

# SOUTHERN OREGON HERITAGE

July 2002 Vol. 4, No. 7

*Today*



**WHEN SLOTS WERE HOT • THESE TWO TOOK THEIR TIME**

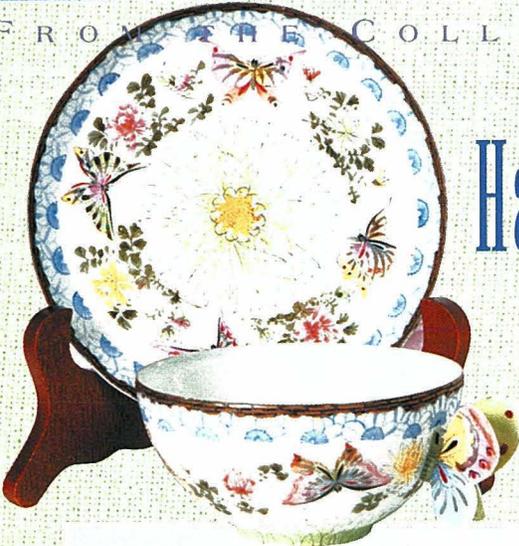


# Hanley China

by Mary Ames Sheret



Fred Schaefer

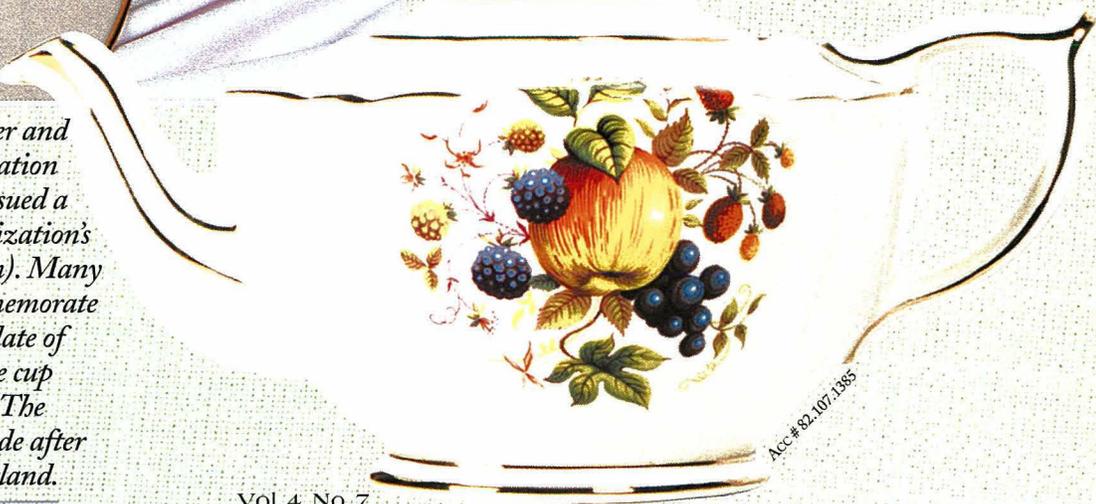


The delicate saucer and cup with butterfly handle were made in Japan.



ACC # 82.107.175, # 82.107.1294, S. # 82.107.1763

Claire Hanley was an avid gardener and president of the Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs. The Federation issued a commemorative plate for the organization's fortieth anniversary (above, bottom). Many items were created in 1959 to commemorate Oregon's statehood, including this plate of the "Beaver State (above, top)." The cup and saucer are by Castleton China. The earthenware teapot (right) was made after 1937 by James Sadler & Sons, England.



ACC # 82.107.1385

**D**O YOU HAVE SEPARATE SETS OF china for everyday use and for fine dining? Do you collect fine china? If so, you have something in common with the Hanley women who were avid china collectors. Since November 2000, Southern Oregon Historical Society volunteer Fred Schaefer (above) has been cataloging the Hanley china. We have been surprised at the extent and diversity of the collection.

To date, more than three hundred pieces have been catalogued. The collection includes full and partial sets of fine china and everyday dishes, assorted tea sets, commemorative and souvenir plates, and a large selection of decorative cups and saucers. English, American, French, German, and various European manufacturers are represented.

We wonder where all the china came from. Gifts? Purchases? Handed down from one generation to the next? In any case, it shows that the Hanley women appreciated fine arts and that information contributes to our understanding of them. 🏠

*The china shown below, in the "Pareek" pattern, was made by Johnson Brothers.*



*The name "Limoges" has been associated with porcelain tableware and decorative objects for centuries. The area surrounding the town of Limoges in central France is rich in kaolin, a fine white clay containing feldspar. Kaolin and "china stone" are the main ingredients in hard-paste porcelain. Dozens of companies in Limoges produced fine china. The best known is Haviland & Co., which made the chocolate pot (right) and the cake plate (above right). The Pickard China Company in Illinois purchased the Haviland china blank plate then hand painted the design.*



SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Things To Do in July



**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               | Tambourines; families; 50¢  |
| Beekman Living History Program | Wed. - Sun., 1 - 5 p.m.            | BEEKMAN HOUSE                   | Enter 1911: adults, \$3; ages 6-12 & seniors 65+, \$2; ages 5 & under and members, free           |
| Hanley Farm                    | Fri., Sat., Sun., 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. | 1053 Hanley Road, Central Point | Activities, programs; adults, \$5; ages 6-12 & seniors 65+, \$3; ages 5 & under and members, free |

## PROGRAM DETAILS

FOR TIMES AND LOCATIONS, SEE SCHEDULE ABOVE.

### JULY CRAFT OF THE MONTH

#### Tambourines

Explore homemade music as you create your own tambourine at the Children's Museum.

### BEEKMAN LIVING HISTORY PROGRAM

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

### HISTORIC HANLEY FARM EVENTS

Enjoy hands-on activities and engaging programs highlighting one of five different themes. Tour the house and gardens. Take a wagon ride. Bring a picnic lunch! Purchase fresh farm produce on Sundays (11 a.m. - 3 p.m.) at the Hanley Farmers' Market.

#### JULY 5, 6, & 7: Old-Fashioned 4th of July

Enjoy music from 12 - 3 p.m. Saturday by Dave and Tami Marston and Sunday by Old Time Fiddlers. Make and eat firecracker ice cream. Patriotic speech at 1 p.m. Saturday & Sunday followed by a parade.

#### JULY 12, 13, & 14: Late 19th Century Farm Life—Sheep to Shawl

Southern Oregon Draft Horse Association will demonstrate a hay-baling press and provide wagon tours, Saturday and Sunday.

Meet Buddy, a miniature horse. On Saturday from 1 - 4 p.m., there will be demonstrations of woodworking, wool dyeing, carding, spinning, and knitting; and spinning, combing, weaving on Sunday.

#### JULY 19, 20 & 21: Native American Lifeways—Baskets

Mary Carpelan, Shasta basketmaker, will demonstrate open-weave twined willow work each day. Bert Emerine, local pine-needle artisan, will share her craft on Saturday. Shoshone-Bannock tribal storyteller **Ed Edmo will tell traditional coyote stories and present a coyote sack puppet workshop for youngsters, on Saturday, 1 - 2 p.m.**

#### JULY 26, 27, & 28: Pioneer Lifeways—Needlework

Mountain Star Quilters will demonstrate quilting from 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Saturday. There will also be woodworking and blacksmithing demonstrations. Stitch with Embroidery Guild members for a half hour, and you'll be eligible for one of seven tea towels to be created this season. Horse-drawn wagon tours.

