

WINTER'S GIFT: SOUTHERN OREGON'S LOVE AFFAIR WITH SNOW

by Larry Mullaly

Winter snow has not always been celebrated. Shakespeare dolefully complained of "barren winter, with ...wrathful nipping cold "

To early Southern Oregonians, a snow-filled winter made for a cruel season. Only in recent years have such attitudes dramatically changed.

For thousands of years, native people such as the Shasta and Takelma avoided the mountains in winter and made only occasional forays into the lower elevations to hunt down deer immobilized by snowfalls. In the 1800s, trappers on snowshoes set their trap-lines in snow country during winter, but they also avoided the higher elevations. For pioneer settlers, heavy snow meant the suspension of mail and the interdiction of travel and supply routes.

In the Far West, interest in winter sports began haltingly. In the 1850s, Norwegian gold miners in California's high Sierras doubled as mail carriers in the winter, using cumbersome wooden skis, some as long as 15 feet, to travel between settlements. In Southern Oregon, a few hardy souls subsequently engaged in cross-country skiing, but the sport aroused little interest until the inauguration in 1927 of an annual 42-mile race from Fort Klamath to Crater Lake Lodge and back. Billed as "the longest ski race in the world," the event brought internationally known Nordic skiers into Southern



A close-up view of 7,536-foot elevation, snow-covered Mt. Ashland was not available to most Southern Oregonians until an all-weather road was built to the site of the present-day ski lodge.
Rogue River National Forest Photo

Oregon. It initially stirred up much excitement and saw as many as 4,000 spectators in attendance. By 1932 ski jumping had also been introduced, but interest waned and the event was discontinued in 1938.

Meanwhile, enthusiasm was building for downhill "Alpine" skiing. The sport attracted attention when Sun Valley, Idaho opened the nation's first large wintertime destination resort and chairlift in 1936. Oregon soon followed with its own Mt. Hood Timberline Lodge resort. Dedicated in 1937, it was soon equipped with its "Magic Mile" chairlift.

For Southern Oregonians, these events coincided with the building of improved mountain roads and two small Forest Service winter-rec-

reation sites. During the late 1930s, a "snow-play" site was located on the newly paved Crater Lake Highway north of Prospect and Union Creek at Farewell Bend; the other was at Trail Camp, situated at over 4,000 feet in elevation on the new Mt. Ashland Loop Road. The two sites, with their small gas engine-powered rope tows and simple warming huts, gave Rogue Valley residents their very first taste of downhill skiing.

Downhill skiing grew in national popularity after World War II, and between 1945 and 1960 over 90 new ski areas were opened. Sentiment for such a Southern Oregon

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Masthead: Hanley House Snow SOHS #20879



Snow (Continued from page 1)

facility also grew during this period, resulting in a 1961 proposal for a locally funded ski area perched on the northeast face of Mt. Ashland.

Unlike many ski-area developments financed by large corporations, Mt. Ashland involved a small group of Ashland and Medford investors and skiing enthusiasts. Prominent among these was long-time Medford resident Glenn Jackson, the politically powerful chairman of both Pacific Power and the State Highway Commission.

Glenn Jackson's influence was crucial in getting the Forest Service behind the proposal, and in obtaining federal "O & C" timber receipts for building the costly 8-mile-long paved access road to the ski area. Jackson and others originally envisioned a year-round resort on the mountain, but that did not come to pass. Although both the lodge and new access road were still unfinished, the Mt. Ashland ski area opened for business on January 11, 1964. Within a year, the lodge was also open for business.

Other kinds of wintertime sports soon followed. As late as the 1960s, large tracked vehicles meant for snow use gave way to light-weight, single-person snowmobiles capable of traveling across open

(Continued on page 3)

Cross-country skiers gather at Fort Klamath prior to their grueling 42-mile race to the Crater Lake Lodge and back. The record time for the event of 5 hours and 35 minutes is still held by Swedish-born Emil Nordeen of Bend, Oregon, shown at far left. SOHS #4116



Holidays at Hanley



Visit the historic Hanley farmhouse, dressed for the holidays

Tuesday, December 26 11am - 3pm

1053 Hanley Road, Central Point

Tickets \$5/\$3 members and children 12 & under

Go to www.sohs.org to reserve a tour time

Roasted chestnuts, warm drinks & cookies

Snow (Continued from page 2)

country at 40 miles an hour. Between 1970 and 1973 two million such vehicles were sold in the United States. New forms of recreation and the clamor for access by snowmobile clubs quickly emerged. In 1976 snowmobiling at Crater Lake was limited to an 8-mile stretch along the park's north highway, the beginning of today's 300 miles of groomed trails.

