

# THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY



MAKING HISTORY TOGETHER

## WHEN THINGS WENT BUMP IN THE NIGHT: ROGUE VALLEY HALLOWEENS

By Ben Truwe

Halloween is the chameleon of holidays. Unfettered by Christian tradition, its observance has shifted over the years from quietly communing with the spirits around the hearth, to raucous pranks and shenanigans, to ritual door-to-door extortion. Though it's thought that Halloween came to America with Irish immigrants in the 1840s, there's little contemporary evidence to support the assumption. In those early years the holiday was exclusively observed—if it was observed at all—quietly at home by children, who performed various divination practices to determine prospects for marriage or wealth.

This changed sometime in the 1870s when some unknown child genius decided to mystify his neighborhood by fabricating evidence of the spirits thought to be roaming the earth on the night before All Saints' Day. These first mysterious evidences soon evolved into ever more elaborate pranks. It's in this form that Halloween is first recorded in the Rogue Valley in 1881.

That year, a Jacksonville "sheet-and-pillowcase party" (a common type of masquerade party) was given new twists by those who must have learned of the pranks being committed elsewhere in America. Sheets mysteriously disappeared from clotheslines before the party, which was scheduled for October 21 of that year—ten days before Halloween. The Oregon Sentinel reported that on the

night of the 20th "there was a general transmigration of terrestrial things all over our usually quiet and orderly town. Objects inanimate seemed to have possessed themselves of the power of locomotion and changed places, as it were. . . . Order-loving citizens with wheelbarrow and hammer set

about to replace and repair." (1)

And such was Halloween for the next fifty years. The *Ashland Tidings* reported that Halloween in 1884 "passed

(Continued on page 2)

Masthead: Josephine Plymale, Jackson County feminist and suffragette, featured on page 4.



Darkwing Manor & Morguetorium Museum

The From the late 1890s to 1918 thousands of Halloween postcard designs were produced many highlighting night-time pranksters.



SOHS#28625

*Ashland school boys in the early 1920s. Such fertile minds inspired Halloween outrages barely imaginable in later decades.*

### A NIGHT OF MISCHIEF

"I guess almost every town in the U.S. had about the same Hallo'een routine that we had. First the little tykes who'd 'tic tac' windows and had to be home before dark. Then the teenagers who would mostly push over woodpiles, backhouses and steal gates – open barn doors and let horses and cows loose to roam the streets. Always a cow locked in principal's office at school (and next a.m., what a mess!). Then the saloon gang would take over: take somebody's big farm wagon apart – hoist it to the top of U.S. Hotel and put it together again. One time they sawed off the big wood sign that read "United States Hotel." A few years previous was when Bum Noober and Marshal Bill Kenny exploded the big brass cannon which blasted out every window along Main Street, including the United States Hotel. Hallo'een morning when Frenchy Deerbaum, the owner, saw the huge sign on the sidewalk. He went nuts and shouted: "Sacre bleu: first they BLOW me UP, then they SAW me DOWN!"

*Pinto Colvig, SOHS Manuscript #9*

"In Medford last night . . . the open-air merry makers were busy . . . soaping windows, pounding doors, ringing door bells, rearranging lawn furniture, making snoots at the curfew law, moving portable articles from one neighborhood to another and generally disturbing the peace and quiet of the elderly folks basking by their warm firesides, who accepted the situation with humorous grace, remembering that they were once young themselves.

"Very little damage was done beyond causing much inconvenience, according to police reports . . . . Many piles of winter wood at homes and other places had their braces pulled away during the celebration, causing the wood to topple over. One high woodpile at Washington School was given this treatment. A number of sections of board walks and the like were carried from one neighborhood to another, along with the other usual Halloween pranks of that nature.

"But the youth of the city heeded the warning issued by the police and let the street lights alone last night."

*Medford Mail Tribune, November 1, 1922*

### Halloween (Continued from page 1)

entirely unobserved in Ashland"(2), but by 1888 the chaos was general. In Ashland in 1890 "scarcely a movable gate in the town was left upon its hinges, and signs and other movable objects were mixed up in the old-fashioned way."(3) That year also saw the beginning of pushback from more sober residents:

"The harmless pranks usually played on that occasion can be readily overlooked in honor of ancient custom, but when harness is removed from teams and women and children are compelled to stand shivering in the night air for hours while the hapless owners are searching for it, and when gates are wrenched from their hinges and pickets torn from the fences of non-residents, it savors too much of cruelty to be tolerated. Don't let this occur again, boys, or the Times will be after you with a hot stick, as well as the authorities."(4)