### HANLEY BARN & GARDEN LECTURE SERIES

Free with admission. Fridays, 2 - 3 p.m. Preregister by calling (541) 773-6536.

#### JULY 12: Closets, Cupboards and Correspondence

#### JULY 19: Tribal Trade—Networks & Legends

#### JULY 26: Locating Your Family Homestead

Hanley Farm Youth Programming for ages 3-6 provides storytelling for one-half hour at 1 p.m. each Friday.

### SUMMER LIBRARY READING PROGRAM

During July, the Society in partnership with the Jackson County Library System, will be presenting **Bees in Your Bonnet...Butterflies in Your Belly** at all fifteen branch libraries. Check for times with your local library, on the Society's web site, or in the Society's youth newsletter, *Hooked on History*.

- JULY 9 • Jacksonville and Ashland
- JULY 10 • White City and Medford
- JULY 11 • Ruch and Applegate
- JULY 17 • Shady Cove and Prospect
- JULY 18 • Phoenix and Talent
- JULY 23 • Central Point and Butte Falls
- JULY 24 • Eagle Point
- JULY 25 • Rogue River and Gold Hill



AVISTA Utilities Operations

Analyst Neil Thorson, turns over truck keys to Society Executive Director Brad Linder. The truck was donated by AVISTA as part of its community support program.

# EXHIBITS : *(see listings below for complete descriptions)*

|   | LOCATION                    | MUSEUM HOURS   |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Century of Photography: 1856-1956<br>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<br>Miner, Baker, Furniture Maker<br>Politics of Culture: Collecting the Southwest-Art and History<br>Capturing the Splendor- opens late July | JACKSONVILLE MUSEUM         | Wed. - Sat., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.<br>Sunday, noon - 5 p.m. |
| Ongoing 'hands on history' exhibits   | CHILDREN'S MUSEUM           | Wed. - Sat., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.<br>Sunday, noon - 5 p.m. |
| Black/White and Sometimes Gray  | 3RD STREET ARTISANS' STUDIO | Saturdays, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.                            |

## EXHIBIT DETAILS

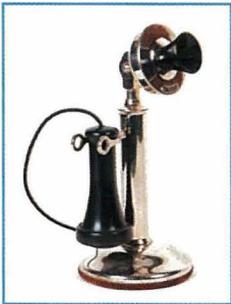
FOR TIMES AND LOCATIONS, SEE SCHEDULE ABOVE.

### 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.



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

Be sure to take in this exhibit of ten major milestones in Jackson County's history. An abundance of artifacts

and photographs, from Chinese archaeological material to an early cellular telephone, tell the county's story. Not everything is behind glass—a working 1940s jukebox plays vintage automobile songs, and a DVD player reproduces historic film clips.

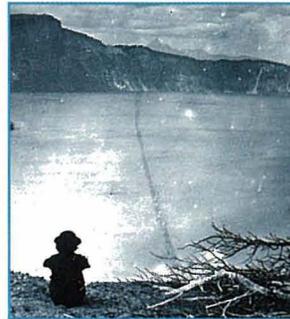
### MINER, BAKER, FURNITURE MAKER

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

### POLITICS OF CULTURE: *Collecting the Southwest-Art & History*

Cultural history of local tribes and information on contemporary collecting issues. Objects from the Society's Southwest Native American

collection highlight ancient Anasazi and historic Pueblo pottery. Textiles include two Navajo women's dresses, a Navajo Germantown blanket, and a Hopi/Pueblo "maiden's shawl."



### CAPTURING THE SPLENDOR

A photographic essay celebrating the centennial year of the founding of Crater Lake National Park.

### CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

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

### BLACK/WHITE AND SOMETIMES GRAY

Members of Rogue Valley Handweavers, Far Out Fibers and the Saturday Handweavers Guild will be demonstrating the traditional art forms of spinning and weaving. Black, white, and gray textiles will be on display.

### HISTORIC OPEN HOUSE LISTINGS:

- **State Historic Preservation Office**  
shpo.state.or.us - click on "publication"  
PHONE: 503-378-4168
- **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.

**C.C. BEEKMAN HOUSE**  
California & Laurelwood, Jacksonville  
Wed. - Sun., 1 to 5 p.m.

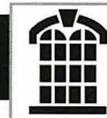
**C.C. BEEKMAN BANK**  
3rd and California, Jacksonville

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

Your membership will support: preservation of Southern Oregon's rich heritage; Society exhibits and educational events; outreach to schools; workshops for adults and children; living history programs; and tours and demonstrations at historic Hanley Farm.

Members receive *Southern Oregon Heritage Today*, the Society's monthly magazine with newsletter, providing a view into the past and keeping you up-to-date on services provided by the Society.

For membership information, call Susan Smith at 773-6536.

### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

|              |                 |                |  |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Lifetime ... | \$1,000         |                |  |
| Business ... | Two years \$200 | One year \$120 |  |
| Director ... | Two years \$450 | One year \$250 |  |
| Curator ...  | Two years \$200 | One year \$120 |  |
| Patron ...   | Two years \$110 | One year \$60  |  |
| Family ...   | Two years \$55  | One year \$30  |  |
| Friend ...   | Two years \$35  | One year \$20  |  |

## Southern Oregon's

Slot  
Machines

## One-armed Bandits and Their Battle with Moral Crusaders

WHILE ROGUE VALLEY COMMUNITIES wrestled with many social issues at the turn of the twentieth century, the nearly epic battle over gambling has received little attention from historians.

Why was gambling so popular in Southern Oregon? What drew people to openly commit crimes and risk their hard-earned cash? Like most of the United States at the turn of the twentieth century, Jackson County was a thriving, male-dominated network of communities. Those employed in the timber and mining industries were primarily men who worked long hours and had little time for a social life. These working men took comfort in social drinking, and gambling was a popular form of entertainment. Wages were high and the cost of living was low for many workers, leaving "money to burn." Many saloonkeepers were more than happy to provide games of chance for the local boys to spend their money on. Gambling fit nicely into the "get-rich-quick" theme of life in the West. After all, a miner's life was a gamble of its own. Gambling offered a form of entertainment that was challenging and possibly rewarding for those lucky enough to beat the odds.

by Josh Gary



*Opposite, Admiral Dewey, the naval hero of the Philippine Campaign during the Spanish-American War, adorns the center of this ornate turn-of-the-century slot machine, a 1902 Jackpot Dewey made by the Mills Company.*



Slot Machines on Parade, The Mead Company, 1980

In response to citizens' concerns, Ashland and Medford revised and published new city ordinances further restricting gambling in 1885. The Ashland ordinance more specifically outlined the duties of the city marshal, night watchman, and all of the city police. The public officials mentioned were required to "enter a complaint with the City Recorder against all persons who they shall know to have violated this ordinance, and upon complaint being made to them verbally or otherwise, to investigate such charge at once and if the evidence substantiates it to file a complaint against the party or parties accused with the City Recorder."<sup>1</sup>

At the turn of the twentieth century there seemed to be a general consensus between Medford and Ashland, as it is easy for one to see the obvious anti-gambling articles in either town's local papers. But one form of gambling changed the way people in Southern Oregon gambled and positioned Ashland and Medford on opposite sides of what was to become one of the most controversial issues in Southern Oregon history.