Interest in Nordic cross-country skiing also increased. By 1983 an estimated 18,000 cross-country skiers were visiting Crater Lake each year. Despite closures due to uneven snowfalls, Mt. Ashland's popularity also grew. In 1998-1999, 142,000 ski visits were recorded. Elsewhere in the region snow-parks were developed at Great Meadows near Lake of the Woods, and at Diamond Lake. The advent of snowboards, the introduction of large-tired snow bikes, and wilderness snowshoeing enhanced the region's reputation as a winter destination.

Today, winter sports, aided by newer technologies and improved features, are an important part of the Southern Oregon identity. Our love affair with "fun in the snow" reflects a far different world than that of our ancestors.



The origin of the name "Siskiyou" has puzzled many residents over the years. It is one of the oldest existing place-names in our region.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Wintertime events have given several local landmarks their names. The word "Siskiyou" – which denotes the rugged mountains located south of the Bear Creek Valley – resulted from Alexander Roderick McLeod's disastrous beaver-trapping expedition through our area in the winter of 1829. Among his trappers were native Cree people from what is now Manitoba, Canada. When the party encountered blizzard-like weather near Mt. Shasta, they retreated north. Crossing the high pass, they named it "Siskiyou" ("bob-tailed horse" in the Cree language) after a horse of that name that had perished on the pass. Later, the name was applied to the entire mountain range.

During an 1870 winter, one foolhardy gold miner, a German by the name of Hensley, took a fateful risk by heading north over the Siskiyou crest to reach Jacksonville. Overtaken by a severe storm, Hensley never made it. His body was later found near one of the highest peaks in the Siskiyou Range that still bears the name Dutchman's Peak (a corruption of *Deutsch*, the German word for German).

A happier winter inspired the naming of Snowshoe Butte near the town of Butte Falls. During the winter of 1910-1911, a team of Forest Service rangers on snowshoes engaged in an experimental winter-time tree-seeding operation. Their endeavor had little success, but the name Snowshoe Butte remains.

Glenn Jackson: Mr. Oregon



SOHS #43689

Glenn Jackson was much more than a major stockholder and booster of the Ashland Ski Resort. From the White City industrial park to the Interstate highway system, he helped build the Rogue Valley. He became so influential, trusted and well liked, that he was nicknamed "Mr. Oregon."

Born in 1902 in Albany, Oregon, Jackson began work in Medford as salesman for the California-Oregon Power Company (COPCO), becoming chairman of the board in 1965. He inherited the Albany *Democrat Herald* in 1959 and built it into a chain of nine newspapers, including the Ashland *Daily Tidings*. His most important role may have been as head of the Oregon Transportation Commission, overseeing development of I-5, including hundreds of bridges and state parks.

A quiet pipe-smoking man, Jackson worked tirelessly to balance development with environmental protection, helping to pass the law protecting public access to Oregon's coast and beaches, insisting, "We must not sell out our heritage."



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: A RESILIENT SOCIETY

SOHS has much to be thankful for this holiday season. We are very much alive...and we've reinvented our organization! We've tapped our pioneer spirit of self-reliance and pooled talents, time, and energy. We've stepped up our volunteer efforts and transitioned to a hands-on working board. We're resilient and we're viable—just look at some of our 2017 accomplishments!

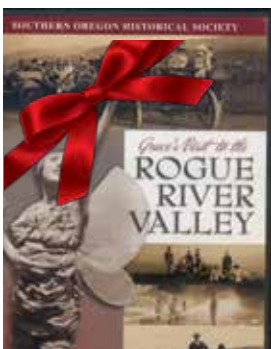
1. *We've hosted seven major public events at Hanley Farm, staffed by 70+ volunteers, that attracted over 4,000 visitors.*
2. *We've undertaken major capital improvements to the Farm's infrastructure, allowing us to build on current programs and activities and expand both public and private offerings.*
3. *We've conducted a successful membership recruitment program. As of November 1, we have 664 members, an 8.8 percent increase over last year.*
4. *We have reopened the SOHS Research Library and Archives for three days each week with a skilled archivist and volunteer staff.*
5. *We've continued our partnerships with Jefferson Public Radio and Jackson County Library Services for our popular "As It Was" stories and "Windows in Time" series.*
6. *We've cared for the artifacts in our collection, sharing them through the Research Library, Hanley Farm, and the Beekman House and Bank. We've invested in our educational assets with our 1946 Fire Engine Rehabilitation Project.*
7. *And we've finished 2017 with a balanced budget, financially in the "black."*

This is just a short list with more exciting things in the works. In the meantime, join me in celebrating the year and how far SOHS has come! With your help, we'll continue to make "history come alive" in Southern Oregon.

