR TIMES AND LOCATIONS, SEE SCHEDULE ABOVE.

### CENTURY OF PHOTOGRAPHY: 1856-1956

Highlights the work of two area photographers, Peter Britt and James Verne Shangle, with cameras from the Society's collection.

### THE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN OREGON FROM A TO Z

Do you know your ABC's of Southern Oregon history? Even local oldtimers might learn a thing or two from the History Center windows along Sixth and Central as each letter of the alphabet tells a different story about the people, places, and events that have shaped the region we live in.

### "HISTORY IN THE MAKING: JACKSON COUNTY MILESTONES"

The spirit of America is captured in the history of Jackson County. Follow in the footsteps of early residents who experienced the five historic milestones explored in this new exhibit. You'll be inspired by the pioneers who arrived by sea or land; see the gold rush from the perspective of Chinese sojourners; discover the local impact of the railroad and automobile, and more. Artifacts include rare Chinese archaeological material and an early Coleman stove. A 1940s jukebox plays music and oral histories describing automobile travel experiences. Opens mid-September.

### MINER, BAKER, FURNITURE MAKER

Explores the development of the Rogue Valley and the impact the industrial revolution had on the settlement of Oregon.

### POLITICS OF CULTURE: *Collecting the Native American Experience*

Cultural history of local tribes and discussion of contemporary collecting issues.

### HANNAH POTTERY

Examples of pottery made over four decades ago by the Hannah family.

### HALL OF JUSTICE

History of this former Jackson County Courthouse.

### CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Everyone enjoys exploring the home and work settings from the 1850s to the 1930s through "hands-on-history."

### THIRD STREET ARTISANS' STUDIO

Rogue Valley Handweavers, Far Out Fibers, and the Saturday Handweavers Guild will present an exhibit of woven wall art at the Third St. Artisans' Studio, Third and California streets, in Jacksonville. Members will also demonstrate the traditional art forms of spinning and weaving. The exhibit will run through October 27.

**Award Winning!**

### *A Century of the Photographic Arts in Southern Oregon:*

*A Directory of Jackson County Photographers,  
1856 - 1956*

\$7.50 • SOHS Members

\$8.95 • Non-members

Available at the SOUTHERN OREGON  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY RESEARCH LIBRARY  
History Center, 106 N. Central Ave., Medford  
(541)773-6536 • sohs.org

### HISTORIC OPEN HOUSE LISTINGS:

- **State Historic Preservation Office** - PHONE: 503-378-4168  
prd.state.or.us - click on "publication"
- **Southern Oregon Historical Society** - PHONE: 541-773-6536

## SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY SITES

PHONE: (541) 773-6536  
unless listed otherwise

FAX: (541) 776-7994  
E-MAIL: info@sohs.org  
WEBSITE: sohs.org

**HISTORY CENTER**  
106 N. Central, Medford  
Mon. - Fri., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**RESEARCH LIBRARY**  
106 N. Central, Medford  
Tues. - Fri., 1 to 5 p.m.

**JACKSONVILLE MUSEUM &  
CHILDREN'S MUSEUM**  
5th and C, Jacksonville  
Wed. - Sat., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Sun., noon to 5 p.m.

**HANLEY FARM**  
1053 Hanley Road  
Fri., Sat., Sun.; 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
(541) 773-2675

**C.C. BEEKMAN HOUSE**  
California & Laurelwood, Jacksonville  
Sept. 1, 2, 3; 1 to 5 p.m.  
(then closed for season)

**C.C. BEEKMAN BANK**  
3rd and California, Jacksonville

**JACKSONVILLE HISTORY STORE**  
3rd and California, Jacksonville  
Wed. - Sun., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**THIRD STREET ARTISANS' STUDIO**  
3rd and California, Jacksonville  
Sat., 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**U.S. HOTEL**  
3rd and California, Jacksonville  
Upstairs room available for rent.

**CATHOLIC RECTORY**  
4th and C streets, Jacksonville

*We invite YOU to  
become a member!*



### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

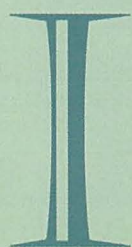
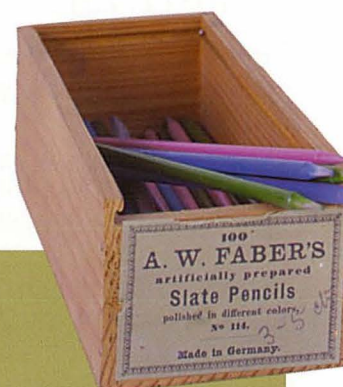
Friend .....	\$20
Family .....	\$30
Patron .....	\$60-\$90
Curator or Business .....	\$120-\$200
Director .....	\$250-\$500
Lifetime .....	\$1,000