Slot machines had a dramatic impact on the acceptance of gambling in Medford in contrast with Ashland. Ashland banned slot machines outright, while Medford introduced an amended city charter enabling the town legislature to regulate the machines. The debate over whether slot machines should be removed or allowed was a much-heated one that drew attention from both local papers. Legal battles between local authorities enforcing the new legislation claimed front-page headlines for days.

What was the appeal of these one-armed bandits? Why was this form of gambling accepted as an innocent form of social gambling by many and opposed adamantly by others? How was the issue of allowing slot machines transformed to a much larger debate over the rights of local lawmakers? These questions can be answered by investigating public opinion through the reactions of local newspapers and printed letters to the editor that engaged in these debates.

State law formally banned slot machines in Oregon on February 24, 1899. This law was handled differently by the cities of Ashland, Medford, and Jacksonville. Ashland City Attorney C. B. Watson was quoted in an article in the *Ashland Tidings* as saying, "Violations of this act will be prosecuted."<sup>2</sup> A few days later an article in the *Tidings* went further to state that all nickel-in-the-slot machines had been shut down in Ashland, although it is open to question whether or not the law was as rigidly enforced as the paper described. However, going by the attitudes expressed in the pages of the *Tidings* and its open criticism of policing, it seems that the *Tidings* would have been critical of the Ashland Police Department had the law not been rigorously enforced.<sup>3</sup>



A search of issues of the *Medford Daily Tribune* for Medford's reaction to the 1899 slot-machine ban turns up no mention of the new law. The statewide ban was apparently ignored in Medford until 1901, when the city passed a special charter giving the city the legal means to justify the regulation and use of slot machines within the city limits. Section 25 of the Medford City Charter passed on February 12, 1901, declares that, "The city council shall have power and authority within the limits of the city of Medford to enact all ordinances and adopt all regulations, not inconsistent with the constitution and laws of the State of Oregon, as shall be needful or requisite to maintain and establish the peace, good order, health, cleanliness, prosperity and general welfare of the city." Subsection 23 of the same Section 25 of the Medford charter give the city of Medford and its legislature the power, "To define and prohibit gaming or gambling, to suppress houses or places where gambling is carried on or permitted, and to punish persons keeping such houses or places and persons for gambling. And to license, regulate or prohibit nickel-in-the-slot machines or any other schemes of chance, and to punish persons operating or using the same."

Slot machines ran as usual with no opposition from authorities, and were common in many businesses around the county, including pool halls, saloons, and cigar shops. These machines were loved and thought of as an innocent form of gambling. Margaret Schuler remembered Medford's slot machines in her description of a club she worked at next to the Holly Theater on Front Street.<sup>4</sup> While she couldn't remember the exact name of the business, she said, "We had slot machines galore." She describes the era of legal slot machines in Medford as a "very beautiful time." Schuler went further to describe how the business end of the machines was organized. She explained that the club where she worked was given a percentage of the machines' earnings. The machines themselves were owned by a man whose name she could not recall. She did, however, remember that the man owned and serviced many slot machines in various Medford businesses.<sup>5</sup> She also recalled them being very popular among customers.

As their popularity increased, so did scrutiny of the devices from more conservative Medford citizens who opposed gambling, including slots. The two men who took it upon themselves to represent the concerned citizens of Medford and Ashland were Medford City Attorney Clarence Reames and Jackson County Sheriff D.H. Jackson. Their new policy of enforcing state laws against slot machines and other saloon laws quickly divided Medford and created one of the greatest debates in the history of Rogue Valley gambling. No other gambling arrest or trial attracted as much attention as the removal of slot machines from Medford's and Jacksonville's saloons, cigar shops, and pool halls. The issue of the nickel-in-the-slot machines became much more than the simple enforcement of an existing state law.

The *Ashland Tidings'* coverage of Sheriff Jackson's moral campaign treated it as a much-needed action and the paper praised the sheriff and his enforcement of state law. The article applauded Jackson for finally putting a stop to the great and illegal revenues these machines brought their owners at the expense of others.<sup>6</sup> The article also noted that the anti-gambling device law was well respected in the majority of the state, yet for some reason certain

areas in Jackson County ignored it. It is obvious to see that the author of an Ashland newspaper report looked down at Medford as a town of a lower class with disrespect for laws. He goes on to use words such as "nefarious" to describe the operations of Medford's slots. The attitude of the author and what must have been much of the Ashland population, due to the lack of letters to the editor supporting slot machines or criticizing the actions of Sheriff Jackson, is found in the last sentence of the article, which reads: "Sheriff Jackson will have the support of all law abiding citizens in his work of enforcing respect for the laws."<sup>7</sup>

This statement differs dramatically from the reactions held by the authors of articles published in the *Medford Daily Tribune* regarding Sheriff Jackson's removal of slot machines.

While Sheriff Jackson's decision called for page-three praise in the *Ashland Tidings*, it received front-page criticism in the *Medford Daily Tribune* of September 16, 1907. Medford's love of gambling and slot machines was voiced clearly in the many articles that questioned Sheriff Jackson's moral crusade against vice. The first article on the subject in the *Tribune* read more like an obituary for an old friend than praise for an end to

lawlessness. The author seemed to already be longing for these flashy machines: "No more will the merry click of the slot machine sound on cigar counters, no more will Admiral Dewey whirl and clang in return for your nickel."<sup>8</sup> The author describes how the cigar dealers and saloonkeepers were for the most part taken by surprise. The owners of these machines thought the public generally liked them.

Along with a sad sense of loss expressed by the *Tribune* author was the mention of Medford's city charter, which gave the city the right to regulate slot machines and gambling devices. The author, not stating where his legal expertise came from, argued that "As it is special legislation, enacted since the state law was passed, the courts will probably hold that the charter supersedes the state law in Medford."<sup>9</sup> This article, specifically the last statement, must have surely fueled the debate that ensued over whether the city charter protected slot machines, or whether Sheriff Jackson had the authority to shut them down.

Slot machines claimed front-page headlines the next day, September 17, 1907, with an article titled, "Slot Machine Owners Defy Sheriff Jackson; Keep Devices Running." This article discussed meetings held by cigar dealers and others interested in the issue to examine possible forms of resistance to Sheriff Jackson's orders.<sup>10</sup> The orders were ignored based on the argument that the cigar dealers and other machine owners paid the city a regular license fee for operating each machine. They also argued that since the city charter authorized only the city council to regulate and license slot machines, the sheriff had no jurisdiction over the matter. The article estimated that there were twenty coin machines operating in the city, and as many or more cigar- and drink-selling machines. The author also states that these cigar and drink machines were as popular as ever and would have been a great loss of business for shop and saloon owners.<sup>11</sup>

The same edition of the *Tribune* also contained the first of five editorials that addressed the slot machine debate. It stated that, "the *Tribune* is no champion of the slot machine or any other





Along with mahogany bars and polished brass rails and spittoons, so-called "one-armed bandits" were common decor in turn-of-the-century saloons in Southern Oregon.

gambling device, but it believes that in issuing the order removing machines Sheriff Jackson exceeded his authority and acted illegally." The author was very critical of Jackson's abilities as a sheriff, using lines such as: "Several times recently he has butted in and swung his big stick." The article also touched on the bigger issue that had developed from the slot machine debate, which was the right Medford citizens had for local self-government.<sup>12</sup> The editorial ends with strong statements remarking that the sheriff should mind his duties and let Medford deal with its own affairs.