With gratitude,

Doug McGeary
President
SOHS Board of Trustees

SOHS Membership: A Gift That Keeps On Giving!



Have you considered giving a one-year membership as a Holiday Gift! In addition to supporting the Society, your gift entitles friends and families to discounts on tickets and merchandise; a subscription to the SOHS Quarterly; and notifications of upcoming events. As a bonus, new members will receive the full-length DVD promotional movie, "Grace's Visit to the Rogue River Valley," featured at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition held in San Francisco in 1915.

To enroll go to the SOHS website at
<http://www.sohs.org/membership>

FY 2017 FINANCIAL SUMMARY*

REVENUES

In 2017 the Society significantly reduced its staffing and operational costs. It also began paying the monthly interest on its long-term debt, and negotiated an updated contract with the excellent Kid Time Children's Museum which leases a major part of our History Center building in Medford.

Volunteers will have raised over \$20,000 through public events: the Heritage Plant Sale; Children's Heritage Fair; Living History Days; our first annual Hanley Music Festival; our Scarecrow Festival; Haunted Field Drama; the Wreath Making Workshop, and the upcoming Holidays at Hanley House Tours.

Significant increases in Hanley Farm revenues occurred from facility rental of this popular wedding and meeting site.

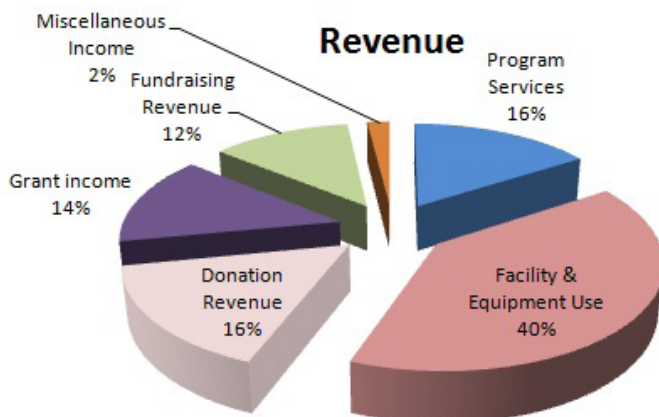
Despite the serious cutback in staffing, membership revenue grew, and public program earnings were maintained and slightly increased.

Membership continues to expand, and gifts and grants have increased in support of our mission.



Volunteers assemble construction kits for the popular October Scarecrow Festival. Increased reliance on member support has allowed the Society to offer a broad range of public programs.

[2017 Ending Fund Projections]



REVENUE

Program Services	38,668
Facility & Equipment Use	97,076
Donation Revenue	39,289
Grant income	33,925
Fundraising Revenue	29,571
Miscellaneous Income	4,790
	<u>243,319</u>

* The FY 2017 Financial Summary is taken from the *Southern Oregon Historical Society Strategic Plan For 2018 and Beyond* adopted by the SOHS Board of Trustees on November 28, 2017.



Wreath Making Day at Hanley: hands-on, family-friendly events brought over 4000 visitors to our historic farm this past year.

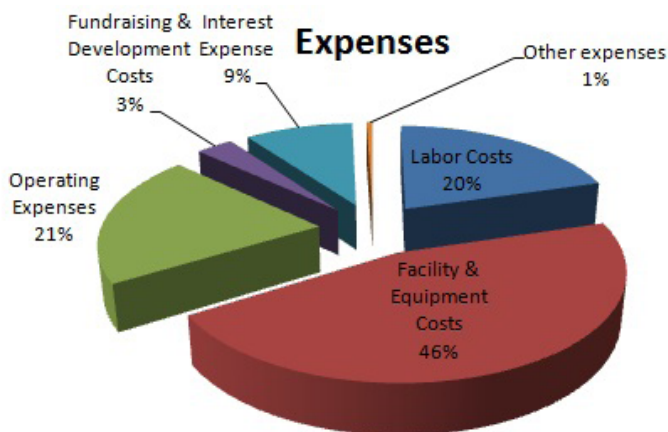
EXPENDITURES:

This past year major capital investments were made at Hanley Farm with renovations and additions to facilities. They include expanded capacity of the septic system and upgrades to the water system. In addition, the society funded a major long-term facilities' assessment at Hanley and prepared a 10- year farm master plan which will be the basis for an updated county land use permit filed in early 2018.