It did occur again, of course. Celebrated pranks included building a fence around the Eagle Point post office in 1894(5), assembling Mrs. Kubli's buggy on the roof of Otto Biede's saloon in Jacksonville in 1898(6), replacing the U.S. flag in front of the Gold Hill School

*(Continued on page 2)*



*Spirit Lake Beacon, Oct 29, 1931*

*As this 1930's cartoon fondly recalls, old-fashioned halloweens were nights to remember.*



## Halloween (Continued from page 2)

with a skull-and-crossbones flag in 1900(7), and the delivery of a threshing machine and “a self-binder, a hay rake, twelve or thirteen wagons, buggies, water tanks, etc.” to the middle of Pine Street in Central Point in 1908(8). The last gasp of the elaborate pranks was the shifting of Medford’s one-ton WWI German cannon from the city park to the steps of the library in 1928(9).

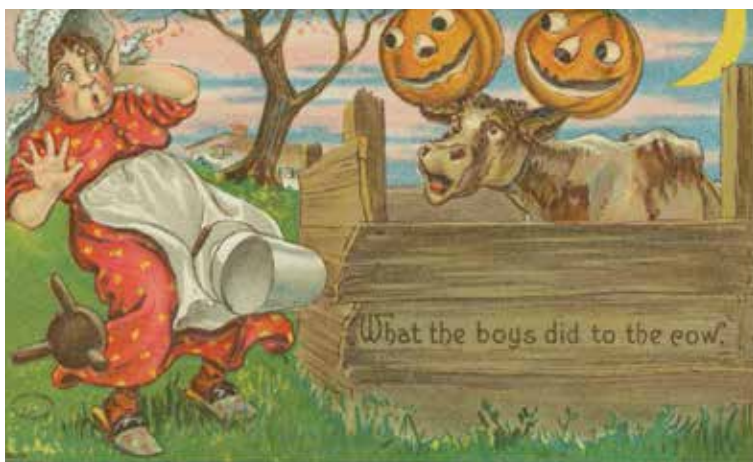
By this time adult pushback had led to countermeasures beyond the police patrols and shotguns loaded with rock salt employed earlier in the century. The most effective tactic was found to be flooding neighborhoods with Halloween parties—with their irresistible treats—hosted by residents, schools and churches. Depression-era children quickly learned to crash these parties with what many adults decried as “extortion” or “gangsterism,” gradually announcing their forays with the phrase “trick or treat” instead of “gimme a handout.” By the early 1950s trick-or-treating had become general throughout the United States and pranking had been forgotten in many areas, a victim of the economic pressures of the Depression and patriotic pressures of World War II.(10)

Future decades would see Halloween challenged by urban legends of poisoned candy, booby-trapped fruit and predatory strangers, only to be reborn as a holiday for adult parties. What the future holds for this chameleon of holidays, only time will tell.

### SOURCES:

- (1) *Oregon Sentinel*, October 22, 1881
- (2) *Ashland Tidings*, November 7, 1884
- (3) *Ashland Tidings*, November 7, 1890
- (4) *Democratic Times*, November 7, 1890
- (5) *Medford Mail*, November 9, 1894
- (6) *Democratic Times*, November 3, 1898; *Medford Mail*, November 4, 1898
- (7) *Medford Mail*, February 16, 1900
- (8) *Central Point Herald*, November 5, 1908
- (9) *Medford Mail Tribune*, November 1, 1928. The howitzer later fell victim to the 1942 WWII scrap drive.
- (10) Ben Truwe, *The Halloween Catalog Collection* (Talky Tina Press, 2003), pages xvi-xviii.

Also see: <http://truwe.sohs.org/files/rvhalloweens.html>



New York Public Library Digital Collections

*The humor of Halloween greeting cards was often at odds with the feelings of distraught citizens caused by property damage.*



Presents the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Hanley Farm

# SCARECROW FESTIVAL

October 6 and 7, 11am-4pm

Free Admission!



Alice Mullaly Photo

**Make a Scarecrow**  
(kit costs \$15 or \$10 for members)  
**Scarecrow Contest**  
**Food, games, crafts**  
**Hayrides**  
**House Tours (\$5)**

*Hanley Farm is at 1053 Hanley Road between Central Point and Jacksonville.*

# JOSEPHINE MARTIN PLYMALE—FEMINIST AND SUFFRAGETTE

By Carolyn Kingsnorth

Where many states seem to be making voting more difficult, Oregon keeps making it easier. But even with the removal of voting impediments, one-third of eligible Oregon voters do not vote in general elections; half to two-thirds don't vote in primaries.