The second editorial, printed on September 18, 1907, not only further criticized Jackson and his actions, but denounced citizens who protested the running of slot machines by calling them spies and meddlers. The writer's bitterness toward the removal of these machines is best shown in his description of a citizen who reports illegal activity: "The informer is one who, to secure petty revenge, spies upon his neighbor, and, keeping himself in the background, gets others to work out his petty spite."<sup>13</sup> The article also includes the argument that Medford could deal with its own affairs and did not need orders from Ashland citizens.

Some of the editorial comments in these articles completely disguised the issue and resulted in nothing more than a personal attack on Jackson. In the editorial titled "As to The Law," Jackson was called "a hypocrite who masked himself under the cloak of a saint who was doing nothing more than searching for cheap notoriety by forcing upon others virtues he himself lacked."<sup>14</sup> Not even the Medford Ministerial Association was safe from criticism for its endorsement of the sheriff. The final editorial again criticized Jackson and this time questioned his motives for attacking gambling. The author calls his actions nothing more than, "A grandstand play for morality at the eleventh hour."<sup>15</sup>

While the reaction to the sheriff and his gambling crackdown was far from

supportive in the *Medford Daily Tribune*, local gamblers were treated as innocent victims of a sheriff's unjustified moral crusade. In a test case set up to fight the removal of slot machines, local cigar store owner and well-known gambler James Stewart kept his machine running and faced the consequences.<sup>16</sup> Medford City Attorney Holbrook Withington held that the city charter gave the city council power to regulate slot machines.<sup>17</sup> As a test case was made, Sheriff Jackson went to Salem to research the law and find whether or not the charter would hold. Prior to his return Stewart turned himself in and could not find a lawyer who would argue the case. Stewart was tried and convicted of allowing gambling in his cigar shop and fined ten dollars. With Stewart's conviction, the battle to keep slot machines running died.<sup>18</sup>

Five years later slot machines that were designed to circumvent the law were again eliminated from Jackson County establishments. In an attempt to justify these machines as non-gambling devices they were supposed to deposit a package of gum for the player with each quarter played. However, after it was realized that the gum was inferior and the machines were played purely for the chance of winning drinks or cigars, they were banned once again. There was little fight from the owners of these machines when they were instructed that these devices were in direct violation of the law.<sup>19</sup>

This investigation into gambling in Southern Oregon from 1868 to 1910 leaves more questions than answers. Researching the *Ashland Tidings*, the *Medford Tribune* and Jacksonville's *Oregon Sentinel* leads, however, to a testable hypothesis. Within these cities a strong division in class and morality emerged in the years surrounding the turn of the twentieth century. Ashland seemed to develop a more middle-class do-gooder attitude. If the *Ashland Tidings* can be used as a primary document that illustrated the town's viewpoints on gambling and other vices, Ashland seems to have reached a more conventional consensus

about civic morals.

This is not to say that Ashland was free of vice and Medford was a shameful place for only the lowliest of characters. Both towns had their fair share of vices including gambling, prostitution, and drinking. The main difference was the way these two communities dealt with their vices. Ashland citizens who lived above the boulevard did not want to see these vices. As a result, gambling, prostitution, and drinking were more secluded. Medford on the other hand was mainly composed of people who seem less concerned with regulating the morality of others. Medford at the turn of the twentieth century was more a workingman's town and Ashland was quickly becoming a place for the "more civilized" and financially better off. No other issue in these two towns brought out this separation of classes more than gambling, particularly the whirring and clanging of the slot machine. Slot machines brought gambling into public view, and forced the two towns onto opposite sides of a controversial issue. The 1907 slot machine debate truly illustrates the differences in Medford and Ashland's attitudes on many social issues. ■

Josh Gary is a graduate of Southern Oregon University with a degree in history.

#### ENDNOTES

1. "New City Ordinances," *Ashland Tidings*, 13 March 1885.
2. "The Law Will Be Enforced," *Ashland Tidings*, 2 March 1899.
3. "Nickel-in-the-slot Machines are..." *Ashland Tidings*, 6 March 1899.
4. Margaret Schuler, interview by Marjorie Edens, 14 August 1979, Southern Oregon Historical Society Oral History No. 112, p. 12.
5. *Ibid.*, O.H. No. 112, p. 12.
6. "Lid On In Jackson County, And Sheriff Jackson Will Sit On It—Edict Against Gambling," *Ashland Tidings*, 16 September 1907.
7. *Ibid.*
8. "Lid Nailed on Jackson County; Saloons Must Close on Sundays; All Slot Machines Ordered Out," *Medford Daily Tribune*, 16 September 1907.
9. *Ibid.*
10. "Slot Machine Owners Defy Sheriff Jackson; Keep Devices Running," *Medford Daily Tribune*, 17 September 1907.
11. *Ibid.*
12. "An Arbiter of Morals," *Medford Daily Tribune*, 17 September 1907.
13. "A Meddlesome Meddler," *Medford Daily Tribune*, 18 September 1907.
14. "As to The Law," *Medford Daily Tribune*, 20 September 1907.
15. "Endorsing the Sheriff," *Medford Daily Tribune* 25 September 1907.
16. "Whirring of Slot Devices Is Resumed," *Medford Daily Tribune*, 19 September 1907.
17. "Will Fight Removal of Slot Devices," *Medford Daily Tribune*, 18 September 1907.
18. *Ibid.*
19. "Close Slot Machines, Prosecuting Attorney Issues Ban On Devices in Medford," *Ashland Tidings*, 1 August 1912.

# A Curious Fourth of July

by Bill Miller



WITH AN ASSORTMENT OF EARSPLITTING fireworks for all, merchants guaranteed a traditional Fourth of July celebration. "FIRECRACKERS! Roman candles, Rockets, flower pots, pinwheels, blue lights, Bengal-lights, star mines, etc., etc., for sale," they said. In this festive summer of 1884, everything would seem exactly the same and yet be completely different. For more than thirty years, residents of the Rogue Valley had enjoyed a long-established routine of celebration. But this year, the customary fireworks parades, picnics, speeches, food, and games, would compete with something new. For the first time, whistle shrieks and puffing steam could be heard as trains pushed through the newly created town of Medford. People were curious. Many had never seen a train and fewer still had ridden one. With the Oregon & California Railroad offering Independence Day discounts, sixty people from Southern Oregon and Northern California rode the rails to Portland's festivities. Locally, short train rides between towns quickly became the amusement ride of choice and the railroad, unable to provide enough cars to meet the demand, lost considerable profit.<sup>1</sup>

There would be three centers of celebration, Jacksonville, Ashland, and Medford. Jacksonville's festivities included a parade to the County Courthouse, speeches, picnics, and a fireworks display at "the vacant lot on California street." The *Jacksonville Oregon Sentinel* recounted a list of principal events and regretted that "of the carefully prepared programme ... we have not space to speak." One suspects that the paper's staff had joined the majority of county residents who had gone to attend the Medford celebration. Ashland's situation was a bit more embarrassing. The City Council had to hire the Mount Shasta Cornet Band of Yreka, after refusing to pay the Ashland Brass Band \$125 for a Fourth of July performance. Ironically, the

1776.  1884.