These capital improvements, funded by \$20,000 of operating surpluses and \$8200 from reserves (shown in accompanying graph as negative "net income") will lead to increased future earnings.

SOHS continued to invest in a small part-time staff that has enabled our dedicated volunteer base to properly maintain collections, continue a full range of public service and fund-raising programs. Other activities such as the popular *As It Was* public radio program, and the monthly *Windows in Time* lectures were offered to the community at no cost. All of these programs will

[2017 Ending Fund Projections]



EXPENSES	
Labor Costs	51,401
Facility & Equipment Costs	115,136
Operating Expenses	51,770
Fundraising & Development Costs	8,083
Interest Expense	23,801
Other expenses	1,344
	<hr/> 251,535
TOTAL REVENUE	243,319
TOTAL EXPENSES	251,535
NET INCOME	<hr/> -8,216

2018 AND BEYOND

The 2018 budget projects further improvements in our overall fiscal situation along with an increase in ending-fund balances. Continued capital improvements, technology and facilities investments are anticipated. The society's financial posture will be further strengthened by several partnerships now underway regarding research library services, our ability to mount public exhibits, the agriculture program at Hanley Farm, and a debt-reduction plan.



SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS: THE SOHS GOLD DIGGERS' GUILD

"The Gold Diggers are worth their weight in gold," SOHS President Doug McGearry said in a recent interview, adding, "The Society would not be the same without them."

Working in close collaboration with SOHS, the Gold Diggers, who celebrated the completion of their 40th year of service this April, have a remarkable history.

The guild began in 1977 when 84-year-old Mary Hanley recognized that more volunteers were needed to serve the Jacksonville Historical Museum and the Beekman House. By July of that year, her ten-member fledgling group had expanded to over 40. The Gold Diggers defined itself as an organization "civic and social in nature, [that] shall serve to enhance the programs of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, whose members participate and give willingly of their time, resources and knowledge."

From the beginning, fund-raising was a major purpose. In the guild's first two years of existence it staged a costume fashion show, held dinner and dance socials, sponsored a garage sale in a warehouse owned by one of its members, and held garage sales at the Medford Center and the National Guard Armory. Thus

began four decades of service in which the Gold Diggers have raised \$256,000 to assist with Society projects.

Today they do much more. Gold Diggers maintain the SOHS membership office, prepare society mailings, and serve on committees. They are among the first to answer requests for volunteers at our public events. The 32 active members also maintain ties with 27 "sustainers," elderly members who continue to pay dues, get notices and come to meetings when they wish. "And we make sure that we have a program at every monthly meeting that tells about the history of Southern Oregon," former

president Nancy Hamlin notes.

The Gold Diggers also enjoy themselves! Each year the members celebrate a gala holiday party in December and a Founders' Day event in spring.

As they have done for the past 40 years, Gold Diggers continues to be a mainstay of the Society. This year they have contributed over 2000 hours of service to the Society. "The quality of the programs we offer to the community," says SOHS President Doug McGearry, "is owed to these remarkable women."

To learn about becoming a SOHS Gold Digger contact President Barbara Moore at [<moorebarbara994@gmail.com>](mailto:moorebarbara994@gmail.com)



Gold Digger ladies hosted the Opening Reception for the Chinese Exhibit in 2016 — Pam Lumley, Linda Basgen, Liz Smith, Kitty Meyer, Nancy Hamlin.



Windows In Time

Windows in Time talks are offered to the public free of charge at the Medford Library and Ashland Library on 1st and 2nd Wednesdays from noon to 1pm.

