

Early history of SOHS, followed by a timeline from 1927 to 2015

OFFICIAL GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT FOR THE ORCHARD HOME PRECINCT

JACKSON COUNTY, OREGON

AT THE GENERAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON THE 2nd DAY OF NOVEMBER, A. D., 1948.

Mark (X) between the number and name of each Group, Candidate or Answer voted for.

Referred to the People by Resolution and Order of the County
Court of the State of Oregon for Jackson County

Shall Jackson County, Oregon, establish a county historical fund for such county to be used for the purposes provided in Section 2, Chapter 246, Oregon Laws 1947, and annually levy a tax of not to exceed one-half mill therefor, which such tax shall be a special tax in addition to other taxes levied by said county and shall not be within the limitation as provided by Section 11, Article XI of the Constitution of the State of Oregon.

Vote YES or NO

322 Yes. I vote for the Historical Fund and Tax.

323 No. I vote against the Historical Fund and Tax.

SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORIANS NAME MAYOR PRESIDENT

Organization Outlines Projects With Museum At J'Ville Among First Plans.

Formal organization of a Southern Oregon Historical society was completed at a meeting of interested persons held yesterday at the office of Mayor C. A. Meeker. Aiding with organization details was Lancaster Pollard, Portland, head of the Oregon State Historical society, who has been in southern Oregon to attend meetings here and in Klamath Falls.

Mayor Meeker was named president of the society, Mrs. G. Q. D'Albini was elected vice-president, Ralph Billings, Ashland, treasurer, and Lester Harris, secretary and historian. Frank Hull Sr., Claire Hanley and Amos Voorheis of Grants Pass were named directors and Walter Jones, E. H. Hedrick, Herb Grey, Miss Hanley and Billings were named to the membership committee by the new president.

Museum First Aim

First project of the new group will be promotion of the plan to have the old courthouse in Jacksonville converted into a museum, Meeker states. It is planned to secure petition signatures of sufficient quantity to assure a

ballot measure at the next election asking for a special levy for the project, and the museum funds would be administered by the county court.

It has been the plan of those interested in the museum project to ask families of the area having objects and articles of historical value to loan them to the museum in order that they might be displayed for the general public. Meeker announces that the state society has promised support for the project and will loan back to the southern Oregon group for the museum certain historical articles now in state custody.

Value Seen

"It is believed the local historical group can be of great value in gathering local historical data and records, preserving objects, buildings and sites of historical interest and in co-ordinating the efforts of such historically minded groups as the Jackson County Pioneer association, Daughters of the American Revolution and Sons of the American Revolution," Meeker states. "This section is rich in Oregon history and tradition and we have delayed too long in taking steps to properly care for these buildings and articles and in gathering and tabulating records and information."

In addition to the Jacksonville museum, other projects to be considered are aiding the Klamath Falls society with a celebration to mark the 100th anniversary of opening of the pioneer Klamath Falls-Applegate road and planning a proper premiere performance of "Canyon Passage," film made in the county last fall by Universal Pictures of Ernest Haycox' novel of early Jacksonville days.

The society is hopeful of having a membership of 1000 persons within the next few weeks. Meeker states that annual dues will be \$2, half of which will go to the state society.

Paid Members of 1946.

Feb. 27,	Clarence A. Meeker*	dues	\$2.00
	Walter H. Jones		2.00
	Mrs. G. Q. D'Albini		2.00
	Ralph Billings		2.00
	Mrs. Label Russell Lowther		2.00
	Miss Lydia Mc Call		2.00
	Mrs. Brenneman		2.00
Mar. 6,	Herb Grey		2.00
	Lester Harris		2.00
	Hugh Hanlin		2.00
Mar. 8,	Leon B. Haskins		2.00
	Frank Hull (paid state dues)		2.00
Mar. 26,	F. J. Hall, P.O. Box 75, Jacksonville		2.00
	Rev. L. H. Mitchelmore		2.00
	E. K. Peterson, 523 Fairmont		2.00
Apr. 26,	Frank Applegate		2.00
	George R. Carter		2.00
	Lona Hall Spencer		2.00
	J. M. Spencer		2.00
May 8,	Mr. and Mrs. S. B. Mc Nair		4.00
	Mrs. Frank Jordan		2.00

44.00

10

SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FIRST LIST

Feb. 8, 1946

Lancaster Pollard, Supt. State Historical Society.

Mayor Clarence A. Meeker * , President. S. A. R.

Mrs. G. W. D'Albini, Vice President, D. A. R. Medford

Ralph Billings, Treasurer, Pioneers of S. Oregon Ash.