Josephine Martin Plymale would be appalled! She was active in the hard-fought battle that women and minorities have waged to participate in determining the future of our country.

Born in Missouri in 1845, Josephine was in many ways a product of her time. She crossed the Oregon Trail with her family in a covered wagon, came to Jacksonville at age 17 as a teacher, and a year later married William Plymale. She was first and foremost a wife and a mother. And she was no stranger to the hardships that most pioneers faced, losing a son to one of the many epidemics and losing her home in one of Jacksonville's many fires.

However, Josephine also defied the standards of her day. She was a women's suffrage activist, a temperance activist, a newspaper writer and journalist, a noted speech giver, a candidate for political office, an orchardist, a farmer's advocate, a member of various civic organiza-



SOHS #20567

*Josephine Plymale about 1870*

tions, and interim Jacksonville town clerk.

Perhaps Josephine's interest in politics was inevitable. She was born into and married into families that were heavily involved in Oregon politics. But many of her views were shaped by experience. As a teacher, she was charged with educating Oregon's youth, but only half were allowed to determine their future. She could give birth to 12 children but have no say about the country in

which they lived.

As Jacksonville correspondent for the Ashland Daily Tidings and the Oregonian, she used her journalist's platform to promote her political opinions. She became vice president of the Oregon Press Association and a member of the National Press Association. Raised on farms, Josephine was a lifelong advocate of farmers and agriculture and a frequent speaker at regional Granges and agricultural societies. She was vice president of the Oregon State Women Suffrage Association and described as "one of the most active workers in the women suffrage field . . . anywhere."

In 1892 Josephine officially filed for the position of Jackson County Recorder, but her name never appeared on the ballot. Not to be denied a role in politics, she obtained the position of committee clerk for the Oregon State Legislature and two years later clerked for the senate chamber. Josephine took her two youngest daughters with her to Salem to give them a taste of politics and to learn how laws were made.

Josephine died in 1899 at the age of 54. She never realized her political ambitions or the right to vote. But her daughters did. Oregon finally gave women the right to vote in 1912—eight years before the United States afforded them that privilege.



## Windows In Time

Windows in Time talks are free monthly lectures held at the Medford Library and Ashland Library on the 1st and 2nd Wednesdays from noon to 1pm.

September 5 & 12—*Stories of Southern Oregon: Landscape Changed*—Maureen Battistella

October 3 & 10 — *What to Do? The 1918 Killer Flu Hits Southern Oregon* — Joe Peterson

November 7 & 14 — *Oregon Outcast, John Beeson: Indian Rights Activist* — Jan Wright

December 5 & 12 — *Cameras, Compass, Castle and Vine: The Legacy of Peter Britt* — Stephanie Butler



# TALES OF THE CITY: MEDFORD'S LIBERTY PARK DISTRICT

By Alice Mullaly

*The half-mile-long Liberty Park or Beatty-Manzanita neighborhood of Medford, tucked between North Riverside and Court/North Central Avenues, retains its character as a working-class community more than 100 years after its founding. Its story casts an interesting light on Medford in its heyday of expansion.*

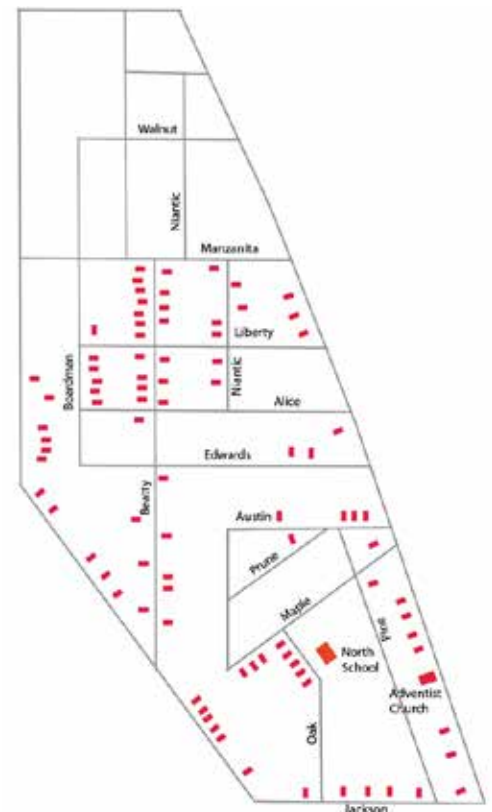
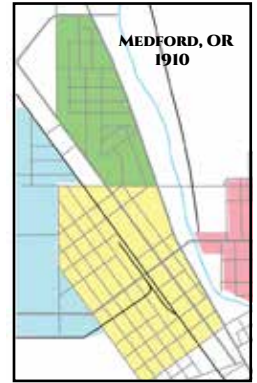
Before 1900 the scrub brush-covered area was described as the best rabbit hunting wasteland in the valley. Its growth began when the Medford school district built a new elementary school (North School) in 1906 in a field two blocks north of Jackson Street. A 1911 Sanborn Insurance Company map shows this modern school had 110 electric light fixtures.

