

# The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

April 2002

## Board Highlights

After roll call the minutes were approved and the treasurer's report was approved with the following numbers reported by Betty Brown: February income: \$5,264.25; expenses \$820.61; net \$4,443.64. President Shirley will check on the investments.

Financial/Membership Chair: Lila Jackson reported one new life member, four new members, seven renewals and two changes of address. These changes will be given to Olive Johnson and Betty Brown.

Correspondence Secretary: Marjorie Owens gave a brief update.

Volunteer Chair: Eileen Lewis reports one new volunteer is working, Carol Reid and new volunteer Jean Kleinschmit will be called soon. The Green Thumb program has started, will work 20 hours a week - it is for three months and may be extended for an additional three months.

Old Business: Budget Overview: Marjorie's Budget Review committee report brought out the following: About \$10,000 per year goes out to pay expenses (about \$800 per month). Income sources: Membership, Donations, including the First Federal Savings & Loan checkoff, PGE, Nomadic Teacher program, Calendars, and Grants. Title Companies might be asked to be a donation sponsor for the museum.

Accountability: We have a computer program available that will list the income checks, record the source of the income and list outgoing checks. This can be printed out monthly. Shirley Venhaus and Lila will look into this program.

Grant requests for church repairs must have definite figures listed. Committee members are working on getting these bids. Listed first will be specific bids for the under-church visqueen and labor to put it in - at least three bids. Other items will need to be bid with specific numbers so these can all be listed in applying for a grant. Eileen will get three bids on debris removal.

Monies have been donated to purchase the Oregon Burial Site Guide. Lila will call Mr. Ballard about pictures of old buggies. A question has come up about putting up a chain link fence with slats along with plantings to define the museum's property. President Shirley will discuss this with Barbara Hinman. The Poling Church Review was held in Salem. A big "thank you" is extended to Marjorie and Shirley V. for all the work they did to get this project turned in.

Re-print: A motion was made by Francis, seconded by Barbara to have the contract signed to order the reprint of Old Yamhill. Motion passed.

Treasures in the Attic: Three appraisers have volunteered to work at this event. Publication of this event will be in the Oregonian, News Register, Newberg Graphic and Sheridan Sun. A flyer is ready. We plan to serve juice and cookies.

New Business: Membership Fees - Discussion was held. Suggestions were the following yearly levels of membership: 1. Individual: \$15, 2. Family: \$25, 3. Sustaining membership: \$50, 4. Sustaining Family: \$100, 5. Sustaining Business: \$500. Sustaining Business memberships would be listed in the Newsletter for the year. These new dues structures were approved by the Board. (Notice no more life memberships)

Monthly Un-affle : April is taken care of. Donations are needed for the May meeting and beyond. Nomadic Teacher: Barbara has scheduled/presented 131 programs for this year. Pottersfield Cemetery in McMinnville: developers Ray Kauer and Barry House will pay for a dedication stone, to be unveiled on Memorial Day. Harry Byrnes donated a copy of "The Yamhills" by J.C. Cooper, which will be auctioned at our next general meeting. Dan was authorized to sell a few of our old books on eBay; these are kept in the rear of the church museum and are not of local interest.

## From Our President:

I know a lot of you have grandchildren who come to visit but how many have a grandpig named Mary Beth who comes to see you? Mary Beth lives in Pahrump, Nevada with my daughter and husband, Shea & Dale. Mary Beth weighs about 100 pounds on a strict diet. She is probably treated better than any human, let alone a pig. When she comes to our house she has a portable pen, a covered sleeping area with a heat lamp, her blanket and toys. That is for during the day. At night she sleeps in the guest bedroom. She has figured out how to go under the pen and escapes to greener pastures. She loves grass. She is very intelligent and does just as she pleases. She rides in the back of a very nice Honda. It's always a pleasure to have company but I just don't remember it being like that back on the farm.

Normally Mary Beth stays at our house but this time she went to the "Pig Guest Ranch" near Hubbard, Or. She has her own house and an outside area where she is allowed to play in the mud. Aaahhh, for the life of a pig!!! Well enough for that Historical Stuff.

The nomination of the Poling Baptist Church for the National Historical Register survived a review of a panel of learned participants in Salem. They will send us suggestions on 4 different items that needed corrections or changes. Once that is done it will be forwarded to Washington D.C. Thanks to everyone who is a depositor at the First Federal Bank in McMinnville and who wrote in to nominate the "Yamhill County Historical Society" to be put on their list of non-profit organizations to be considered for their grants. The write-ins earned us \$132.71. Next year we will be on the printed list so don't forget to vote for us. This happens every December so keep us in mind.

