

# YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING

Date: Tuesday October 9, 1984 7:00 p.m.  
Location: Lafayette Youth and Senior Activities Center, Lafayette  
Potluck: Bring your own service

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### Museum News

We have had some work done recently at the museum including having the heaters cleaned and light bulbs replaced. Now we need to have some painting done on the outside as the south and west sides and some windows are in bad shape. We have a new renter now and he is getting settled.

We are back to Saturday and Sunday hours from 1:00 until 4:00 or by appointment. We are having a quilt rack made to display several of the quilts we have in trunks. We have one with a very old pattern, about 1908.

I hope you have read in the county paper about the new Veteran's museum that they are trying to build at the fairgrounds. There have been several meetings. There will be many flags and poles with placques of all the military men that were killed in action in all the wars. There are many details to clarify at this time and donations are tax deductible.

I hope you will visit your museum soon. A special thanks to all those who helped during our summer days.  
Call 472-7935 for an appointment.

ROMA SITTON

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### HISTORY NOTES

EXCERPTS FROM REMINISCENCES OF JAMES M. SHARP, WHO, AT THE AGE OF EIGHT, CROSSED THE PLAINS WITH HIS FATHER AND MOTHER IN 1852. Part II

(The Sharps spent their first winter in Oregon in the Chehalem Valley in a log cabin that belonged to James Morris.)

Along in the fall (1853) father went south and filed on a donation land claim of 320 acres in Lane County, about seven miles northwest from what is now known as Eugene. (The family soon moved to Lane County. James Sharp continues his story.)

During the summer of 1854 my sister Julia and her husband, O.R. Bean, who had been living in Yamhill County, came to Lane County to visit her parents, and in returning by some chance took me with them. I was past eleven then and had not attended school since leaving Missouri. Arrangements were made for me to attend the Panther Creek School, a walk of about two and one-half miles. It was a pay school, but the tuition was not large. I had to furnish books, slates, pen-

cils, ink, pens, penholders and writing paper. Second-hand books, such as McGuffey's and Sander's Readers, Webster's Elementary Speller and Arithmetics were available to a large extent. My first copybook was a number of sheets of foolscap, sewed together as a folio, which had previously been used by an older pupil, and which I interlined with my practice work.

There was no grading, each pupil being advanced according to his aptness. Thus, beginning in July, in a little more than one year, I had run the gauntlet from the first reader to the fifth, and had made fair progress in writing, arithmetic, and geography. The school house was made of boards, with rough benches to sit on, some long, rough desks for writing, and a blackboard or two on the wall.

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As a means of adding to our funds, our entire family gathered wild strawberries in season. These we capped and carried them on horseback to Eugene and sold them for a low price. As I remember, it was ten cents a quart. We did not have much in the way of luxuries in those days. I recall once being given an orange by a man in whose store I clerked. I gave the orange to a young girl in whom I had some interest, and she in turn passed it on to her grandmother, much to my discomfort. Part of my duties in this store was to mould candles, weigh in slaughtered hogs, butchered by people about the neighborhood, try out the lard and salt the meat down. I was required to sleep in the store as a means of protecting it. For all this service I received the sum of \$20.00 a month, which sum I passed on to my father.

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One winter, shortly after my return (from clerking in Eugene), the teacher who had been engaged to conduct a school close to our home, boarded with us, and by his help and by firelight, I made some progress in arithmetic. A year or so later I attended school for three months, taught by a man who had been educated for an attorney, and who was unusually competent as a teacher. I think it was about the close of my nineteenth year that I attended a three months' school, conducted by a very fine teacher, and made some educational progress. This was the last of my training in the public schools of Oregon. Sometime later I went to Eugene to take an examination for a certificate to teach in the public schools of Lane County. The county superintendent of schools was a merchant whom I knew quite well, and when I told him what I wanted, he took me out to an open platform in the rear of his store, where each of us occupied a convenient drygoods case, and he proceeded with the examination by asking me a few simple questions, requiring me to read a selection or two, and ending up by giving me a certificate inside of half an hour. A year or two later, wishing to teach in Wasco County, I underwent a very similar examination and received a certificate to teach in that county.