An acute housing crisis was created when a huge influx of new people came to the Rogue Valley during the orchard boom of the

early 1900s. New areas on all sides of Medford were annexed into the city to handle the quadrupling of the city's population in a decade. These included the Beatty and Kendall additions north of North School, which formed the nucleus of today's Liberty Park community. The 1910 census shows the subdivisions with single-family homes, about one third of them rentals. Many of the men worked as carpenters, painters, plumbers, and masons. These are the people that built many of Medford's new homes during this period. Others worked as farm and mill workers. The families generally were not large, but there were often three generations in the same house. If they had an extra room, people often took in boarders.

From the 1910 census we get a snapshot of some of the first residents of the neighborhood. For example, George Karos, a Greek food cart owner, lived at 1116 Niantic Street. Lottie Vincent, one of several widows, was a laundress raising five children

*(Right) Medford in 1910 was building new homes on all sides. North-Medford/Liberty Park District is shown in green, with original 1883 town plat in yellow.*



*(Above) By 1910 the North Medford additions had begun to sprout small homes, some of which remain today.*



SOHS #8111

*Medford's newest school was built in 1906 north of Jackson Street on open land north of the city's center. For the next half century it remained the Liberty Park area's social center.*

at 305 Liberty Street. Eugene and Cara Amann owned their home at 1017 Riverside, and Frank Davis boarded with them. Amann and Davis were house carpenters. These properties have all been replaced with multi-family dwellings or commercial buildings.

Today a surprising number of small homes in the Liberty Park neigh-

*(Continued on page 6)*

**Liberty Park** (Continued from page 5)

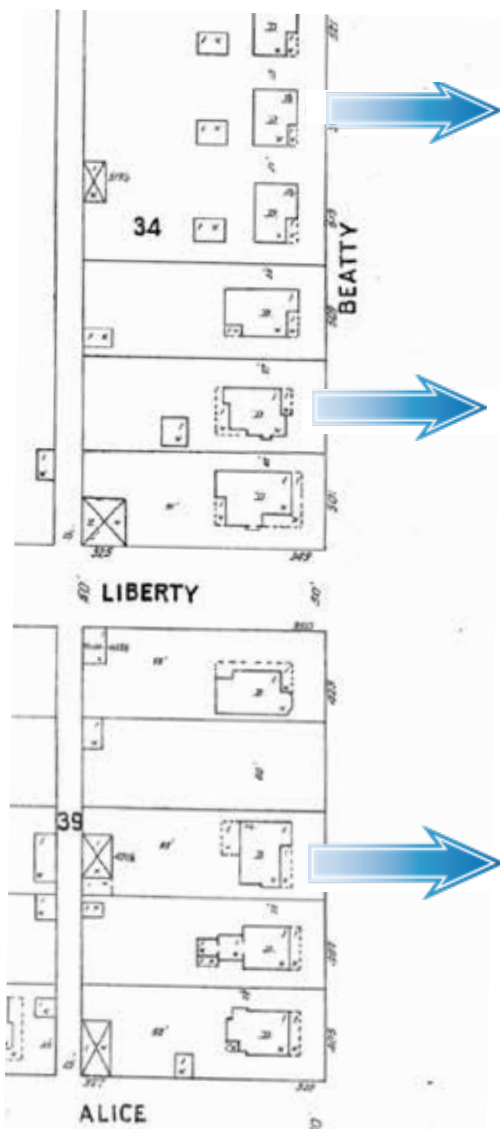
neighborhood retain their original footprint and appearance. Their first residents included widower George Stacey, who lived with his four children, housekeeper, and her two children in the house at 402 Boardman Street. He was an automobile salesman. After all, Medford at the time had more automobiles per capita than any other city in America.

On Beatty Street near its intersection with Liberty, Willet Wilson, Newton Tinker and Walter Van Scoyoc lived a few houses from each other.