A contract was signed with "Binford & Mort Publishing" in Hillsboro to print 500 copies of "Old Yamhill". We sent \$2500 for half of the cost and have 6 months to raise the remaining \$2500. It will take about 10 weeks before the books will be available for sale at the museum.

Don't forget about the "Treasurers in the Attic" event June 29th, Sat. 10 to 3. Tell all your family, friends and neighbors. There will be a sign-up sheet at the next General Meeting and also at the museum for volunteers who will help that day. Bring your own treasures for an appraisal. See you next month. Sincerely Shirley

*The Yamhill County Historical Society is a nonprofit tax exempt educational and public service corporation established to protect, preserve and share the history and heritage of Yamhill County*

**OFFICERS - 2002**

President  
Shirley Venhaus  
472-7328

VP/Program  
Barbara Knutson  
843-2069

Secretary (Joint)  
Shirley McDaniel  
662-3528  
Eileen Crawley  
835-3673

Treasurer  
Betty Brown  
472-7100

Financial Secretary  
Lila Jackson  
472-8510

Corres. Secretary  
Marjorie Owens  
843-3081

Board of Directors  
Eileen Lewis  
835-7531

Ed Roghair  
472-6909

Francis Dummer  
864-2637

Dan Linscheid  
843-2625

Volunteer Coordinator  
Eileen Lewis  
835-7531

Librarian  
Olive Merry Johnson  
472-6070

Newsletter  
Dan Linscheid 843  
-2625

Car Pool Coordinator  
Joanne Watts 835  
-5893

**MUSEUM HOURS**

**September 1 - May 31**  
Sat-Sun 1 to 4 PM  
or  
By Appointment

605 Market Street  
Lafayette Oregon  
Phone: 864-2308

**ANNUAL DUES**

**\$10.00 Individual**  
**\$17.00 Family**  
**\$125.00 Life**

Mail to:  
Financial Secretary  
2430 North Baker  
McMinnville OR  
97128

© 2002  
YCHS

**Treasures in the Attic**

YCHS is preparing to bring "Treasures in the Attic" (an Antique Appraisal event) to Yamhill County on Saturday, June 29th, 2002. This will be held at the museum complex and will be open to the public. Appraisers from many different areas of expertise will be on hand, giving appraisals on your antiques for a minimal fee. This is a fundraiser for the society so please mark you calendar now for this special event and plan on attending.

There are many details left to plan and we are looking for volunteers. If you are interested in helping please call Joanne Watts 835-5893 or Shirley Venhaus 434-0567

**Special Presentation Scheduled**

August 13th of this year will see a very special presentation for our society. In mid-August of 1826, Alexander Roderick McLeod passed through the Yamhill valley on his way back from the central Oregon coast. He and Peter Skene Ogden were Chief Fur Traders for Hudson's Bay Company. Mr. Ogden's travels took him easterly and southerly, while Mr. McLeod went south and west from Fort Vancouver.

Al Le Page, Executive Director of the National Coast Trail Association, will give a two hour presentation focusing on the trails and experiences of Mr. McLeod's trip through Yamhill County 176 years ago, almost to the day. Al has a one hour slide show, which will be followed up with another half-hour of general discussion and wrapping up with a question and answer period. You will need to mark this one on your calendar, since it was scheduled too late to be published earlier. This presentation will take place at 7:00 p.m. at the Yamhill County Public Works Auditorium. This will not be a potluck meeting, but we may have some light refreshments for our audience during a brief break.

**Note of Appreciation**

Each month, prior to preparation of this newsletter, Jim Lockett brings the editor an article. He is very faithful in this, and it is very much appreciated by our entire membership. One of Jim and Reita's special gifts to our organization has been publication of numerous books and articles pertaining to subjects and people of local historical interest. When they leave on vacation for a month or two, Jim always puts together an extra monthly article for this publication. This extra effort saves a lot of last minute (gray) hair-pulling by yours truly. So, the next time you see Jim or Reita, please let them know how much their efforts are appreciated.

On the subject of newsletters, if any of you wish to see something specific, or have a submittal, let us know. DL

**Fourth Graders Visit Museum**

Twenty-five fourth graders from Grand Haven Elementary School, McMinnville, toured the three museum buildings the morning of February 21. They were accompanied by their teacher, Gloria Lutz, and student teacher, Noel Kroese, plus two other adults.