# SCHOOLHOUSE MEMORIES

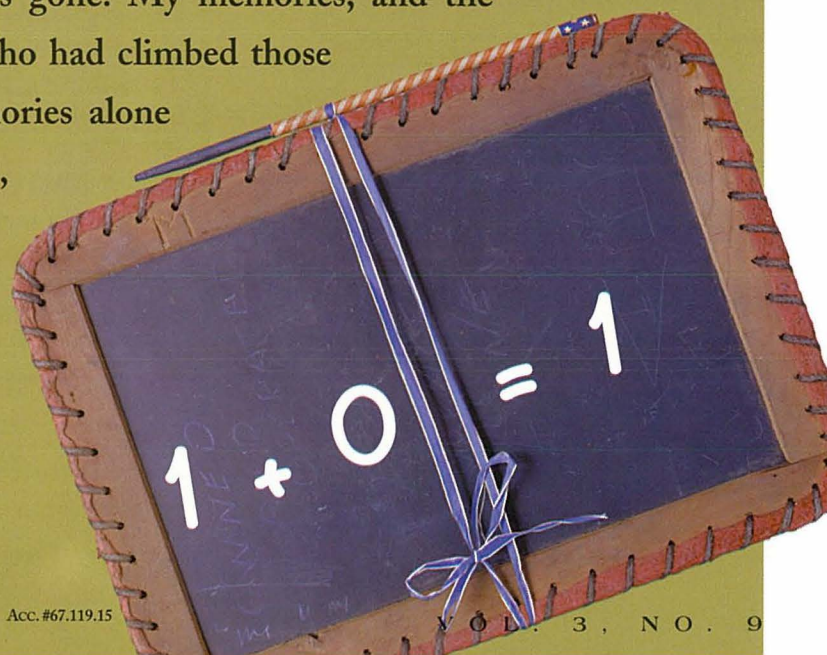


by Bill Miller



**WAS AN APPREHENSIVE SIX YEAR-OLD,**

nervously standing beside my mother. Frightened by the old country school, I wanted to be brave as I climbed its stairs on the first day of school. Surely no one could see the tears I pushed back into my eyes. After a few pleasant years of study, our family moved away, and teachers, classmates, and the old schoolhouse lingered in my memory. The building was a friendly old place, with a smell that said, "I've been here forever and I always will." But when I returned forty years later, the school was gone. My memories, and the memories of the thousands of students who had climbed those stairs, were not enough to save it. Memories alone seldom are. Threatened by fire, renovation, and natural disaster, a structure often survives simply by chance. Disguised as a business or home, the building slides into anonymity, its earlier significance lost with the gradual deaths of its former occupants.





The citizens of Medford built four schoolhouses before 1900 and only one still stands, memories of its past practically faded from our consciousness. By retelling the story of this and the other

three school buildings, we can rescue these memories and better understand the lives of those who came before us. We will also see the roadblocks to preservation, take a glimpse into the classroom, and marvel at a people who possessed such a profound commitment to their children's education.

A saloon and two blacksmith shops marked the birth of Medford in December 1883. By the following spring, a building boom was under way and a new railroad was bringing emigrants from across the country. W. F. Williamson, an attorney and sometime schoolteacher, came with them. He bought a lot near the corner of Ninth and Central and built a sixteen-by-twenty-foot wood-framed house. Until the town could build a school, Williamson offered to teach classes at his home, charging each student eight dollars per year. For nearly a year, up to thirty students of varying age crowded into his residence for lessons. But Williamson's generosity did not end with each Friday's class. He invited clergy into his home to preach Sunday afternoon sermons. The Reverend Moses A. Williams, who lived just south of town, was the first. In his diary entry for Sunday, April 6, 1884, Williams tells of a carriage ride to Jacksonville for an 11:00 a.m. service at the Presbyterian Church, followed by a return to Medford, where he "preached at the school."<sup>1</sup>

While Williamson taught his classes, Medford citizens organized a new school district, voted for a school levy, and began plans for a publicly financed schoolhouse. Up to eighty students would be divided between two classrooms in a one-story building located on the northern portion of the lot where the Jackson County Courthouse now stands. When the school opened in January 1885, school officials were surprised to find that attendance already exceeded the building's capacity. By the end of February, a second story was added and principal Walter S. Gore, assisted by May Crain, began the daunting task of teaching students in four separate classrooms.<sup>2</sup>

The next six years were marked by chaos as the school went through a dizzying flurry of personnel changes. Nine principals and more than twenty teachers either resigned, or were fired. While politics and

personal animosity played a part, most of this turmoil probably stemmed from the overcrowded classrooms and disciplinary problems.<sup>3</sup>

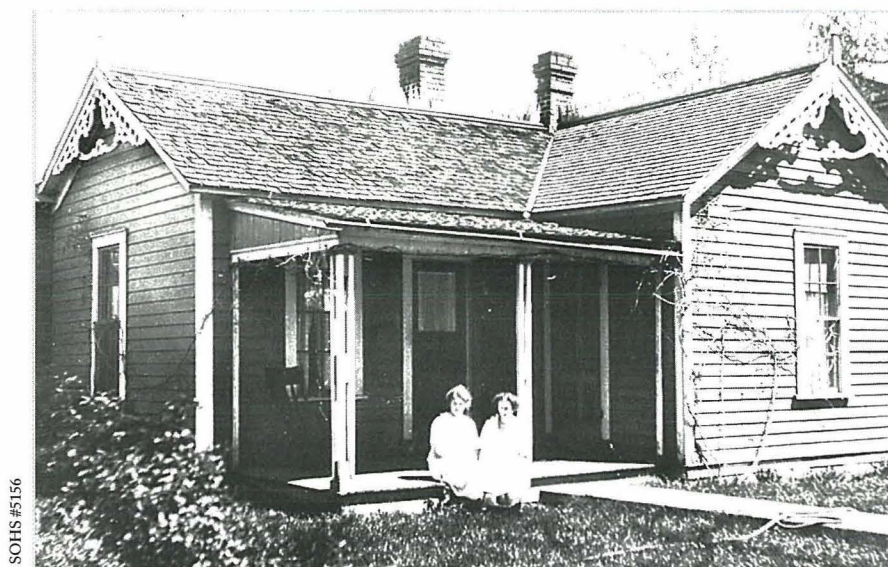
The overcrowding came from outside the city limits. Parents from the countryside braved additional costs to ensure an education for their children, either boarding youngsters in the homes of Medford residents, or moving the entire family to town during the school year. Attendance was particularly high during the winter term, with the harvest completed and spring planting still months away. A school year might start in September with 150 students, and by March, more than 230 pupils would be contending for legroom. The ever-changing corps of teachers struggled to maintain discipline. An unconfirmed story says that one unruly day a band of rambunctious boys actually threw an unnamed principal out of the window. In March 1889, after praising the improvements made by Medford scholars, one school director added, "It has now been four years since the boys cleaned out the teachers." Parents were concerned that overcrowding and disciplinary problems were affecting the quality of education of their children.<sup>4</sup>

By 1890 the situation grew worse. Overflow classes were set up in the Episcopal and First Christian churches and sentiment for a new school building was gaining momentum. The school board hired local architect Arthur J. Weeks to design a schoolhouse with seating capacity for 320 students. Weeks' plans for a \$7,000 building were approved in May 1891.