They had all come to Oregon a short time before, drawn in by the promise of a booming economy. Wilson, at 411 Beatty, was a janitor at the school and owned his house, but had a mortgage. His wife and two sons lived with him. Newton Tinker owned and probably had built his home at 505 Beatty, since he was a house carpenter. He, his wife and one daughter are the only ones of the three families that still lived in the neighborhood in 1920. Van Scoyoc was a dentist with his own office. He rented his home, as did many others.

The rapid growth that marked the district's early history slowed with the bursting of the local real estate bubble in 1912. For the next decade, a fair amount of vacant land remained in the Liberty Park neighborhood, especially along the edges. It remained a working-class community, with many residents staying only a brief time. By 1920 few of those who had lived there in 1910 remained. Medford had installed water and sewer lines and paved some streets early on, but 1923 newspapers showed long lists of

*(Continued on page 7)*



*517 North Beatty Street. Architectural features suggest that the house dates to the late 1800s. It was brought within Medford City limits until this area was annexed about 1906. In 1910 the home was rented by Medford dentist, Walter Van Scoyoc.*



*In 1910, this modest, but well-maintained home at 505 Beatty Street was owned (and probably built) by Newton Tinker, a carpenter, who lived here with his wife and daughter. In 1920 they were among the few original residents still living in the district.*



SOHS Photos

*In 1910, school janitor Willet Wilson, lived here at 421 North Beatty with his wife, and two sons. The structure at the back of the lot marked with an "x" was originally meant to be a stable.*

*(Above left) Comparing Beatty Street homes of today with the detailed footprints of the 1911 Sanford Insurance Maps found in the SOHS Library allows us to date these structures with reasonable accuracy.*



### *Liberty Park (Continued from page 6)*

people who still owed on their utility assessments.

The Liberty Park neighborhood was not intended to be working class. A 1910 real estate ad in the Medford Mail Tribune praised the area's open vistas for their "excellent views of the valley and mountains," noting that it was "only a fifteen-minute walk" from the downtown post office. At a time when a tent city sprang up in Medford to handle the influx of newcomers, the ad promised that "No shacks will be allowed; persons who buy lots will build substantial houses." The reality was less idyllic. Most of the city's wealthier families built their homes elsewhere. The smaller homes of the Liberty Park area attracted those with lower incomes, and many of the homes were rentals where people did not stay long.

As the automobile came into common use, parts of the district assumed a commercial nature. The streets which bounded the area had become transportation corridors: Jackson Street on the south; Riverside Avenue, which was the Pacific Highway, on the east; McAndrews Road on the north; Court Street and Central Avenue on the west. The houses that had been on Central and Riverside avenues soon made way for auto courts, restaurants, and car lots—not too different from what surrounds the residential area today.

There were some changes over the years. The vacant lots were replaced with modest new houses and apartment buildings. North School became Lincoln School, then closed in the 1960s. After a time, this lovely building became the Cornerstone Christian Fellowship, and is an anchor in the neighborhood. A bowling alley on Riverside was transformed into Kids Unlimited, which now includes a charter school that has become a focal point of the community. The Salvation Army serves people in the neighborhood as well as the community at large. Ironically, the area known as Liberty Park and the

home of countless children over the years possessed neither a public park nor playground until 2014.

As a 1900s working-class neighborhood, the Liberty Park District played an important, if unheralded, role in the development of Medford. It is particularly remarkable that so many of the district's first-generation homes remain intact. If only they could talk, what stories they could tell!

#### SOURCES:

*Many of the details of this account were taken from the US Census re-*

*cords of 1910 and 1920. This information identifies each house by number, and details age, occupation, and place of birth of each resident. Supporting this information is the SOHS collection of Sanborn Insurance maps of 1907, 1911, and 1927. These show the footprint of each house and yard, indicate whether structures are of stone or wood, and other details. A final and indispensable source that is easily searchable is the Medford history website (<http://truwe.sohs.org/files/>) of SOHS member Ben Truwe that gathers vast amounts of data from local newspapers of this period.*



Southern Oregon Historical Society &  
Crater Renaissance Academy proudly present

## The Mystery of the Lady in Black: A Haunted Field Walk

A strange lady haunts historic Hanley Farm and all the neighbors are astir. Take a guided tour by lantern light to experience what happens to those who venture into the cornfields and woods to learn her deep, dark secret.

A family-friendly event that's suitable for children age five and older, accompanied by an adult.