These children were full of questions— How is velvet made? Did the long black dress go all the way to the floor? Why do the stereoscopic pictures look 3-D? Did they mail those leather post cards? How does the big churn work?, etc., etc.— and several brought cameras to snap pictures of their favorite exhibits.

Twila Byrnes, who usually guides the children through the church, was unable to be there Thursday, but she had prepared packets of Joanne Watt's handmade soap for each group of children, and stocked the lady-in-the-sleigh's shopping basket with items which pioneer women might have purchased. Some children noticed that a few brands are still available today. Ed Roghair, Patsey Miller and I were on duty.—Lois Brooks

**Courthouse History Presentation**

On March 22nd, Dan Linscheid gave a presentation to the McMinnville Newcomers group on the history of our county courthouses. This group has been in existence for about 12 years, giving support to area newcomers and trying to make them feel a part of the community. Were you aware that Yamhill County has had four courthouses over the years, and has held court in at least twice that number of locations? The first circuit and probate court meetings were held in settler's homes near the falls at Lafayette, and after Jacob Hawn built the Lafayette House (aka Hawn's Tavern) court was moved there. In about 1850, the county bought a building for \$800 from Levi Scott, and this is the one that burned to the ground in 1857. It could seat about 100 people, and was at the SW corner of 3rd and Jefferson in Lafayette.

The replacement structure was one block south of our Museum, was made of brick, and was occupied in February of 1860. Problems with this courthouse, the new Jail, as well as changes in our county's population and commerce centers over the next 25 years resulted in an election to relocate to McMinnville. This was a hotly contested issue, and hard feelings over the move were the order of the day. The new home of county government cost nearly 1/2 as much again as the bid (\$61,000 vs. \$47,000), and a guard was paid to oversee the records just prior to moving in. (No one has ever come up with compelling evidence of the mythical "midnight ride", stealing the records from Lafayette for relocation) The move occurred in 1889, and this courthouse lasted the next 75 years until it was replaced in 1964 with the current structure.

*April 2002*

Those first days of 1842 and 1843 were awesome for the emigrants as they settled on the lush land of the upper Willamette Valley area. However, transportation was a serious problem. Only Indian trails and rivers were open to travel. These played a major role in the development of Yamhill County.

The Indian trail from Oregon City to McMinnville went up the Tualatin river to the Forest Grove area then down present day Highway 47 to Lafayette. There it crossed the ford at "Yamhill Falls" (Lafayette), now a mere ripple in the river. It was an easy place to cross and would later prove an economic boon to Lafayette where miners outfitted before heading to the mines in California.

As more people settled in Yamhill County the trails became wider and muddier with logs across creeks to serve as bridges. As travel increased the trails became roads but during the rainy season wagons sank to their axles. In 1847 one attempt to improve the situation was a "plank" road constructed from Portland, via Canyon Drive, Washington county and on down to Lafayette. During a particular wet time a wagon leaving Portland on this road would sink to the wheel hubs. Fighting dense undergrowth and fallen trees, they could just travel about nine miles in a day. Construction continued on the road but the winter rains invariably floated the summer's work away. Attempts to improve this road eased when in the early 1850's the river boats began to provide the necessary transportation for those early settlers. Road improvement beyond the needs of pack horses and wagons stopped until the coming of the automobile.

This 1850 leap forward in transportation with the steamships coming up the river, is reminiscent of the Mississippi River stern wheeler days that provided a needed and fairly luxurious form of transportation for the early pioneers.

By this time, abundant crops were being raised in the upper Willamette Valley. Getting them to market was a serious problem. During the fall harvest when crops needed to be sent to Oregon City and beyond, the wagons were usually mired deep in the mud.

James D. Miller of Linn City, aware of this transportation problem, saw a way to help and also to make some money. He started a water transportation service on the upper Willamette and Yamhill Rivers in the spring of 1850. He had a sixty-five foot flat boat capable of carrying 350 bushel of wheat. The boat was manned by four Indian oarsmen who received \$16.00 a trip; one day down river and two days back. Charging 50 cents a bushel to carry wheat down river to Canemah and \$35.00 a ton for other goods upriver was a lucrative business for Miller. Canemah was located just above the falls at Oregon City where the goods could be portaged on down the river. Throughout 1850, Miller made many profitable trips with full loads both up and down the river. In the summer of that year, George A. Pease began boating on the upper Willamette river so the two men enjoyed racing each other and making great profits.