Brick basement walls sitting on a stone foundation would support a two-story wooden structure. Six of the seven new classrooms would be twenty-five by thirty feet, and one, on the upper floor, double that size. Voters were impressed by the fact that each of these classrooms was larger than Medford's first school in Williamson's home.<sup>5</sup>

The hiring of Norton L. Narregan as principal in 1891 brought stability and discipline to the schools. As an adult, Medford merchant Clarence Meeker fondly remembered Narregan as a strict disciplinarian. The schoolboys were adept at mischief, Meeker recalled, marching to class with pockets full of paper wads and nails, which they threw at the ceilings and sometimes at each other. On many Halloweens, the boys would lead a cow up the bell tower stairs and leave the helpless animal standing there till morning. Narregan gradually brought an end to most of these shenanigans. Traveling from room to room during unannounced inspections, the approaching sound of the principal's squeaky shoes brought terror to the more timid boys. "Then one day Mr. Narregan joined the rubber heel fad," said Meeker, and the sudden silence gave even the older boys something to fear.<sup>6</sup>

Grants Pass contractor George Catching's \$7,208 bid was \$700 less than his nearest competitor's. Even though this was more than the original estimate, the school board accepted. The old building was moved nearby and within two weeks the new foundation had been laid. Construction delays, including an accident in which three painters fell twenty feet when their



SOHS #5156

*Medford's first school was in the home of attorney W.F. Williamson, which he built in 1884 near the corner of Ninth and Central. It was remodeled after 1909 to become the home of optometrist and jeweler Elmer Elwood. The home, at 135 S. Central, is shown above about 1910.*





*Medford's second school, but its first publicly financed building, was built at Seventh and Oakdale and opened in 1885. Quickly growing overcrowded, the school building was moved in 1891 and Medford's third public school was built in its place.*

scaffolding broke, delayed the school opening. Except for paint stains all over their bodies and a few bruises, none of the workmen was seriously injured.<sup>7</sup>

For two months, the shouts of workmen and the commotion of construction clattered in the ears of Medford scholars, while classes continued in the old schoolhouse next door. Then, in early December, students happily received an unexpected vacation. School was closed for a few days and new desks, along with salvaged furniture from the old building, were moved

into the new. A Saturday dedication ceremony on December 5, 1891, gave the community a chance to congratulate itself. Surely they had built "the best school accommodations in the entire state." The students were excited by their new schoolhouse, but their celebrations ended quickly with the start of classes the following Monday.<sup>8</sup>

Community members were finally sure that their children were getting a good education. Professor Narregan bought the old schoolhouse for \$250 and had it moved to his lot on the south side of Tenth Street. Welborn Beeson, publisher of the *Talent News*, who visited the new school in 1893, described school life during these years. Early in the morning, he said, the bell would ring and the children would run to form two separate and silent lines, one of boys and one of girls. As they stood in front of the steps, the student band would strike up a martial tune and the students would march into a large central hall. There they dispersed to their assigned classrooms. Beeson was pleased with how the school was run. "Order and system rule complete, which is necessary to the future welfare of the pupil, as [is] a book to knowledge." He marveled that the desks were not marked and that neighboring buildings and fences were not "broken or destroyed." During that year, high school tuition was raised from \$5.00 to \$7.50 per term, while intermediate and primary grades remained at \$5.00. In 1895 Narregan's staff included an assistant principal and seven additional teachers, who struggled to educate 650 students, more than double the school's designed capacity. Overcrowding and Professor Narregan's resignation in August 1895 threatened an end to four years of well-ordered education and relative tranquility. But the worst was yet to come.<sup>9</sup>



*Medford's second school ended up on a lot on Tenth Street and was purchased in 1904 by wealthy businessman Ansel Davis, who added a portico on the east side, pictured here in 1905. The portico was later removed, and the former school now houses the Britt Festivals office.*



*Members of the Medford School band pose with their instruments outside the third school building in 1894. The man in the light-colored suit, second from right, is Professor Norton L. Narregan, who as principal was credited with bringing discipline to formerly chaotic classrooms.*

As usual, on the evening of August 18, 1895, the town's streetlights were turned off at midnight. Then, just before one in the morning, a voice screamed out in the night, "Fire! The school's on fire!" Joe Frizell was in a hysterical run and the sound of his shoes striking the wooden sidewalk echoed in the sleeping town. Past the city park, he sprinted east on Main Street, blaring his warning continuously until he crossed the railroad tracks at Front Street. Frizell was a telegraph lineman from Ashland and didn't know where the fire bell was located, so after pausing to take a quick breath, he went into the Nash Hotel to ask for directions. In the street in front



of the hotel, volunteer fireman Gordon Schermerhorn forced his team of horses into a nearly out-of-control turn. With carriage wheels barely on the ground, Schermerhorn was heading for the fire bell next to the firehouse at Sixth and Front. He reined in his horses, leaped from the carriage and set the 800-pound fire bell in motion, ringing a call to volunteers and anyone else who could help. There was no time to hitch horses to the hose cart, thought Schermerhorn; the fire was burning too furiously. Back in his carriage and

turning his team, he shouted at the half dozen men now around him, ordering them to hitch the hose cart to his carriage and he would pull it to the fire. As Frizell left the hotel, he saw the approaching hose cart followed by a running group of men who grasped hoses, buckets, and other firefighting equipment. He ran to join them, but exhausted, lost his footing and fell onto the street. Schermerhorn had his horses in full gallop and in the darkness of early morning saw Frizell too late to avoid him. A wheel of the hose cart rolled over

Frizell's leg, but somehow he was only bruised and the leg did not break.

Medford water engineer Eli Carder had also heard Frizell's shouts. Seeing the flames from his window, he quickly dressed and dashed the two blocks from his home to the water tower across from the school. The fire was already engulfing the first floor of the school building when he entered the pump house and fired up the steam engine at the town's water tanks. The two enclosed wooden tanks stood fifty feet high and that night they held only fourteen feet of water, not