Lester Harris, Secretary and Historian

Directors

Frank Hull Jr.

Miss Claire Hanley, Pioneers of Southern Oregon
Amos E. Voorhies of Grants Pass Courier, S. A. R.

Membership Committee

Walter H. Jones, Medford, S. A. R.

E. H. Hedrick, Supt. Medford Public Schools.

Herb Grey, Medford, S. A. R.

Miss Claire Hanley, Pioneers of Southern Oregon

Ralph Billings, Ashland, Pioneers of S. Oregon

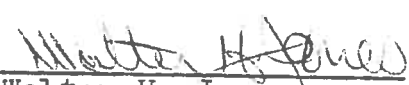
THE SO. ORE. HISTORICAL SOCIETY
of Medford, Oregon

Meeting held in the rooms of the Jackson
County Chamber of Commerce
May 8, 1946

MINUTES

Meeting was called to order at 8:10 P. M. by the President C. A. Meeker. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. The Committee appointed to secure an estimate of the probable cost necessary to rehabilitate the court house building and make such alterations and installations as would probably be necessary for the establishment of a Historical Museum reported. One estimate was for \$75,000, the other estimate was for \$90,000. President C. A. Meeker also reported on the legal aspects with regard to the project, and of placing it before the voters at the November election. A round table discussion was held and it appeared to be the consensus of opinion that in view of the doubtful legality of a vote on the project, that the matter should be held in abeyance until an enabling act could be properly passed at the next session of the State Legislature. Also, that President C. A. Meeker, together with Attorney Frank P. Farrel, should prepare and present such an act to the State Society which in turn should present it to the proper committees of the legislature for consideration and enactment.

The meeting was adjourned, sine die, by order of the President at 9:10 P. M.


Walter H. Jones
Sec. Pro Tem

Paid Members of 1947

Jan. 31,	Mr. Guff	dues	2.00
	Mrs. Hatfield		2.00
	Mrs. Robert Jewell		2.00
	Frank De Souza, 30 Western Ave.		2.00
	Mrs. Arliene Butler Thompson		2.00
	Francis Kimball, Jacksonville		
	Sanitarium.		2.00
	Mrs. Wayne Carter		2.00
	Dr. Peters		2.00
	Mrs. Otto Hackert		2.00

May 27, 1947

Miss Venita Daley
 343 North Grape St., Medford, Oregon
 (Paid State Historical Society dues 2.00)

 \$20.00

MINUTES OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, May 10, 1949

MINUTES OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The meeting of the southern Oregon Historical Society was held Tuesday evening May 10, 1949, at 8:00 P.M. at the home of Walter H. Leverette. Notice of the meeting was by publication in the Medford Mail Tribune and by telephone call. Those present were:

Walter H. Leverette, President
Robert Dodge, vice-President
Walter H. Jones, Secretary
Ralph Billings, Treasurer

Also the following members and directors:

Miss Clair Hanley
Miss Mary Hanley
Mr. George Carter
Mr. Frank DeSouza
Mr. Shy Northland
Mr. Robert Lytle
Judge J. B. Coleman
Mr. William Perry
Mr. A. E. Powell
Mr. E. C Ferguson
Mr. E. W. Kubli
Mr. Donald Spencer
Mr. E. D. McIntyre
Mr. A. C. Van Galder
Mr. Lancaster Pollard, Secretary State Historical Soc.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Walter H. Leverette, president. The minutes of the last stated meeting were read and approved.

An informal discussion was had regarding the Jacksonville Court House Museum project, and the formation of a corporation in compliance with the Oregon statutes and the certified vote on the proposition successfully voted upon in the 1948 election.

Secretary Pollard of the State Society discussed and explained the law and the legal aspect of the Southern Oregon Historical Society and commented upon the value of history as an asset to the community.

MINUTES OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, May 10, 1949

Transcribed from original typewritten text

President Leverette suggested that all present officers resign in order to get a more representative group for the permanent organization which will have control of the museum project.

Mr. Ferguson expressed himself in favor of the physical asset of the museum in preference to the history aspect of the building.

Judge J. B. Coleman was asked to express his views and in reply stated that he had come principally to listen, however, he then outlined the history of the organization of the museum society which had prepared articles of corporation. He stated further that he objected to affiliations with any up-state organization. Secretary Pollard in reply to Judge Coleman cited the record of the local Society and explained the relationship between the State and the local Society and cited Medford as a splendid example of likeness of purpose among those interested. Mr. E. C. Ferguson, who had been elected presiding officer of the proposed museum society, suggested that they disband in view of the statutes of Oregon, 1947, Chapter 246.