## A Haunting Adventure by the Light of the Moon

Sunday, Oct. 14th  
Saturday, Oct. 20th  
Sunday, Oct. 21st

Gates open at 6pm  
Performance begins at 7pm  
and continues through 9pm

Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$5 for children and SOHS members.  
Refreshments are available for purchase.

## “WHAT’S IN A NAME?”

By Jeff LaLande

Every two years, in those years that end in even numbers, fall is “election season.” Any careful review of Southern Oregon’s political history will show that we have had a lively political tradition throughout the decades. Ever since our region was first settled by American voters in the early 1850s, “conservative” rural sentiments—occasionally punctuated by angry populist insurgencies—have usually predominated.

During the 1850s and for many years thereafter, most Southern Oregonians were staunch Democrats. However, as anyone familiar with basic American history well knows, this was during a time when the Democratic Party was America’s conservative party, typically standing for states’ rights, small government, White supremacy, and defense of the “private-property rights” of Southern slave owners. (Whigs and their successors, Republicans, were the reform-minded, “forward-thinking” voters of those days, usually promoting a strong central government, federal spending, public education, and so forth.) In

fact, throughout all Oregon during the 1850s, most voters held tight allegiance to the Democratic Party.

Today, that early hold of the then-conservative Democratic Party on the Southern Oregon region is told by county names that date to the 1850s.

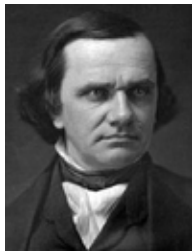
Jackson County was named for “Old Hickory”: President Andrew Jackson, slave owner, “Indian fighter,” and many Western settlers’ hero.

Douglas County honored Illinois senator (and unsuccessful 1860 presidential candidate) Stephen A. Douglas, whose “popular sovereignty” policy would have aided the spread of slavery into Western territories; the resulting raging controversy over Douglas’s policy thereby helped push the nation closer to civil war.

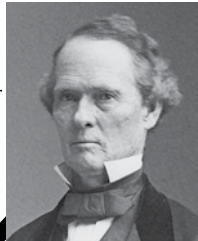
Curry County was named for Oregon’s 1850s Democratic territorial governor George Curry. Curry actively supported Southern Oregon’s White militias in their relentless war against the Native people of the Rogue Valley; during the Civil War, ex-governor Curry’s pro-Confederate newspaper in Portland was suppressed for its disloyalty to the Union.

To the north, Lane County honored Oregon’s very first territorial governor Joseph Lane. Lane, very popular with Southern Oregonians, subsequently was elected as one of the new state’s first two U.S. senators. Lane, an outspoken supporter of the South, later ran as the vice-presidential running mate of John Breckinridge of Southern-sympathizing Democrats’ pro-slavery ticket in 1860. The Breckinridge-Lane ticket won easily in Southern Oregon’s counties in that year’s election.

It was only during and after the Civil War that many Oregonians to the north of us began their shift to the ranks of the G.O.P. The naming of Lincoln County, Oregon, was one telling, if comparatively minor, result of that political transformation. Southern Oregon, however, remained a stronghold of the then still-conservative Democratic Party until the 1890s.



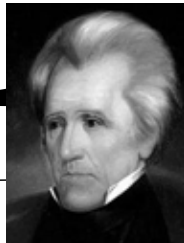
Stephen A. Douglas  
US Senator, Illinois  
1847-1861



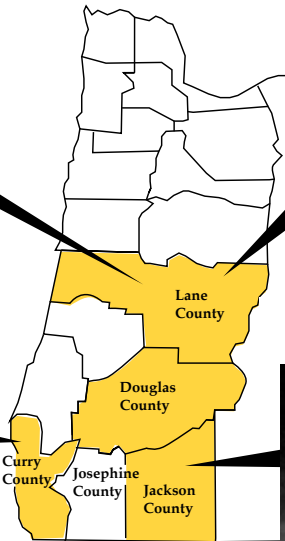
Joseph Lane: Territorial  
Governor 1853; US  
Senator 1859-1861



George L. Curry  
Oregon Territorial  
Governor 1853-1859



Andrew Jackson  
US President  
1829-1837



*Oregon Counties in 1860: politics played a large part in the naming the state’s southern counties.*

### SOCIETY HAPPENINGS:

Our renovated 1946 Ashland Amphibious Fire Engine was awarded first place in the Vehicles category in that city’s July 4th parade.