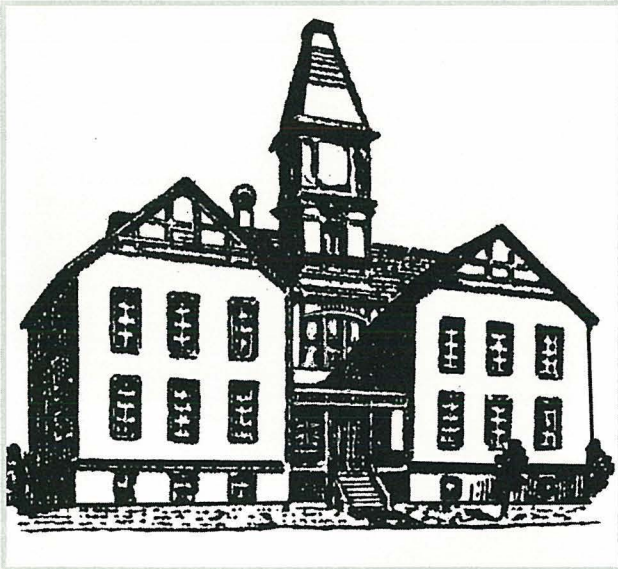
enough to supply adequate pressure for fire hoses. By using the engine to pump water directly into the mains, Carder hoped to increase the available water pressure for firefighters. When

the hose cart arrived, flames already encircled the school's bell tower, leaping in distorted braids far above the building. The fire volunteers frantically connected two hoses to a hydrant and began to move in on the inferno, but the flames were too hot and the pressure too low. The flames were very high now and the meager streams of water could not reach them. Attention turned to the Methodist Episcopal Church, which stood directly across Main Street. The firemen knew the schoolhouse was lost, but

they were determined to save the church. The heat was so intense that their clothing was in danger of catching fire. Bucket brigades were formed from the gathering crowd and the firemen's clothing was kept water-soaked and safe. In less than forty minutes the crowd stood in shocked silence. The church was saved, but the school building was in ashes, only the lower brick walls still standing. The school library was gone, musical instruments destroyed, and the fifty-pound school bell from Cincinnati was melted beyond recognition. Some of the more than 200 people standing there felt sorrow for what they had lost. Others turned their grief aside and declared that they must rebuild. Because there had been many suspicious fires over the past year, many in the crowd felt an unspoken anxiety, fearing that a firebug was loose and ready to set the whole town ablaze. Most of all, there was anger. Many vowed to find this "Fire Fiend" and bring him to his just desserts.<sup>10</sup>

On the day of the fire, August 19, 1895, the City Council determined that the blaze had been intentionally set and offered a \$1,000 reward for the arrest and conviction of the arsonist. Except for \$224, insurance paid all of the \$7,000 policy on the building. The community felt compelled to rebuild and so the planning, approval, and construction of a new building was accelerated. Within two weeks, architect W. J. Bennett was drafting plans for a new brick schoolhouse. The previous January, Bennett had relocated to Medford, having been hired to improve and renovate the Hotel Nash. At an emergency school board meeting held at the Angle Opera House on August 31, Bennett's plans were finally approved. The eight construction bids submitted ranged from a high of nearly \$21,000 to the winning low bid of \$11,995 from contractors Butler, Barrett & Stewart. The successful contractors hired local subcontractors to do most of the work. Frank Wait would handle the stonework, bringing material from his Ashland quarries. George Priddy began to fire brick in his ovens, and blacksmith George Merriman was prepared to shape any necessary ironwork.<sup>11</sup>

With construction under way, the most pressing need was substitute classroom space for the already overdue start of the school term. With limited space available, the students would only study for half a day, sharing classrooms in either a morning or afternoon session. Three of the four locations selected were churches—the First Baptist at Fifth and Central, the Presbyterian near the park at Holly and Main, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, which had been saved by the firemen when



*This is the only known complete image of Medford's third public school, which opened in December 1891, and crumbled in ashes following an arson fire in August of 1895. While the community scrambled to build its fourth school, students took classes in churches around town, including the Methodist Episcopal Church across Main Street from the school, shown below, and which firefighters only just managed to save from the adjoining blaze.*

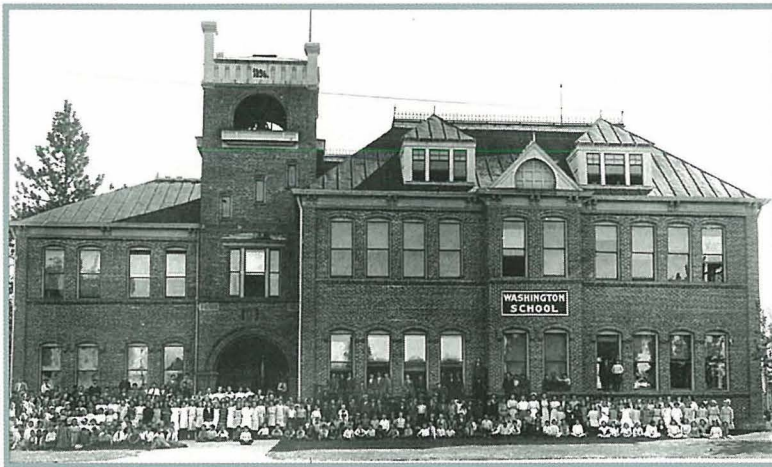






SOHS #15928

*Following the disastrous arson fire in the summer of 1895, the community quickly supported plans to build a still-bigger and better school, shown under construction above in 1895-6. Named Washington School, it boasted brick construction, a fire alarm system, and the latest in ventilation for the students' comfort.*