## GRAND CELEBRATION

Of the 108th Anniversary of American Independence at

### MEDFORD,

On Friday, July 4, 1884. The Following is the

**PROGRAMME:**

**A Salute of 39 Guns at Sunrise.**

**OFFICERS OF THE DAY.**

President—M. Peterson.  
 Vice Presidents—Hon. C. W. Broback, J. S. Howard, Dr. M. Vrooman, David Miller, Col. J. E. Ross, Geo. Forsythe.  
 Orator..... HON. L. R. WEBSTER.  
 Reader..... W. F. WILLIAMSON.  
 Chaplain..... M. A. WILLIAMS.  
 Marshal..... A. L. JOHNSON.

**ORDER OF EXERCISES:**

1. Music by the Band.
2. Prayer by the Chaplain.
3. Music by the Band.
4. Reading the Declaration of Independence.
5. Music by the Band.
6. Oration.
7. Music by the Band.

**Barbecue and Basket Dinner**

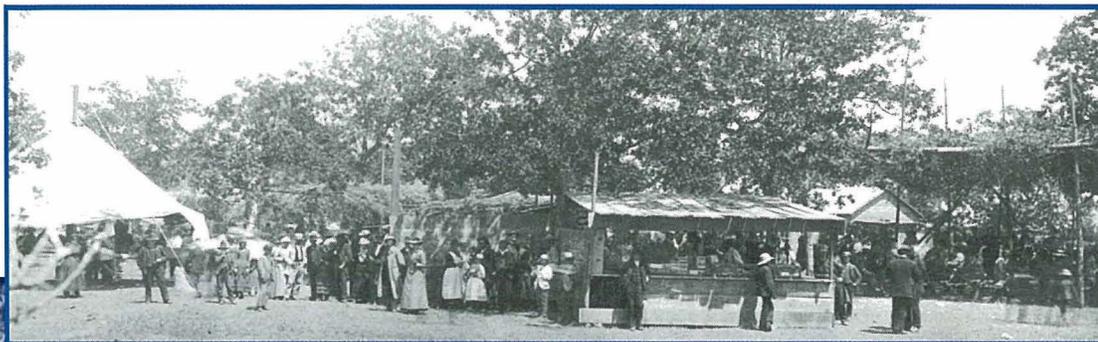
On the grounds, which will be appropriately decorated for the occasion.

**RUNNING RACES,**

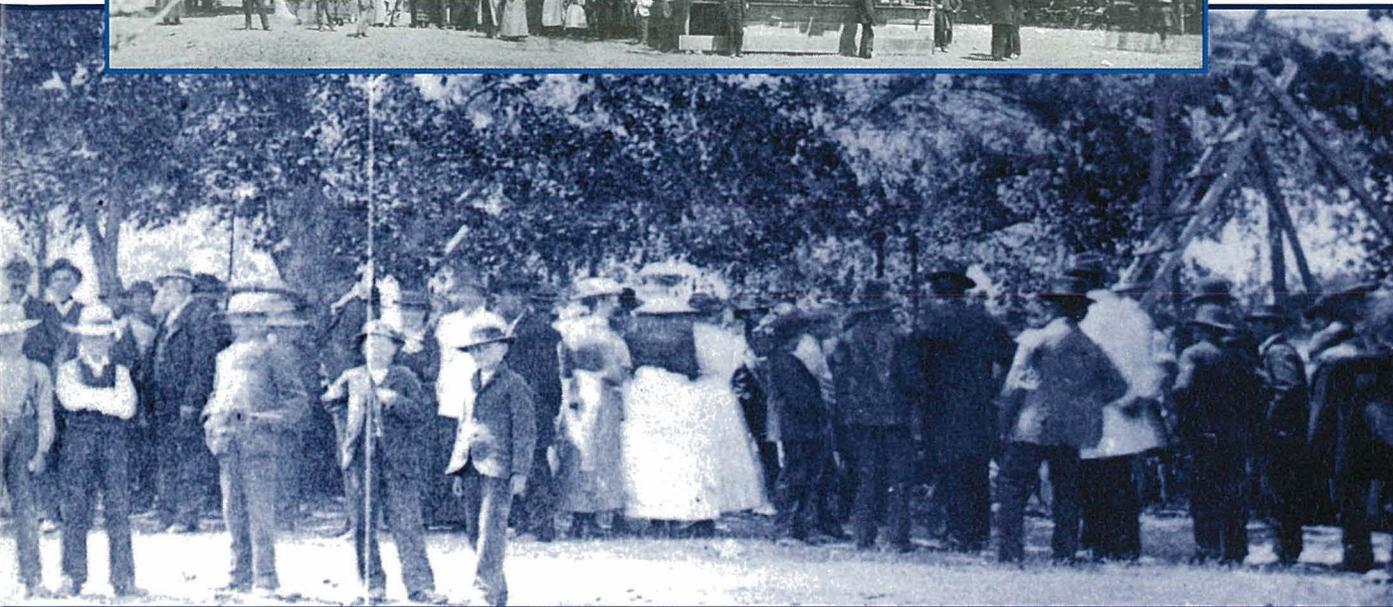
Jumping contests, Catching the Greased Pig, Fat Men's Races, Married and Single Men's Races, Ladies' and Misses' Races, etc., and a variety of other sports and games will be insisted in.

Arrangements have been made with the O. & C. E. R. Co. for Excursion Trains from Ashland, Phoenix, Woodville, Grant's Pass and Gold Hill, at Half-Fare rates.

ASHLAND TRIBUNE, 1884



SOHS # 5539



SOHS # 16975

Ashland band became the musical centerpiece of Medford's holiday activities. Even the *Ashland Tidings* knew that most people were going to Medford and, with a trace of jealousy, could only entice visitors with Ashland's location. "Whatever attractions there may be elsewhere, we can safely say that no other town in Oregon will have a more pleasant place for the outdoor exercises and pleasures of the holiday." More than 2,000 people did not agree and spent most of the day in Medford.<sup>2</sup>

To begin Medford's day, the original flyer had advertised "A Salute of thirty-nine Guns at Sunrise," each blast representing one of the current states in the Union. Luckily, before sunrise, someone realized that there were only thirty-eight states and the salute was adjusted accordingly. Booths, tables and a speaking stand were set up under the shade of oak trees that covered vacant lots southwest of Central and Eighth streets. A block away, William Egan's livery stable was overflowing with horses and wagons. He finally had to tie up teams along the roads in the "suburbs" of town and spent the day keeping hundreds of horses watered and content.

The Reverend Moses Williams walked from his home south of town and delivered an "impressive prayer" as chaplain for the day. Williams noted in his diary that there

had been an abundance of food, much of it left over. It was, he said, "a great greeting of old friends." Lawyer-schoolteacher W. F. Williamson, who ran Medford's first school, read the Declaration of Independence followed by a speech by Judge L. R. Webster. "His oration was full of eloquent patriotism and held the audience in close attention until its close," reported the *Sentinel*. "He ... grouped together many of the important events of our country's history, its struggles and successes ... indicating clearly that in every page of our national history, right had triumphed over every force that had sought to impede its progress."<sup>3</sup>

The day closed with a dance at the Byers and Jacobs brick hall on the southeast corner of Front and Main streets. The promoter of the event was J. W. Cunningham, owner of the Empire Hotel, who upon leaving the hall placed an eighty-seven dollar profit in his pants pocket. That night, the pants were tiredly and carelessly tossed over a chair. The next morning the pants were found, pockets empty, in the middle of Main Street.