SOHS Photo





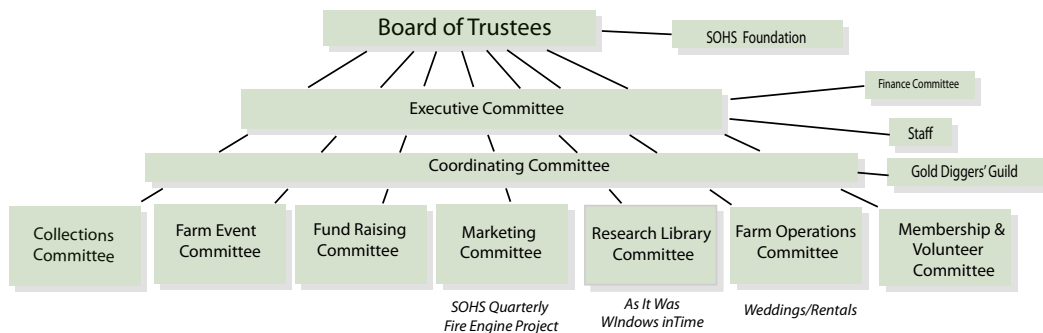


## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: OUR VOLUNTEERS SPEAK VOLUMES

When asked what value history brings to our community, many respond that history provides stories about who we are and why we do what we do. Respondees may not realize, however, that it's volunteers who make it possible to share the stories that define both our past and our future.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society owes its existence to volunteers. From its origins, families such as the Hanleys and the Billings volunteered their energies to save our past. They envisioned and helped create an organization that would treasure the stories that were important to them. Because of their timelessness, these stories will also be important for generations to come.

Today most activities of the Society are in the hands of volunteers, working in various committees. Each group shown in the chart below meets monthly, has a board-assigned function and helps preserve and share the story of our heritage.



Management by committee can be challenging, but it also allows us to capture a broader landscape of interests, ideas, and talents than would otherwise be possible. The fruits of this work are evident in the wonderful programs and services the Society now provides.

As a Society member there is a place for you in this picture. Have you always wanted to have your own business? How about assisting in the membership office or the Hanley Farm mercantile store? Had dreams of being a writer? How about creating "As It Was" scripts? Love gardening or have a green thumb? We have lots of dirt and acres of gardens at Hanley Farm. Enjoy doing research? Have fun exploring and sharing the SOHS archives! Somewhere there is a place for you in SOHS and a support group that will get you started.

Each month our newsletter puts out requests for volunteers to assist with our work. Some focus on individual activities; some involve on-going projects or functions. Both short-term and long-term opportunities abound, providing different ways for you to develop your talents and interests, or explore new aspects of yourself. New friends and interesting people are another bonus. Join in! You will not regret it.

With gratitude,  
Doug McGeary, SOHS President



# MEMBERSHIP

Membership in Southern Oregon Historical Society entitles you to:

- The SOHS Quarterly Newsletter
- Advanced notices of events and volunteer opportunities
- Discounted Member Rates
- Early Admission to Annual Heritage Plant Sale
- A 10% discount on gift shop purchases at the Research Library and Hanley Farm

## ENROLLING ON LINE IS EASY!

[www.sohs.org/membership](http://www.sohs.org/membership)

OR ENROLL BY MAIL WITH THE FOLLOWING FORM:

- ☐ **Individual** - \$35.00: All of the above benefits for one person
- ☐ **Family** - \$50.00: All of the above benefits for one family
- ☐ **Business** - \$75.00: Free Library access for all employees for business-related projects, plus up to 5 free scans of SOHS photographs (a \$75.00 value)
- ☐ **Patron** - \$100.00: All of the above benefits and 10% off Hanley Farm rentals
- ☐ **Curator** - \$250.00
- All of the benefits at the Patron level plus private tour of the Research Library
- ☐ **Director** - \$500.00: All of the benefits of a Curator membership plus guest privileges for six additional people
- ☐ **Historian's Circle** - \$1,000.00: All of the benefits of a Director membership plus a private tour of the collection
- ☐ **Lifetime** - \$3,000.00: All of the benefits of the Historian's Circle membership plus one free rental at Hanley Farm

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_City:\_\_\_\_\_State:\_\_\_\_\_Zip:\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:\_\_\_\_\_Email\_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed ☐ Bill my Credit Card: ☐ Visa ☐ Master Card ☐ Discover ☐ Am Ex ☐

Card #:\_\_\_\_\_Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_

Mail Membership Form with check made out to SOHS or with credit card information to:

**Southern Oregon Historical Society, 106 N. Central Avenue, Medford, OR 97501**





## SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS

### STEPHANIE BUTLER: BRINGING THE PAST ALIVE



Stuart CottsPhoto

*Stephanie Butler is responsible for the care of hundreds of thousands of items in the SOHS collections.*

If you've ever toured the Hanley farmhouse in Central Point, or the Beekman House in Jacksonville, you've enjoyed Stephanie Butler's work. Butler believes historic artifacts are "an invitation to explore the past." Her career with the Southern Oregon Historical Society (SOHS) allows her to extend this invitation to anyone visiting these historic properties.