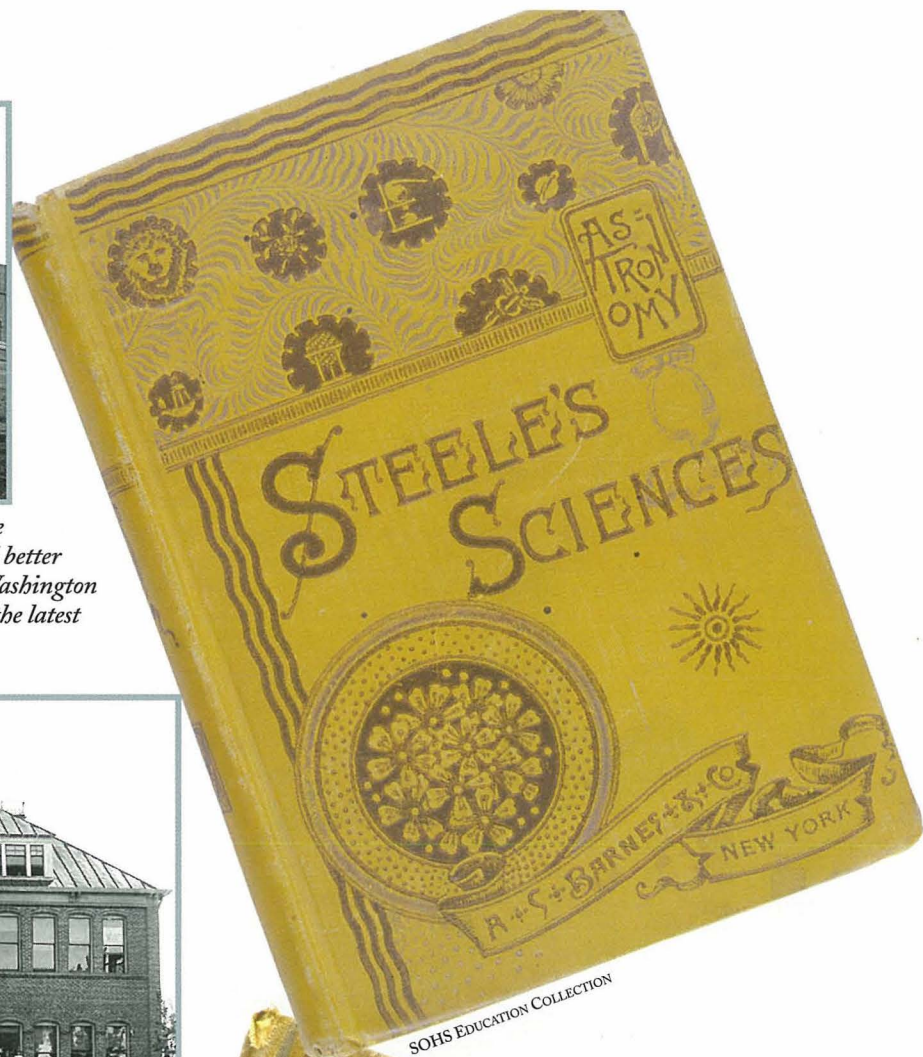


SOHS #8662

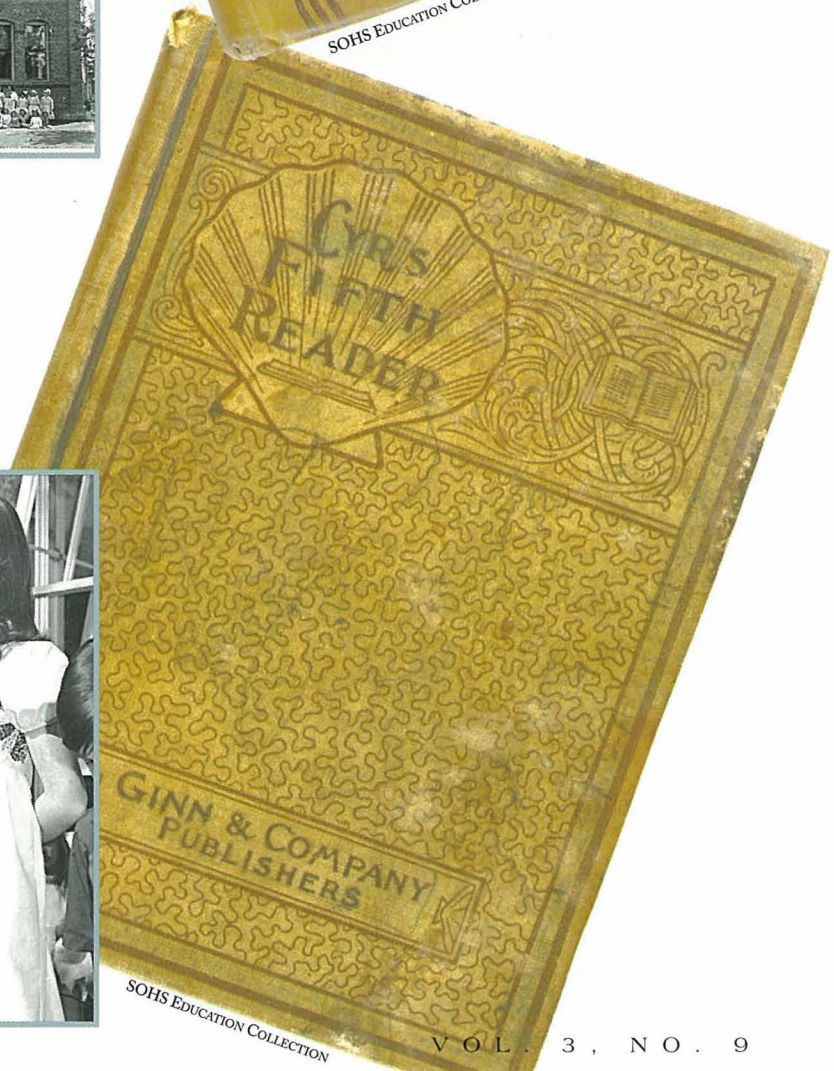
*Above, the halls of Washington School became familiar to thousands of Medford schoolchildren, and served the community from 1896 until 1931. That's when the school board sold the school grounds to the city of Medford, which offered the lot to the county for construction of the new Jackson County Courthouse. The school was torn down and a new Washington School, which is still in operation, was built at Peach and Dakota streets. Below, during the nation's bicentennial celebration in 1976, students at Washington School rededicated the old school bell from the first Washington School.*



SOHS #8154



SOHS EDUCATION COLLECTION



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the school had burned. The senior class shared James Howard's hall on Front Street with ninth-grade students. Later, two additional buildings were added on Front Street, the Smith building south of the Hotel Nash, and the old Stanley Hall at Sixth and Front near the firehouse.<sup>12</sup>