Of the Portland visitors, Michael Hanley, Jr., and brother John arrived late. Thirteen-year-old Michael had decided to ignore the train conductor's protests and view the sights from the rear platform. A mile south of Albany he fell off and was

*The resently completed rail line through the Rogue Valley drew thousands of visitors to the valley's newest community, Medford, for speeches, games, picnics, and fireworks on the Fourth of July in 1884, the year of Medford's founding. Sunny summer skies made the shade of awnings and oaks welcome to the throngs, encumbered in stuffy Victorian clothing.*

rescued by brother John, who had rented a buggy at the next stop.<sup>4</sup>

The arrival of the railroad had changed life in Southern Oregon, but in July 1884, no one was really sure how. For now, they were curious, and willing to let curiosity change the way they did things. By the time they figured out that their lives had changed, the change wouldn't matter to them at all. 🏠

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

#### ENDNOTES

1. *Ashland Tidings*, 1 July 1884. *Jacksonville Oregon Sentinel*, 1 March 1884; 12 July 1884. The first passenger coach had reached Medford on February 24, 1884, and Ashland became the end of the line on May 4.
2. *Jacksonville Oregon Sentinel*, 12 July 1884. *Ashland Tidings*, 1 July 1884; 4 July 1884.
3. The Reverend Moses Williams' Diaries, Southern Oregon Historical Society MS 119.
4. *Jacksonville Oregon Sentinel*, 12 July 1884.

# Sweetness and Thorns: The Himalayan Blackberry

by Donn L. Todt and Nan Hannon



## FAT SPRING BLACKBERRY

A cane, sagging with the weight of clusters of red-to-purple berries, arches over a weathered fence and droops, head-high, into the alley. Though we call them “Himalayan blackberries” (*Rubus discolor*) no one knows their original home.<sup>1</sup> But they have made themselves at home in the Northwest rain belt and insinuated themselves further into our landscapes and customs. Only since the 1940s have they become a widespread part of our West Coast environment.

The plants, though, were widely and anciently distributed throughout Europe and cultivated in England. They were almost surely introduced to North America as a cultivated species and perhaps reached the West Coast via Hudson’s Bay Company trading ships. Their rapid growth rate, hardiness, adaptability and persistence were initially admired. An early twentieth-century horticulturalist waxed enthusiastic about them: “The Himalaya is a blackberry of wonderful growth and prolificness, highly praised by amateurs, but not yet important from a commercial point of view. It is magnificent on a garden fence or trellis.”<sup>2</sup>

Himalayan blackberries are certainly the most commonly gathered wild fruit in our region. Blackberry pickers skirt the perimeter of a patch, gingerly reaching around

the armed branches toward the ripening fruit. The canes’ ferocious cat-claw thorns assure that most of the berries beyond easy reach remain for birds to glean.

This avian harvest results in distinctive landscapes. Birds roosting in isolated trees excrete the hard-shelled seeds that germinate within the drop zone. Sometimes abandoned orchard trees become expanding circles of brambles with forlorn-looking fruit trees masting through the mounds. Since canes can grow as much as twenty-three feet in one year, the plants can cover a lot of territory in a few seasons.

Once established, these brambles travel across the earth by literal leaps and bounds. Canes arch over nearby shrubs, small trees, sheds, and old farm equipment. The growing tips root where they touch moist ground and leap up and over the next obstacle. They are nearly unstoppable and few people draw a line in the earth at which to stop them unless there is an overriding economic incentive to do so.

Some communities in the Northwest cultivate an “if you can’t beat ’em, celebrate ’em” attitude and hold annual blackberry festivals. Most homeowners accommodate the plants by keeping them from trespassing onto their own lawns, flowerbeds, and vegetable gardens, while harvesting the sweet fruit elsewhere.

Unfortunately, this “soft on blackberries” attitude has a negative effect on streams, riverbanks, and wetlands. Impenetrable mounds of blackberries out-compete native plants and exacerbate erosion, since their shallow root systems can’t hold stream-bank soil during floods. By decreasing plant diversity, they render wetland and streamside corridors less

useful for most native wildlife. Expanding blackberry patches also pose a problem for local fire departments. Hidden under a dome of leaves and arching canes, kids experimenting with the magic of fire sometimes ignite their “fort,” which bursts into flames with a barn-burning intensity. Old blackberry patches in the city-wildland interface furnish an explosive combination of dry, woody fuel and oxygen that can jump-start a disastrous wildfire.

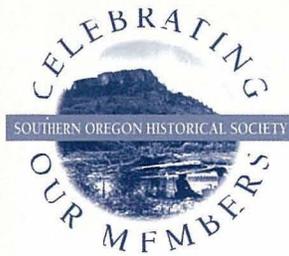
The Himalayan blackberry illustrates the thorny contradictions inherent in many aggressive colonizing plants: a seasonal treat, a prickly nuisance, a pretty wildflower, a fire hazard, a good wildlife habitat, an ecological threat. The fields, hills, and woods change before our eyes; by default we landscape with blackberries. These plants are now as much a part of the West as the people who must decide how to deal with them. Blackberries are emblematic of our own contradictory natures and of the dilemmas and challenges posed by our dynamic landscapes. 🍷

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

## ENDNOTES

1. Marc Hoshovsky, “*Rubus discolor*” in *Invasive Plants of California’s Wildlands*, Carla Bossard, John Randall, and Marc Hoshovsky (eds), (University of California Press, 2000), pp. 277-81.
2. Edward Wickson, *The California Fruits and How To Grow Them* (San Francisco: Pacific Rural Press), 1919, pp. 412-13.





## Honorary Lifetime

Mr. and Mrs. Vincent L. Armstrong, *Medford*  
Francis and Mary Cheney, Ben B. Cheney Foundation, *Tacoma, WA*  
Robertson E. Collins, *Jacksonville*  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Heffernan, *Medford*  
Ms. Jean W. Jester, *Sandy*  
Marjorie O'Harra, *Asbland*  
Mr. and Mrs. Donald E. Rowlett, *Asbland*  
Mrs. Mary Toozee, *Portland*

## Lifetime

Kay and Al Alsing, *Asbland*  
Connie Battaile, *Asbland*  
Patricia Cook Harrington, *Central Point*  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. DeArmond, *Central Point*  
Mr. and Mrs. John Hamlin, *Medford*  
Mr. Tom Hamlin, *Medford*  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hight, *Medford*  
Mr. Robert A. Johnson, *Medford*  
Edward B. Jorgenson, *Medford*  
Robert L. Lewis, *Jacksonville*  
Dr. Eugene I. Majerowicz, *Los Angeles, CA*  
Alice Mullaly, *Central Point*  
Ram Offset Lithographers, *White City*  
Marilyn L. Sibley, *Gold Hill*  
Davis Young, *Medford*

## New Members

### PATRON

♦ Mr. and Mrs. Tim Root, *Medford*

### PIONEER/FAMILY

Elizabeth Carter, *Eugene*  
♦ Dick and Marilyn Henselman, *Medford*

### FAMILY

♦ Richard and Rita Abernathy, *Central Point*  
Pam Ator, *Medford*  
Mr. and Mrs. Don Cady, *Central Point*  
Douglas F. Coghill, *Lake Oswego*  
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Holst, *Medford*  
Dr. and Mrs. Arthur Kreisman, *Asbland*  
Mr. and Mrs. Jay Tapp, *Medford*

