

# The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

December 2002

## The Shuck Pioneer Family

At our November meeting, Elma Shuck gave a great presentation on her family history in the county. She mentioned that members Lila Jackson and Crystal Rilee are also related to the Shuck family.

Three Shuck brothers left the Alsace-Lorraine in Germany in 1832, and each went his separate way after their arrival in the United States. Elma received much of her information from Susan, one of twin daughters of Andrew, who wrote down her memories when she was 98 years of age. This was a remarkable tale, giving vivid descriptions of the wagon trip across the country in 1846, arriving in Oregon City, which at the time had 300 residents, including Chinese and Native Americans. She recalled the day-to-day life in their log cabin as well as her two marriages. Susan's writings also touched on her fourteen year stint in Dawson, Alaska, where she took up sewing to make a living after her husband had returned to the states.

Susan's father had taken up a Donation Land Claim east of North Yamhill. One tree is on a corner of the claim is currently one of our Heritage trees. Andrew started a busy life in politics shortly after arriving here... appointed territorial Sheriff in 1849, opening the first probate court in Lafayette, and later spending six terms as a state legislator.

Elma went on to discuss various pictures and artifacts which she and her niece Lynda Ott of Seattle brought to the meeting. Lynda was then introduced and she described three articles made of cedar in glass cases, one being a lye leach. She then announced that these items, as well as the Family History Book, including not only the Susan's story but also a touching tale by her sister Mathilda and her daughter, Maud. This book will be housed in the reference library in the Museum and those reading it will not fail to be impressed by the stalwart and honorable character of these indomitable pioneers, Andrew and Mary Shuck. Thanks Elma and Lynda, for a great presentation!



Elma Shuck, discussing her pioneer family roots. Elma is also a very active volunteer for our society.

## From our President

Happy Holidays: My motto for the month: The faster I go, the more behinder I get!!! A reminder to attend the Dec. 7th Holiday Event at the Museum. The inventory of items continues at the Museum. Believe we have passed the 8000 mark. Eileen, Marjorie and I attended a meeting in conjunction with the Mormon Church and the Genealogical Society where we were asked to co-host an event April 26, 2003 at the Mormon Church located on Baker Creek. It involves the immigration process and would seem to be a very interesting happening. Watch for more information.

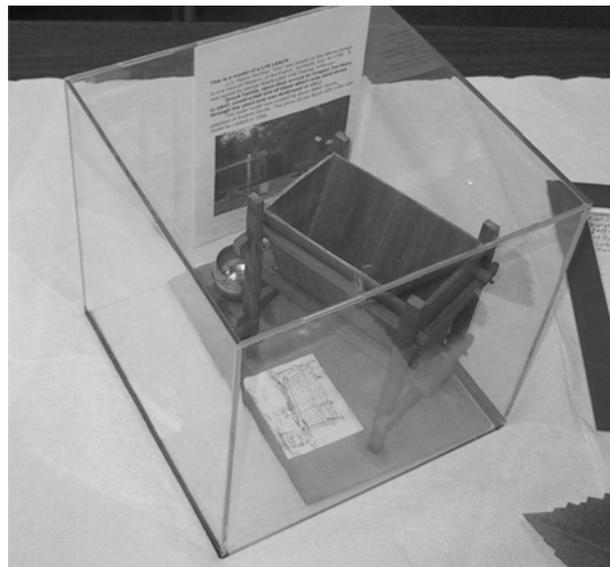
The outgoing, existing and new board members will be honored at the Dec. meeting. It is very important that we acknowledge the work these people do and express our thanks to them. Be sure and attend and show your appreciation. The Nov. meeting ran over into the general meeting and we really did not have time to take care of everything. It was necessary to call a special board meeting in addition to the regular one in December to effectively cover items that need our serious consideration. From now on the regular board meeting will begin at 4:00 PM to allow extra time.

Thanks to Gloria Lutz for her interest in obtaining the Covered Wagon for the use of the museum. It will depend upon the Society being able to house it at the Lafayette site.

We understand in the battle between a tree and an automobile the Knutson's score is Tree - 1, Auto - 0.

Many of you will be spending time with your family over the Holidays. My granddaughter Tara, who is in the Marines and Tonya, who is in southern Calif. will both be home plus the rest of my family. May your Dec. be "Safe and Happy". Shirley.

Below is a model of the Lye Leach, made and used by Shuck Family pioneers in Yamhill County.



*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**

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472-7328

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843-2069

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662-3528

Eileen Crawley  
835-3673

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Olive Merry Johnson  
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Newsletter

Dan Linscheid 843  
-2625

Car Pool Coordinator

Joanne Watts 835  
-5893

**MUSEUM HOURS**

**September 1 - May 31:**  
Sat-Sun 1 to 4 PM

**June 1—August 30:**  
Fri-Sat-Sun 1 to 4 PM  
or

By Appointment

605 Market Street  
Lafayette Oregon  
Phone: 864-2308

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http://  
sites.onlinemac.com/  
history & historic  
photo gallery is at

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**Just a reminder:**

Several years ago your Board of Directors authorized a 90 day grace period on membership, I.e., you will continue to receive newsletters three months after your membership has expired.