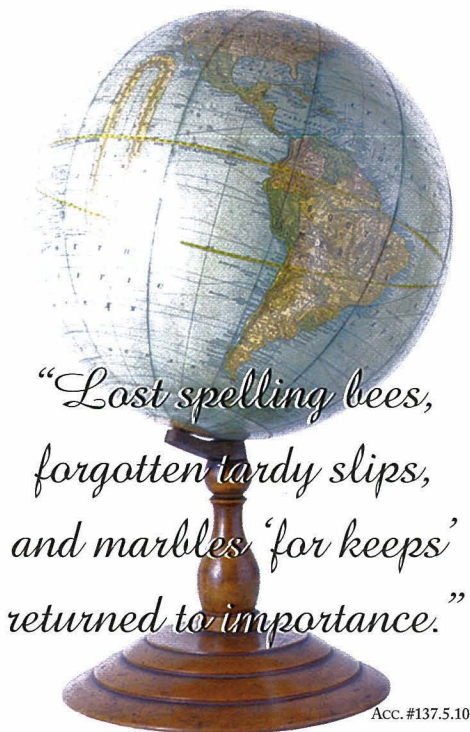
One week into the school term, in the middle of a Monday night, the "Fire Fiend" returned. He opened some of the town's fire hydrants, just enough to lower the water pressure. Breaking the hasp on a padlock, he entered the basement of the Presbyterian Church. There he soaked the basement with a combustible fluid and placed containers of the liquid in the center of the room. He lit a match and ran away. The fire bell rang and responding firemen did their best to extinguish the blaze, but it burned so rapidly that within a few minutes of their arrival, the building was gutted. All that remained were stone walls and the belfry. "Medford is afflicted with a fire bug in its midst and a fiend of the blackest infamy at that," said the *Ashland Valley Record*. "Many believe the new brick schoolhouse will be fired as soon as it is built." Although other arson fires were set in businesses and barns over the next few months, the temporary classrooms remained open and safe. The "Fire Fiend" was never caught.<sup>13</sup>

By mid-November bricklayers began to erect the second story of the school. To avoid delays caused by the approaching winter weather, more workmen were hired and in early December the steel roof was finally in place. While carpenters, plasterers, and painters put the finishing touches on the school's interior, the school board ordered furniture and a new 600-pound bell. The townspeople circulated a subscription list, asking the community to donate money toward the purchase of an American flag. Near the Sterling Mine, a citizens' committee cut a tree and secured a ninety-six-foot flagpole. However, on their return trip to Medford, four feet of the pole had to be removed because it wouldn't negotiate a turn in the crooked road. Placed on the school grounds, the pole displayed a twenty-four-foot long flag, waving nearly twenty feet higher than the building. Six hundred students filled the new classrooms on the first day of school, Monday, March 2, 1896.<sup>14</sup>

Though some complained that the school was too squat and cost too much, nearly everyone else was proud of the town's accomplishment. The school faced north. A bell tower sixty-eight feet high separated two wings of the building. The larger wing was sixty-four by eighty-six feet and extended out from the tower

toward Main Street. The smaller wing, thirty-five by fifty feet, remained flush with the tower and reached out to the east. Over the entrance at the base of the tower, "Public School" was carved on two separate sandstone blocks. High above, in the ornamentation surrounding the top of the tower, the year "1896" was etched. Inside the building, ten classrooms on two floors were all connected to the principal's office with speaking tubes. A third floor had been constructed in the tower and also over the main wing, but except for a chemical lab in the tower, that floor wouldn't be used until needed.

Bennett's design included three innovative features. In colder months two large furnaces in the basement of the building supplied heat to each classroom through ducts connected to ceiling vents.



Floor vents conveyed "foul air" to an exhaust chimney and all classrooms had individual temperature controls. It was during the scorching days of fall when the innovation of this arrangement was most apparent. With a small fire in the furnace to produce a draft, outside air was sucked into the system and distributed throughout the school. Students studied in classrooms cooled with fresh air, which was completely replaced seven to ten times each hour.

Bennett's last two features were in reaction to the devastating fire that had destroyed the previous school. Every window and outside door on the first floor was connected to a burglar alarm. With this system turned on at the end of the

school day, any entry into the school would set off an electric alarm bell, easily heard for blocks away. Located in the bell tower, this same bell was attached to forty thermostats within the building. Should a fire break out and reach a temperature of 116 degrees, an electrical contact was made, sounding the fire alarm.

The *Medford Mail* proclaimed that Bennett and the school board deserved the highest praise for their part in the construction of the building, "... both as to the solid, safe and permanency of its construction and in economy-consistent with a good article for the money. We doubt if a similar building is standing any place in the state at a cost of less than \$20,000—yet this one did not cost but \$14,000." The school board was now in debt for over \$25,000, but that fact was forgotten temporarily, buried by the town's self-congratulatory spirit. For the first time citizens gave their school a name. In honor of the nation's first president, they called it Washington School.<sup>15</sup>

By 1910 the Rogue Valley was near the height of economic prosperity. Land values had skyrocketed as wealthy Easterners speculated in orchard real estate. The land under Washington School had become too valuable for a school building, said members of the Medford School Board. They proposed to sell the site at a tidy profit, tear down the school, and build a new school farther to the south. It was a controversial proposal and the delay in making a final decision doomed it to failure. Prosperity began to unravel as speculators realized that fruit sale profits were too low to sustain their land investments. Some sold at a loss and others lost their land to mortgage companies and banks. Washington School had been granted a twenty-year reprieve from the wrecking ball.<sup>16</sup>

The mid-1920s brought a return to better economic times for the Rogue Valley with a subsequent increase in population. The old courthouse in Jacksonville was overwhelmed and inadequate. An agreement was made that the county seat would shift to Medford. Until a courthouse site was chosen, the city of Medford provided temporary space for county offices in a newly built building at the corner of Fifth and Central. After the courthouse was built, Medford would use the building as its City Hall. By a six-to-one ratio in May 1931, Medford voters approved a bond issue that would pay the school board \$23,000 for the Washington School grounds, deed the land to the county and require the city to pay for the demolition of the school.



At the end of May 1931, hundreds of former students crowded the classrooms of Washington School for a farewell open house. They were "...led from room to room, up stairways and down, over boards more accustomed to the trudging of smaller feet," said the *Medford Mail Tribune*. It was a nostalgic Friday evening when young minds in old bodies relived ancient memories as if they were new. "Lost spelling bees, forgotten tardy slips, and marbles 'for keeps' returned to importance." "Next week," the article continued, "brick by brick the Washington School will be razed." Within weeks the building had become separate piles of lumber, brick and stone. The bell that had rung for every recess in the previous thirty-five years lay in their midst on the ground. The scene shocked the sentimental, who demanded that at least the bell be saved. It couldn't be used at the new school, concluded Superintendent Ercel Hedrick: "Its ringing would wake up all the babies in the neighborhood."<sup>18</sup>

Where does one put a silent school bell? In front of a school, replied a group of volunteers. Local architect Frank Clark drew plans that would include the bell as part of a drinking fountain placed in front of the new and nearly completed Washington School. Charles Pheister, who had laid the cornerstone of the original Washington School in 1895, was asked to lay two stones from the old schoolhouse that had been embedded above the entrance. Carved on the stones were the words "Public School." These stones acted as a pedestal for the bell and were set on a concrete table, the concrete aged and molded to resemble the old stone. With the bell secured on top, four copper bowls at the corners of the table provided basins for the fountains. The bell monument was completed in September 1931. It became a touchstone that would stir memories of the first Washington School in the minds of former students until they died.