Mr. A. C. Van Galder expressed himself in favor of cooperation with the State Society and explained the interest and desire of cooperation of the City Council of Jacksonville.

Miss Clair Hanley told of materials and sources of materials present within the membership of the Society of Southern Oregon Pioneers.

It was rightly moved and seconded that the president appoint a committee of three to make nominations, motion carried. The committee consisted of E. C. Ferguson, Shy Northland, Robert Lytle with president Leverette as ex-officio member. The nominating committee reported as follows:

For President Miss Clair Hanley

For Vice-President, Robert Dodge

For Secretary, Miss Venita Daley

For Treasurer, Mr. Frank DeSouza

For Directors: Mr. E. W. Kubli

Mr. A. C. Van Gilder

Mr. William Perry

Mr. Bert Lowry

Mr. A. E. Voorheis

Mr. A. E. Powell

Mr. Walter H. Leverette

Mr. E. C. Ferguson

Mr. Ralph Billings

MINUTES OF THE SOUTHERN OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, May 10, 1949

It was rightly moved and seconded that the report of the nominating committee be received and that the secretary be instructed to case a unanimous ballot for those nominated. Motion carried. The secretary so cast the ballot.

Miss Clair Hanley then took over the gavel of authority.

It was rightly moved and seconded that the Society extend a vote of thanks to Mr. Lancaster Pollard for his presence at the meeting and for his assistance in matters pertaining to the establishment of the the museum and the incorporation of the Society. Motion carried.

It was rightly moved and seconded that the appreciation and thanks be extended to Walter H. Leverette, the host of the evening.

On order of the president the Society was adjourned to meet Friday evening, May 13th, at 8:00 P.M. in the office of the County Judge, Medford court house.

Signed Walter H. Jones, SEC.

Approved by C. Hanley



OLD COURTHOUSE DEDICATED AS MUSEUM—The old Jacksonville building which once was Jackson county's courthouse was dedicated as a southern Oregon historical museum at ceremonies in Jacksonville Saturday. A crowd estimated at more than 2,000 persons gathered on the lawn of the historical structure, and heard a description of the building's early days by Gus Newbury, Medford attorney (standing above), who at one time was county clerk with offices in the building. Other speakers included County Judge J. B. Coleman, and Jimmy Dunlevy was master of ceremonies. On the speakers' stand in the picture are officials of the county and of nearby cities, officers of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, Inc., and other dignitaries.—(Brainerd photo.)

Timeline for Southern Oregon Historical Society

1927	Jacksonville Courthouse was left empty when the Jackson County courts moved to Medford
1927	Pioneer society of Southern Oregon, Sons of the American Revolution and DAR proposed to make it a museum
2/17/1945	Sons of the American Revolution proposed a project to preserve local historical data, possibly in the courthouse
6/18/1945	Sons of the American Revolution, Daughters of the American Revolution and the Pioneer Society met
2/22/1946	Sons of the American Revolution voted to turn over the courthouse Museum Project as soon as a Southern Oregon Historical Society was formed
March 1946	First meeting to form SOHS was held, plans were made for a petition to assure a ballot measure for a special levy
4/26/1946	First official meeting of SOHS, discussion of courthouse renovations
5/8/1946	Two estimates for courthouse renovations were \$75,000 and \$90,000 - amounts which would require taxation
5/8/1946	Referendum would require a legislative enabling act, the SOHS board determined to have the act prepared and presented to the State Legislature
3/10/1948	Passage of the enabling legislation was expected
5/10/1948	Enabling legislation had passed and work began for a ballot measure of a historical tax.
11/2/1948	Historical tax measure passed. 7,431 county residents voted for it, 7,132 voted against it
5/10/1949	SOHS Articles of Incorporation were signed
5/2/1950	State historical society asked SOHS to supervise repair of the Beekman Bank Building (state society would pay for the work)
11/28/1949	Work began on the courthouse
2/12/1950	Courthouse opened to public, although renovations were not complete
12/11/1950	Carrie Beekman proposed that SOHS take over the Beekman Bank, which she would eventually donate. They agreed
12/11/1950	Board voted to accept and store "all material offered"
5/8/1950	Mary Hanley replaced Mrs. Myrtle Lee as curator in 1955 (only other employee was a maintenance person)
1954	Amalia Britt died and left Britt house and grounds to society, but society rejected the gift, requesting only Peter Britt's studio and photographs for safekeeping
1956	First inventory of holdings
1957	Received Dorland Robinson's paintings from University of Oregon Museum of Art on indefinite loan
1950	Board designated one room of the courthouse museum as a library
5/7/1956	Oregon State Historical Society demanded an increase in dues. SOHS members had been paying \$2.00, with \$1.00 going to OSHS. OSHS demanded \$1.50. SOHS made it an option for members instead of a requirement, but did not increase dues.
1959	Carrie Beekman left the bank to the Oregon Historical Society and the home to the University of Oregon