### FRIEND

Maggie Anderson, *Asbland*  
♦ Sol Blechman, *Asbland*  
Phil Bulebar, *Medford*  
Helen M. Gebhard, *Medford*  
Roger Smith, *Central Point*  
Dorothy Walker, *Central Point*

## Renewing Members

### BUSINESS

Evergreen Federal, *Grants Pass*  
Regence Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Oregon, *Medford*

### DIRECTOR

Dr. and Mrs. H. Walter Emori, *Jacksonville*

## PIONEER/CURATOR

♦ Janet Reter Baker, *Medford*

## CURATOR

♦ Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Barr, *Medford*  
♦ Jack and Nancy Day, *Medford*  
\* Mr. and Mrs. Robert Richmond, *Anchorage, AK*

## PIONEER/PATRON

Cecile M. Camden, *Central Point*  
♦ Ace and Margaret Carter, *Central Point*  
♦ Laura Frost Kaegi, *Medford*  
Dr. and Mrs. John R. Reynolds, *Asbland*  
Helen R. Scott, *Grants Pass*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. Dalton Straus, *Central Point*  
♦ Kathleen M. Sullivan, *Phoenix*  
\* Virginia Younger, *Medford*

## PATRON

♦ James L. Auchincloss, *Asbland*  
Dr. and Mrs. Theodore P. Barss, *Medford*  
Mr. and Mrs. John Braslin, *Jacksonville*  
♦ Betty Hedberg, *Portland*  
♦ Gerald Hellinga, *Medford*  
♦ Richard and Ann Hensley, *Medford*  
Nick King, *Medford*  
\* Mr. and Mrs. David B. Lowry, *Talent*  
♦ Margaret J. McGear, *Medford*  
Mr. and Mrs. John Olander, *Medford*  
♦ The Bruce L. Patterson Family, *Medford*  
♦ "A" Peterson, *Medford*  
♦ Rosalyn R. Rhinchart, *Medford*  
♦ Dr. and Mrs. Richard A. Schaefer, *Medford*  
Colleen Tokar, *Medford*  
Thomas and Cynthia Wicklund, *Medford*

## PIONEER/FAMILY

♦ Mr. and Mrs. Ron Bartlett, *Medford*  
Mr. and Mrs. Marty Bauer, *Grants Pass*  
♦ Patricia Benson, *Clovis, CA*  
Mr. and Mrs. John Black, *Jacksonville*  
♦ Mrs. Monte Campbell, *Eugene*  
Mr. and Mrs. Harold Center, *Medford*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. Gary Christlieb, *Asbland*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. Jack Dumas, *Medford*  
Daryl Farnham, *Medford*  
Mr. and Mrs. Ben Foley, *Rancho Santa Fe, CA*  
Mr. and Mrs. Victor Gardener, *Medford*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. D. Gene Glazier, *Medford*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. Bradford L. Jones, *Jacksonville*  
\* A Dee Linton and Danette Mulrine, *Sacramento, CA*  
Robert S. McClain, *Albany*  
Mr. and Mrs. Gordon E. Miller, *North Bend*  
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Rhee, *Asbland*  
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Richardson, Jr., *Medford*  
Mr. and Mrs. John Ross, *Madison, WI*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. Richard C. Stark, *Medford*  
♦ Trish Styer and Mark Shibley, *Asbland*  
Sandra L. Zimmer, *Canby*

## FAMILY

♦ Mr. and Mrs. William R. Bagley, *Medford*  
♦ James and Mary Lou Clark, *Medford*  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Clark, *Grants Pass*  
♦ Elizabeth Corethers, *Eagle Point*  
♦ Dr. and Mrs. James C. Cruickshank, *Medford*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. Dan Daniken, *Gold Hill*  
♦ The Murrill Davis Family, *Eagle Point*  
Murrey Dumas, *Central Point*  
Walter Dye, *Gold Hill*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. Otto Ewaldsen, *Port Ludlow, WA*  
♦ Dr. and Mrs. Robert C. Gerber, *Medford*  
The Gradwell Family, *Jacksonville*  
♦ Phil and Shirlee Gustafson, *Jacksonville*  
♦ Jerry C. Hood, *Medford*  
♦ Joanne Johnson, *Talent*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Larson, *Medford*

♦ Daniel Maloney, *Asbland*  
Orlando J. Marin, *Central Point*  
♦ Bruce McGarvey, *Medford*  
♦ Matthew C. Morey, *Shady Cove*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. Jay Mullen, *Medford*  
Mr. and Mrs. Warren Paul, *Medford*  
Barbara Ragus, *Medford*  
\* W.H. Reichstein, *Medford*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. Herb Robisch, *Medford*  
♦ Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Rosenberg, *Jacksonville*  
♦ Michael Smith and Nora Leestma, *Gold Hill*  
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Spatz, *Medford*  
Commissioner and Mrs. Jack Walker, *Phoenix*  
Susanna Yoshida, *Grants Pass*

## PIONEER/FRIEND

Marytine Abrams, *Medford*  
♦ William H. Breeding, *Crooked River Ranch*  
♦ Gail Couetts, *Hayden, ID*  
Hannah N. Dalton, *Eagle Point*  
Alan Fleischer, *Central Point*  
Dr. John Hakanson, *Milwaukie*  
♦ Karl A. Hayes, *Lake Oswego*  
♦ Fred Kruggel, Jr., *Medford*  
E.K. Manuel, *Medford*  
♦ Lorraine A. Mattos, *Jacksonville*  
Cecil Owings, *Eagle Point*  
♦ Homer D. Peabody, Jr., *San Diego, CA*  
♦ Amy L. Peil, *Grants Pass*  
Dorothy Morris Reimers, *Saratoga, CA*  
Pam Schiller, *Asbland*  
William A. Singler, *Shady Cove*  
Gordon Stanley, *Eagle Point*  
♦ Doris Sutherlin, *Medford*  
♦ Dorris Kellogg Wilson, *Medford*

## FRIEND

♦ Ann Aines, *Bend*  
♦ Alex Austin, *Grants Pass*  
Mary M. Badley, *Medford*  
Cyd Bagley, *Medford*  
♦ Judy Beecher, *Jacksonville*  
Sherry Cook, *Stevenson, WA*  
♦ Steve Decker, *Applegate*  
Karma Denton, *Medford*  
Dorothy B. Duthie, *Asbland*  
♦ Nellie Dymock, *Grants Pass*  
Eugene L. Edwards, *Medford*  
♦ Richard H. Engeman, *Portland*  
♦ Jim Estremado, *Central Point*  
Claudia Everett, *Asbland*  
♦ Barbara Ezell, *Klamath Falls*  
Beverly Florian, *Medford*  
♦ Sharon Freeburne, *Central Point*  
♦ Mrs. W. G. Garner, *Central Point*  
♦ Thomas P. Gass, *Medford*  
♦ Leonard Harvey, *Medford*  
Betty Hedberg, *Portland*  
♦ Sharon Heisel, *Central Point*  
♦ Mary Lou Henson, *Medford*  
Carmela B. Hotho, *Medford*  
William Howell, *White City*  
James A. Johnson, *Talent*  
♦ William F. Johnston, *Phoenix*  
♦ James L. Kelley, *Central Point*  
Cindie Kitchin, *Cave Junction*  
Amy Lepon, *Asbland*  
♦ Betty J. Lindlan, *Grants Pass*  
Jill Livingston, *Klamath River, CA*  
♦ Dorothy Livingston, *Jacksonville*  
♦ Flora McCracken, *Talent*  
G. W. Marshall, *Newhall, CA*  
Joelle T. Mathis, *Asbland*  
♦ Janet McCullough, *Asbland*  
♦ Bill McDonald, *Jacksonville*  
♦ Karen Mitchell, *Jacksonville*  
♦ Fern Mix, *Medford*  
♦ Peter Naumes, *Medford*  
Sharon Nelson, *Asbland*  
Claudette M. Pruitt, *Grants Pass*  
♦ Lynette M. Read, *Tracy, CA*  
♦ Roger R. Roberts, *Central Point*  
David Scafani, *Medford*