Today the bell is a symbol of the hard work and suffering required to bring education to a small railroad town. Periodically some of the old stories are retold and the meaning of the bell is introduced to a new generation. For the American Bicentennial in 1976, the students of the new Washington School cleaned the fountain and polished the bell in honor of the nation's birthday. As the new millennium approached in November 1999, Washington students again wrote essays, polished the bell and placed a time

capsule inside. Now, only two of the original schoolhouses remained.<sup>19</sup>

In 1886 W. F. Williamson sold his home, the first school, and left Medford for the northern part of the state to teach in Yamhill County. The property was resold a number of times before Elmer and Lucy Elwood took ownership in 1909. The Elwoods had arrived in Medford in 1898 and Elmer opened a jewelry store. He was also a doctor of optometry and practiced in Medford until his death in 1937.<sup>20</sup>

Whether any of the original schoolhouse remains is uncertain. Fire insurance maps show that there were numerous alterations to the building between 1884 and 1911. Between Elwood's purchase in 1909 and the 1911 insurance map, the building received a major remodel. These changes make it impossible to say if any part of the old building remains; although notes on the back of a photograph of Elwood in front of the building describe it as "Medford's first school." The same photograph shows Elwood's office, a brick extension to the home, which meets the sidewalk on Central Avenue and was constructed after 1927. In the ensuing years the structure has served as a residence or business, and since the mid-1980s has been the home of the Yellow Submarine sandwich shop.<sup>21</sup>

There is chance, coincidence and irony in the fact that Medford's first and oldest publicly funded schoolhouse still survives. Pushed aside for another school in 1891, it seems unlikely that it should have outlived its replacements. With block and tackle it had been hoisted aboard wagons and moved away from Oakdale Avenue over bumpy dirt streets. Nearly complete in its original exterior form, today it quietly stands on what was Professor Narregan's one-acre Tenth Street lot. In 1904 the property was purchased by Ansel A. Davis, one of the wealthiest men in the valley. He added a high-columned portico at the building's east side. Eventually the portico was removed and the property sold. For several decades the building served as an apartment house, and after 1976, the apartments were converted to office space. Today we know the building as headquarters for the Britt Festival—located just west of Sacred Heart Catholic Church. On January 22, 1996, the festival's administrative offices were opened for business in the old schoolhouse building—having surmounted all obstacles since 1885.<sup>22</sup>

Not all buildings will be—or should be—preserved. Outside of their practical uses as businesses, churches, government offices, or homes, structures remain valuable only to the extent that they remind us of our past. Except for

architects, carpenters, and other students of architecture, when the walls of a building talk, they talk about people. They tell us endless tales of human hopes and dreams, where people lived or worked, and why. Whether the people are strangers to us, or long lost relatives, it's the hands that touched those walls that make a building important. Memories seem so fleeting and frail when compared to the strength of a building. Too often we mourn a structure's loss believing that our memories are locked inside. But memories endure. Just as the pain of losing family members is eased by memories of their lives, comfort can be found in the memory of the human lives attached to a building. As long as one person remembers or is curious enough to look, memories of a building will live on. Memories can't always save buildings, but memories can always be saved. ■

*Bill Miller is library assistant with the Southern Oregon Historical Society.*

## ENDNOTES

1. *Ashland Tidings*, 14 December 1883. Diaries of Moses Williams, Southern Oregon Historical Society, MS 119.
2. *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, 20 March 1885.
3. *Ashland Valley Record*, 10 January 1889; *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, 13 June 1889; 26 August 1887.
4. *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, 7 October 1887; 29 April 1887; 21 March 1889.
5. *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, 11 March 1892; 29 May 1891.
6. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 17 June 1931.
7. *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, 10 July 1891.
8. *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, 18 September 1891.
9. Jackson County Deeds, 26 April 1894, Vol. 28, p. 49; *Talent News*, 1 April 1893. *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, 22 January 1892; 8 August 1895.
10. *Medford Mail*, 23 August 1895; *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, 19 August 1895; *Ashland Valley Record*, 22 August 1895.
11. *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, 2 September 1895; 19 September 1895; *Medford Mail*, 27 September 1895.
12. *Medford Mail*, 11 October 1895.
13. *Ashland Valley Record*, 17 October 1895; *Medford Mail*, 18 October 1895.
14. *Medford Mail*, 28 February 1896.
15. *Medford Mail*, 6 March 1896.
16. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 11 September 1910.
17. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 2 May 1931.
18. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 31 May 1931; 13 June 1931.
19. *Medford Mail Tribune*, 24 November 1999. The new Washington School is located at Peach and Dakota streets.
20. Jackson County Deeds, 28 September 1886, Vol. 13, p. 209; 15 October 1909, Vol. 73, p. 354; *Jacksonville Democratic Times*, 8 October 1886; *Medford Mail Tribune*, 26 September 1937.
21. S.O.H.S. photographs No. 5156 and No. 7963.
22. Jackson County Deeds, Vol. 48, p. 623; *Medford Mail Tribune*, 14 January 1996. The schoolhouse was moved to 517 W. Tenth Street.