Butler came to Ashland from New York City in 2000 to marry her college sweetheart, whom she met at Ithaca College in upstate New York. Her master's degree in Educational Theater from New York University was

the perfect fit for SOHS's philosophy of bringing history alive.

A professional SOHS staff member from 2003 to 2009, she managed all of the Society's educational and outreach programs. Today, she oversees several other volunteers to preserve and care for the historic Hanley and Beekman houses, filled with original artifacts from the families who lived there.

The full-time staff of SOHS' glory years has been replaced by a few part-time employees, but Butler and several others remained as volunteers, maintaining a high level of professionalism in the organization. Butler originally stayed on as tour organizer at Hanley Farm and Beekman House. In 2010 she also took a position with Southern Oregon University, where she is now Assistant Director of Pre-College Programs.

"We are fortunate to have in our region three historic properties full of objects that belonged to the actual owners," said Butler. Both the Hanley and Beekman houses were lived in by family members until they were preserved as museums complete with the families' furniture and belongings. Jacksonville's Beekman Bank remains as it was when Cornelius Beekman left it in 1915.

Two years ago, Butler took on additional duties as Curator of Collections for the Society's thousands of artifacts, one of the largest regional collections in the country. Many are on display at Hanley Farm, the Beekman House and the Bank, while the rest are carefully stored in a large temperature-controlled warehouse.

"I used to ask visiting school groups at the museum to guess what the smallest artifact is," said Butler. The answer? It's a flea on Peter Britt's son Emil's microscope slide. The largest artifact is Hanley Farm, consisting of the whole property, including the farm house and all of its furnishings, two barns, and several outbuildings. It functions as a living history museum, with Butler taking special care of the artifacts inside the house.

Butler also takes satisfaction in periodically sharing artifacts from the wider collection with others, such as the rifle owned by Elijah Davison, who is credited with discovering the Oregon Caves in 1874.

This summer, Hanley Farm is open every Sunday for tours. If you don't see Butler there, you can see her in December at the Ashland and Medford libraries, where she will be giving a Windows in Time presentation on "The Legacy of Peter Britt."

*Sharon Bywater*

## Fall Membership Drive: Bring The Family!



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Families who join or renew a one-year family membership with SOHS between September 15 and October 15, 2018 will also receive, at no cost, free tickets for parents and their children to this year's Haunted Field Walk at Hanley Farm. In addition, Family memberships support SOHS and buy the entire family a discount to all Hanley Farm events.

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



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[SOHS Photo]

*In the late afternoon, sunflowers still shine bright near the old Hanley barn.*

## CURRENT RESIDENT OR



## From the SOHS Research Library

### HISTORY ON LINE

By Pat Harper

When the SOHS Library staff and volunteers find exciting but overlooked materials in the Archives, we consider scanning them, indexing them, or at least adding details to the records in our online catalog. For example, we recently uploaded 3,730 names from Military Lists from the 1870s. Several volunteers indexed the names. Then Barbara Moore painstakingly checked every entry to assure accuracy and check spelling of names. Ben Truwe has recently indexed Medford Mail Tribune negatives from 1958 to 1986 that have been hidden away in the Archives, seldom used.

In 2010, Diana Marmon and

other volunteers entered full-text records for the inventory of homes and buildings designed by Frank Clark that SOHS published in 1982. Frank Chamberlain Clark was Medford's first registered architect, and he designed many of the county's iconic homes and buildings. Since the inventory has been available on the website, we have been able to add information from several sources to confirm homes attributed to Clark, and to verify that he did not design the Ashland Civic Clubhouse attributed to him.

Recently, volunteer Carol Holst scanned photos of Frank Clark buildings that were taken in 1979. She compared each photo to the records in the inventory. To verify a few of them, she drove by the current homes. Then Carol related every photo that she could to the online inventory record.

Now the 1979 photos are available on-line! To view them, please go to [http://sohs.org/fci\\_view](http://sohs.org/fci_view).