January 3 & 10 — *Getting Oregon Out of the Mud* — Ron Brown

February 7 & 14 — *When Timber Was King: The Rise and Decline of the*

Southern Oregon Timber Industry — Jeff LaLande

March 7 & 14 — *Heritage Ranch History: The Charley Brothers* — Patsy Edwards

April 4 & 11 — *Goldmines to Woodland Trails: Protecting Historic Jacksonville's Natural Heritage* — Larry Smith

May 2 & 9 — *The Civil War (With Its Effects) Comes to Southern Oregon* — Paul Christy

June 6 & 13 — *Lost Beneath the Waters: Lost Creek Lake Villages* — Dennis Ellingson

For the full year-long schedule go to our website at sohs.org

THE GOLDEN AGE OF CHRISTMAS CARDS

by Sharon Bywater

The tradition of sending Christmas cards is closely tied to the expansion and democratization of the postal system. In Victorian England the first adhesive postage stamp was created in 1840, allowing anyone to send a card or letter for only a penny. It was known as the “penny post.” However, cards were still expensive to produce and were not yet available commercially. It was a wealthy British businessman, Sir Henry Cole, who is credited with sending the first Christmas card in England in 1843.

With the help of artist John Horsley, Cole’s Christmas card featured a family enjoying Christmas dinner with side panels showing the poor receiving gifts of food. It was printed on cardboard with the simple greeting, “A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year to You.” Cole sent the card to his friends, and the idea soon became popular among the English upper class. Christmas cards didn’t become widely available to the public for thirty more years, when printers began making them commercially in Britain, Europe, and the United States.

Louis Prang, a Prussian immigrant with a print shop near Boston, is credited with creating the first Christmas card originating in the United States in 1875. Unlike Cole and Horsley’s card of 30 years earlier, it did not contain a Christmas or holiday image. The card was a painting of a flower, and it read simply, “Merry Christmas.” By the 1890s, Americans enthusiastically sent and collected postcards of all kinds, including Christmas postcards. 1902-1918 was known as “The Golden Age of

Postcards.” Christmas postcards featured a variety of holiday and winter scenes, often with animals. WWI slowed down the postcard fad, since till that time most cards were printed in Germany.

U.S. printing companies soon took up the slack. The ubiquitous Hallmark card got started when Joyce Clyde Hall, who ran a family store in Nebraska, began selling postcards of all types, taking advantage of the postcard craze. In 1915, John and two brothers created Hallmark cards, selling Christmas cards in envelopes and advertising in national magazines. According to the Hallmark website, Americans now send over a billion Christmas cards annually.

Once Christmas cards caught on, they became part of our holiday tradition, expanding to include Christmas, as well as Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and the Winter Solstice.



A pensive Santa stands by as two young girls remove gifts from his sack. Often American printers overprinted English greetings on cards made for the German market.



Well-dressed children on horseback evoked images of the life of upper class British gentry, a prominent motif in turn-of-the-century Christmas card art.



Between 1890 and 1914, most Christmas cards used in the United States were printed in Germany because of cheaper production costs. The idyllic village in the distance has a particularly Old Country look.



In the Middle Ages, holly and ivy were thought to symbolize Christ and the Virgin. By 1900 the this religious meaning had taken on a secular identify.



In the 1890s roast ham was the standard Christmas meal in the U.S. and piglets frequently appeared on Christmas cards

The popularity of greeting cards in the early 20th century is attributed to the mobility of Americans that often made it difficult for families to be together for holiday celebrations.





Junior Volunteer Margaret Turso shows off handiwork made for last year's Hanley Farm Wreath Making Workshop. Carl Turso Photo.



CURRENT RESIDENT OR

From the SOHS Research Library

DISCOVERING HISTORY IN THE ARCHIVES

By Pat Harper

Volunteers in the SOHS Archives are rewarded for their diligence and curiosity when they find unique photos, forgotten journals and unusual ephemera. For example, the Pinto Colvig archives include not only manuscripts and drawings, but also his original music and lyrics for "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf." The photo collection yields photos of people, schools, churches, and even entire towns that have disappeared.

Fortunately, finding the treasures and information in the SOHS

Archives does not depend solely on serendipity. Thanks to years of careful cataloging, organization and indexing, materials in the Archives can be found when needed.

The sohs.org website now includes indexing to over 65,000 photos and 992 films. The Mega Index includes 66,819 references to the library's files, documents, books, maps, etc. The website also has biographies of prominent people, the

Eugene Bennett Archives, the Frank Clark Inventory, the Century Farms list, and more.

The website gives initial access points for many archival sources, but certainly not all of them. Sometimes answers are found only because the volunteers know local history so well, and know areas of the collection. Every day brings opportunities to learn more!

Printed music sheet of the song "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf" with Pinto Colvig's hand written notations."

SOHS MS804