Unfortunately, in May of 1851, the "Hoosier," a crude steamboat, appeared on the upper rivers. This put Miller and Pease out of business. The appearance of the "Hoosier" at Dayton and Lafayette was a great event. The county residents and farmers flocked to see the boat. It was able to haul more freight cheaper and faster than the flatboats and also provided transportation for those needing to go to Oregon City. But the Hoosier's monopoly lasted just a month. On June 6, 1851, the small "Washington" churned up the Yamhill for her share of the great grain wealth bound for lower Willamette flouring mills.

1851 became the year of the river steamboats. These two boats added first class travel for the upper river residents.

In the meantime, the West Side Stage Co. was making daily trips with four-horse stages through the Willamette Valley, still following the Old Indian trail from Oregon City and Portland. The fare between Portland and McMinnville was \$4.00, \$8.00 on to Corvallis. By 1870 travelers could cross Oregon by stagecoach in 60 hours and reach Sacramento in 5 and 1/2 days. Portland was a good days ride from McMinnville and Lafayette. A trip there usually required an overnight stay which left little time for business.

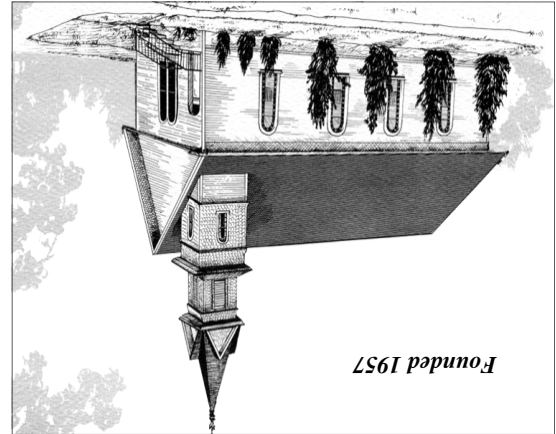
During the 1870's the area residents celebrated the arrival of the railroad. Now you could go to Portland in the morning, have lunch, do some business and be home for dinner. The steamboats were nice but the train was much faster.

The Southern Pacific purchased the railroad in 1901 and a new passenger system was put into operation. The "Red Electric" had come to town! These cars provided transportation between Portland and Corvallis with up to 8 stops in McMinnville. The railroad was soon pushed through Lafayette, Dundee and Newberg and on to Portland, a new and faster route.

While road building was not a priority during the early 1900s, a flood of automobiles soon provide a wake-up call. Cars traveling to California had to brave a muddy road to Cottage Grove, wait with fellow travelers until enough cars were there to fill a flat car on the railroad and then on by train to Roseburg. From there the road was usually passable.

In 1923, the West Side Pacific Highway was opened; completing the dream of area residents for easy access roads throughout the state. By 1930, the automobile and good roads put the "Electric" trains, the Riverboats, and the horse and buggy out of business. Now we could drive across the state in 12 hours, to Sacramento in 2 days and across county in 10 days. The coming of the freeway system cut those times in half and Jet Airliners cut them to mere hours. We had gone from 3 miles per hour to 600 miles per hour in just over 100 years!





**YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
 P.O. Box 484  
 Lafayette Oregon 97127

Non-Profit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
 Permit #3  
 Lafayette Oregon

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP**

- Individual                    **\$15**
- Family                            **\$25**
- Sustaining                       **\$50**
- Sustaining Family            **\$100**
- Sustaining Business         **\$500**

Please make checks payable to the Yamhill County Historical Society. Annual membership gifts are tax deductible.

Members receive the Westside newsletter and access to our research library free of charge. We are an all volunteer organization, and are constantly on the lookout for new helpers. If you can assist us in any way, financially or with your time or talents, it will be greatly appreciated. If you are not sure if you have paid your membership dues, please contact Lila Jackson at 472-8510. Alternatively, check your mailing label, which should show this information also.

**YAMHILL COUNTY  
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

*April 2002 Calendar of Events*

**Board of Directors - Tuesday, April 9th,**  
**5:00 pm**

**Amity Grade School**  
**Monthly Meeting & Potluck—April 9th,**  
**6:30 pm**

**Amity Grade School—Rice Lane**

Our April Program will feature Arlie Holt, Polk County Historian, on more Levi Scott manuscripts plus some memories of Johnnie Ray. Please join us for dinner and bring potluck fare and your own eating utensils.

*We Hope to See you There!*