♦ Barbara Schiavonne, *Grants Pass*  
Pam Sieg, *Medford*  
Betty J. Smith, *Medford*  
Robert K. Stock, *Medford*  
♦ Gary Sumrak, *Medford*  
♦ Bonnie Symmonds, *Medford*  
Jackie Tomlin, *Medford*  
♦ Muriel Trammell, *Medford*  
Univ. of Washington Libraries, *Seattle, WA*  
Peter Van Fleet, *Talent*  
Maria H. Vaughan, *Rogue River*  
John Wasson, *Medford*

\*Indicates upgraded membership category or monetary contribution in addition to membership dues for Society programs.  
♦Indicates two year membership.

## Donors

Dr. and Mrs. Theodore P. Barss  
Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Butte  
Rodney Coleman  
John M. Cowgill  
Viola M. Davis  
Velda Dickey  
Judi Drais  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Fasel  
Eloise E. Friesen  
Laura Frost Kaegi  
Mr. and Mrs. Dan Hoffman  
Mr. and Mrs. John L. Holmes  
Mr. and Mrs. Warren Merz  
Walter E. Minnick, Jr.  
Dr. and Mrs. Matthew Morey  
Mr. and Mrs. Lee Niedermeyer  
Jay Powell Family  
Mr. and Mrs. Don Reynolds  
Paul A. Richardson  
Dorothea Schulz  
Mr. and Mrs. Mike Schwartz  
James Trecker  
Ben Trowbridge  
L. Todd Watson  
Gertrude C. Woods  
Frances A. Young  
Sandra L. Zimmer

## IN KIND

Deli Down

## GENERAL COLLECTION

William Alley  
L. Scott Clay  
Eleanor Clifford  
Eleanor Corey  
William Dames  
George Duggar  
Yvonne Earnest  
Dixie Fleegeer  
Richard Higgins  
Virginia Johnson  
Top and Dusty Miller  
Jacqueline Leighton  
Jaen Pope  
G.K. Rhein  
Anthony Shope  
Krista Sorensen  
Steve Wyatt

## ANNUAL CONTRIBUTORS FUND

Helen M. Gebhard

## Southern Oregon Historical Society Foundation

## ENDOWMENT FUND

Janet Reter Baker  
Jim and Rebecca Estremado  
Laura J. Frost Kaegi  
Dr. and Mrs. Matthew Morey

# The Berrangs Come to Oregon

by William Alley

## WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN FIRE DESTROYS

your home, consuming all of your household goods except for the clothes on your back? This was the question faced by Jacob and Catherine Berrang when their farmhouse near Hartford, Connecticut, burned to the ground.

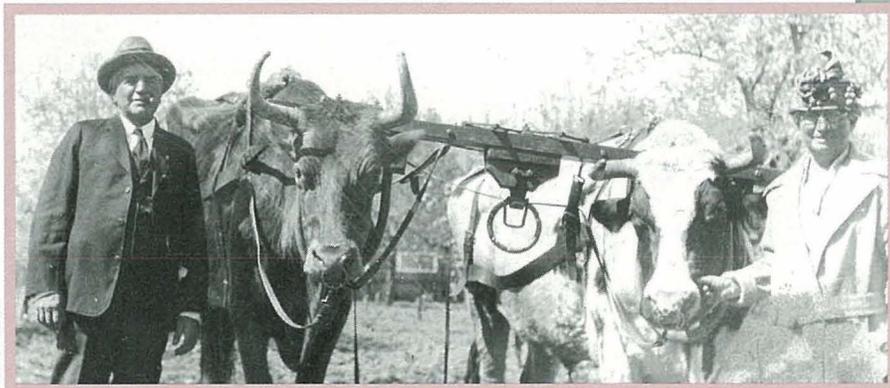
As Berrang worked to prepare temporary housing for the winter months, his mind wandered to the descriptions of Oregon he had recently received from an old friend. In a fit of pique after again hitting his numb thumb with a hammer, Berrang decided there and then that it was time for a change. After a long discussion with his wife, the two decided to make the trek across the country. At fifty-seven years of age, Berrang and his wife prepared their wagon and, with three oxen, some chickens, a dog, and a cat, set out for Oregon.

From the outset the Berrangs' journey aroused the curiosity of almost all who saw them pass. For they were not part of the great migrations of wagons that crossed the plains in the mid-nineteenth century; their journey from Connecticut began in 1920, and their "covered wagon," which Berrang referred to as his "Pullman," was truly a home away from home. Amenities included an oil stove, icebox, phonograph, radio, gas lights, and running water.

At every stop along their journey, curious witnesses sought souvenirs from the Berrangs. To satisfy this demand, Jacob ordered 100 picture postcards, to be delivered to the next stop along the route. When he picked them up, they sold out almost immediately. Soon he was ordering cards by the thousands to be delivered along his route. In Manhattan, the newsreels filmed him driving his wagon down Broadway, "congesting and blocking traffic and causing an untold amount of profanity."

After they left New York, the Berrangs' route took them through Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. A later account of the trip commented on the citizens of Washington's lack of "comment on the bovine, stupid expression of the faces of the oxen, being accustomed to it. Congress was in session."

The Berrangs enjoyed a leisurely pace as they crossed the continent, averaging sometimes a mere ten to twenty miles in a day. If a place suited them they would linger, sometimes for weeks. But when they reached Denver, Colorado, in the fall of



SOHS #16973

*Jacob and Catherine Berrang took more than three years to complete their cross-country ox-drawn wagon journey from Connecticut to Medford, arriving on April 17, 1924, when this photograph was taken.*

1922, a series of tragedies struck. The Berrangs' rooster accidentally came in contact with a charged radio antenna and was electrocuted. They also lost one of their oxen, and the replacement succumbed shortly thereafter.

After three years, four months and sixteen days, the Berrangs finally arrived at their intended destination, Medford, Oregon, where they parked their "Pullman" and oxen in the backyard of Dr. B.R. Elliott's Oakdale Avenue home. Later in the day the wagon was driven to the Chamber of Commerce building, where more than 200 spectators witnessed an official welcome from Mayor Earl Gaddis. When asked about the trip, Mrs. Berrang replied, "We had a lovely time."

Jacob and Catherine Berrang settled down in nearby Phoenix, where they opened a restaurant aptly named The Covered Wagon. For years, their oxen-powered Pullman could be seen alongside the premises. When Catherine died in 1945, Jacob sold out his business and retired. He passed away in 1950. ■

*William Alley is a historian and certified archivist.*



106 N. Central Ave.  
Medford, Oregon 97501-5926

S O U T H E R N O R E G O N H E R I T A G E T O D A Y

Non-profit Org  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 164  
Medford, OR