Timeline for Southern Oregon Historical Society

1955	Society opened exhibits in the old jail/annex
1966	SOHS began spending funds for upkeep of Beekman House
1967	SOHS had to ask county for additional funds
1968	SOHS borrowed funds from county
1965	SOHS Curator Mary Hanley assisted the U.S. National Bank in their opening and dedication
1966	SOHS purchased Wilson House for exhibit space
1960	SOHS leased the bank and the Beekman House
1961	University of Oregon announced plans to auction off furnishings of the Beekman house; they postponed the auction after hearing protests
1965	Jackson County purchased the Beekman House, allowing SOHS to become custodians
1966	Robbie Collins purchased the former Catholic Rectory, and apparently owned it jointly with Ray Reter
1968	Rectory was given to Jackson County by a Catholic Church women's group that had purchased it. SOHS took over but there was controversy and the house remained closed to the public
1967	SOHS agreed to 10 year lease on the Methodist Church
1967	Second concrete block building built on courthouse grounds
1967	SOHS purchased property where Rogue Valley Railroad Depot was located and agreed to move it to new site
1968	SOHS agreed to be custodians of the PP&L original power house building
1974	SOHS budget increased because County had been using wrong formula in previous years
1975	County commissioners abolished the SOHS "sinking fund", putting all funds into the general fund (commissioners had approved the sinking fund in 1972, and \$17,322 had been placed in it)
1980	SOHS budget: \$677,039 (had been \$84,000 in 1970)
1976	First professional librarian/archivist was hired (Richard Engeman)
1978	SOHS published its first book, "The History of Jacksonville"
1978	children's museum in the Annex (old Jail) was opened
1975	Jackson County transferred ownership of county records to SOHS in the 1950s, this was declared illegal in July 1975 but nothing was done
1978	SOHS began sponsoring bus trips, first one to King Tut exhibit in Seattle
1970s	SOHS worked on the U.S. Hotel project, completed in 1982
1975	Beekman Bank ownership transferred to Jackson County from Oregon Historical Society
1976	Catholic Rectory opened to visitors
1967	SOHS signed 10 year lease with City of Jacksonville on Methodist Church, began renovations
1976	SOHS terminated lease on Methodist Church because city would not deed it to SOHS in exchange for preservation
1983	Richard Engeman "resigned in frustration" due to inability to obtain additional library space (SOHS Board tried, but plans were rejected)

Timeline for Southern Oregon Historical Society

1978	Armstrong house was converted in to a house museum, then it was converted to office space, which disappointed the Gold Diggers
1980	Plans for a Public Resource Center were invested in, but not successful
1980	SOHS was offered Hanley Farm by Mary Hanley. SOHS took over all maintenance and upkeep, while Mary continued to live there
1981	SOHS agreed to lease first floor of Swedenburg house in Ashland for \$100,000 for 25 years, plus expenses. SOHS required establishment of a branch museum in Ashland as a condition
1980s	SOHS helped save Grand Hotel by investing \$31,000 in an option to purchase (probably recovered all or most of that investment)
1980s	Library had moved from "a small cluttered corner of the museum" to 2 rooms and considerable space in the "new White City collections building"
1986	SOHS purchased the J. C. Penney Building in Medford
1990s	Archives mezzanine was built and movable shelving was installed
1997	Oregon voters passed law to allow counties to absorb historical society levies into their general funds
2004	SOHS attempted to sell the J. C. Penney building but could not find an alternate location
2007	SOHS lost all tax funding and failed to gather enough signatures to put a new historical district levy on the ballot
2010	SOHS closed Jacksonville Museum
2010	SOHS initiated its History Made By You program and reopened the SOHS Library with volunteers
2011	SOHS signed 5 year lease with Kid Time to share space in Penney building
2015	SOHS negotiated with the county and with the City of Jacksonville to transfer ownership of Jacksonville courthouse, Rectory, Beekman buildings to the city
2016	SOHS gave up its interest in the U.S. Hotel in Jacksonville to the County in exchange for bridge funding (\$400,000?)