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Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hight, *Medford*  
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Robert L. Lewis, *Jacksonville*  
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Davis Young, *Medford*

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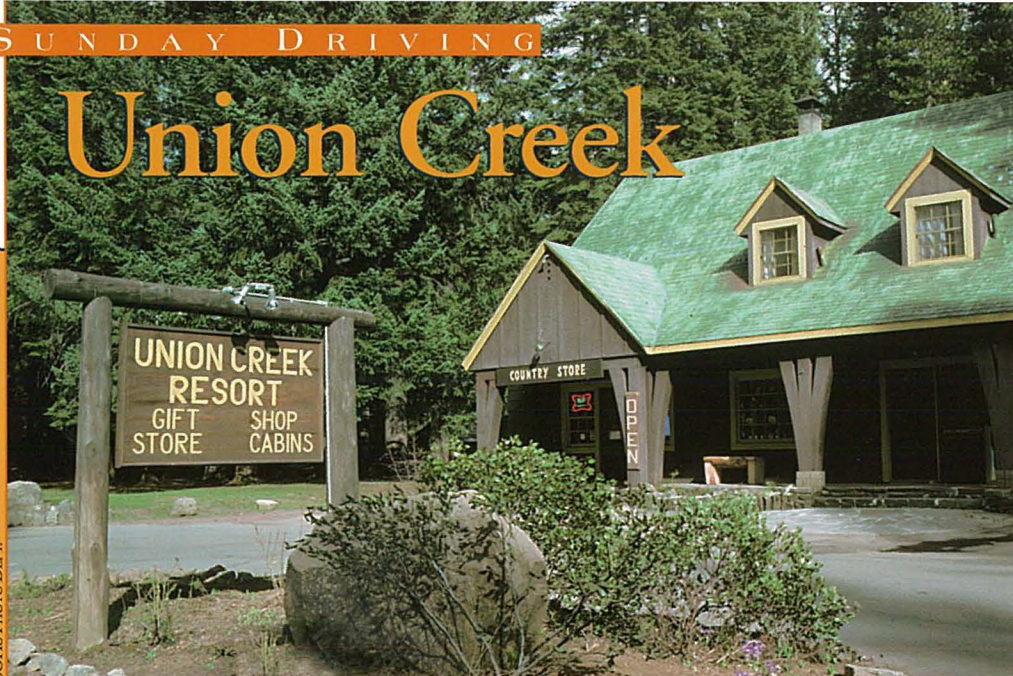


**Leave a Legacy** of Southern Oregon is a community-wide program established to create public awareness and to promote interest in charitable giving through a will or from an estate. The Southern Oregon Historical Society is participating in **Leave a Legacy**. Mary Hanley bequeathed Hanley Farm to the Society in 1982, thereby leaving a historic legacy for Southern Oregon residents and visitors who can now experience the farm's rich history.



# Union Creek

SOHS PHOTO DEPT.



*The present Union Creek Resort lodge replaced the first one, destroyed by fire in 1936. But Union Creek has been an important stopping point for travelers since the Civil War era and long before.*

ONE OF SOUTHERN OREGON'S MOST memorable drives follows Highway 62 up out of the Rogue Valley toward the headwaters of its namesake river. After reaching the Prospect plateau, the highway enters a corridor of old - and second - growth forest that grows right up to the edge of the asphalt. Tall sugar pine branches bend over the road high above, loaded with distinctive eighteen-inch cones hanging pendulously from the branch tips. Forest road signs tick off side-trip destinations that tempt one to tarry: Natural Bridge, Woodruff Meadows, Ginkgo Basin. But our destination is a historic stopping point near the turnoff to Crater Lake: the resort community of Union Creek.

Union Creek is named after nearby Union Peak, which in turn was named by pro-Union prospectors during the Civil War.<sup>1</sup> Because access to the turbulent upper Rogue is so difficult along much of its length, Union Creek offers the most accessible drinking water in the area. Indians stopped at the creek as they traveled to the mountain ridge tops to gather huckleberries. The first European-Americans in the upper Rogue country may have been Hudson's Bay Company fur trappers exploring with Peter Skene Ogden's party in 1827,<sup>2</sup> but miners, loggers, and settlers began filtering in in the 1850s.

In the 1860s prospectors on their way to the John Day gold mines of Eastern Oregon blazed a trail through the Union Creek area. Parts of the "John Day Trail" later saw use as a wagon route to Fort Klamath by the military. The Woodruff family had a cabin on Union Creek and catered to travelers; the family also opened a toll road to the berry fields on Huckleberry Mountain.<sup>3</sup> Because of Union Creek's convenient location on the routes to Diamond Lake and Crater Lake, it became much more popular when visitors could travel by automobile to those locations. The Forest Service developed a primitive campground in the area by 1917.<sup>4</sup>

With increased traffic came development. About 1922, James Grieve built a store and cottages at Union Creek. The next year, Ed Becklehymer built a garage and delicatessen (the present Becky's Café).<sup>5</sup> In 1927 Ed Regnier bought out Grieve, and the following year he built a lodge and more cabins. But in the spring of 1936 Regnier's lodge burned and a new one was built. That lodge still stands, and one of its outstanding features is the stone fireplace in the lobby, built of opalized wood hauled from Lakeview.<sup>6</sup>

Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal ushered in massive public works projects and programs at the government's expense. One such program,

the Civilian Conservation Corps, brought thousands of young men to the Northwest work in the outdoors. The Prospect Range District of the Rogue River National Forest became home to two CCC camps, one at Union Creek and the other at Union Creek.

Union Creek's biggest growth came in the 1930s when the CCC built several buildings including a warehouse complex, residences, various other structures. The wooden buildings are fine examples of 1920s rustic architecture, many of them featuring the Forest Service pine-tree symbol.<sup>7</sup>

The area is one of great natural beauty. Union Creek lies in the transition area between the ponderosa-pine and Douglas-fir zones; in addition to mammoth sugar pines, white pine, Noble fir, white fir, lodgepole pine, and western and mountain hemlock can be found here. Blacktail and mule deer and Roosevelt elk share the forest with black bears and coyotes. Recreational opportunities include fishing, camping, hiking, and snow sports.

The Union Creek Resort is forty miles northeast of Medford on Highway 62, the Crater Lake Highway. Becky's Café is open 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. June through September; call for winter hours (541-560-3563). The telephone number for the lodge is 541-560-3565. ☼

#### ENDNOTES

1. Lewis McArthur, *Oregon Geographic Names, Fourth Edition* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974), p. 750.
2. Jeff LaLande, *First Over the Siskiyou* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1987), p. 73.
3. Marjorie O'Harra, *Southern Oregon Short Trips into History* (Medford: Southern Oregon Historical Society, 1985), p. 119.
4. Jeffrey LaLande, *Prehistory and History of the Rogue River National Forest*, (U.S. Forest Service, Rogue River National Forest, 1980) p. 187.
5. Ibid.
6. O'Harra, *Short Trips*, p. 120.
7. LaLande, *Prehistory and History*, p. 189.



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