Each month as mailing labels are printed, we include a date code to the right of the addressee's names: this represents the month and year through which our records show your dues are paid. Please watch this date closely and try to be timely in your renewals. This society depends heavily on membership dues to pay fixed expenses, and while other receipts from sales and events help sustain us, your continued support is critical to our continued existence.

**November Board Highlights**

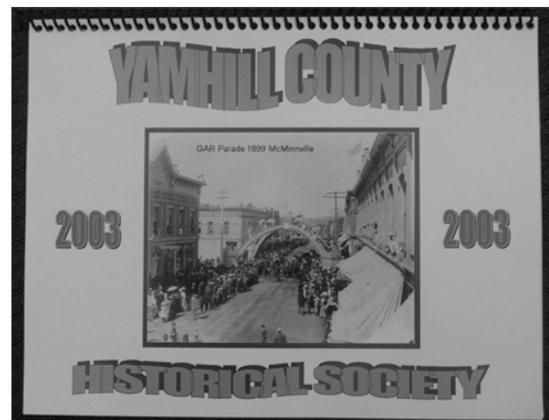
The November meeting of the Board was called to order by President Shirley Venhaus at 5:02 with Board Members Eileen Lewis, Betty Brown, Lila Jackson, Frances Dummer, Dan Linscheid, and Barbara Knutson present as well as Barbara Doyle and Joanne Watts. The MINUTES of the October 8 meeting were approved as corrected -- Barbara Doyle had not made a grant request to the US Bank. The TREASURER'S REPORT was accepted as presented on motion of Lila Jackson, seconded by Dan Linscheid. Lila, FINANCIAL SECRETARY, reported 2 new members, [Nathaniel McFadden and Donald Rivera,] and 6 renewals. Margie Owens, Correspondence Secretary, sent her report: five new replies, two thank yous, and two get wells. The Scout project is almost complete, accurate information about the mill stone is needed. \$ 255, part payment of the Roadside Council grant, has been received and bills are in hand of \$106.46 to be paid from that fund.

Old Business: PGE bill: The bill of \$285 has been received, this means it is being averaged out as requested. 2002 Budget Copies of the budget were circulated and Frank Dummer moved it be accepted as presented, motion carried. Frank was then welcomed back and thanked the group for the Get Well cards that "made him well." Security: Motion problem fixed by A&E, was a dead battery. Not everyone with a key is on the Security Code list yet. Nomadic Teacher \$25 has been received for October. Brochure: If we are using the brochure the outdated membership dues should be crossed out. Harvest Festival: Need to appoint a chair for next year early. Lila reported only \$81.50 collected -no one sold memberships, calendars etc. Basement Cleanup: County crew did the work, we are now ready for visqueen --even cobwebs gone! 2003 Calendars: They are \$7, \$9 if mailed. Even have holes punched this year! Start searching out old barns for the 2004 calendar.

New Business: Gloria Lutz arrived and presented a plea about the Covered Wagon that was made originally for the Susquecentennial Celebration. Frank Dummer moved the Historical Society research and pursue obtaining the wagon, hopefully housing it in a pole barn-type extension on the Barn Museum, seconded by Dan and carried. Motion by Dan to accept Colin Armstrong's request that he make a wooden handrail for the Log Cabin also carried. Newsletter will announce 1st Federal's program of a \$25 donation for each new checking account solicited by a Society member. Joanne Watts and Barbara Doyle described the plans for the "Holiday Happening" December 7th. Need members to advertise the event and bring bazaar items. Barbara Doyle has received a \$4,237 grant from the Confederated Tribes for Nomadic Teacher. She has completed a second grant application for the oral histories. Almost all the first grant monies have been expended on interviewing those who were involved in the turkey industry. Margie Owens and Shirley will attend the Family History Fair November 20th and report in December. Dan Linscheid moved we approve in content the Basic Agreement presented by Pamela Raye, representing the McMinnville Area Cultural Association. This organization, in cooperation with our society, the Arts Alliance of Yamhill County and possibly other cultural entities in the county, will be seeking grant monies available through the Oregon Cultural Trust. Motion seconded by Eileen Lewis and approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:40. Barbara Knutson, Secretary Pro Tem

**CALENDARS STILL AVAILABLE**

Our 2003 calendars are still available at the museum or by contacting Lila or Shirley Venhaus. The price is \$7.00 each, with an additional \$2.00 charge if mailed.



Please consider this as a holiday gift for friends and loved ones.

From her presentation notes at our October, 2002 meeting

Some of you may have heard these stories before. If so, please bear with me since some of the newer members and guests may not know how and why this group came to be organized.

Once upon a time, many years ago, one of my young sons asked me what it was like living in the prehistoric days. This was a little before my time, and I was unable to give him a satisfactory answer. But it did make me think. What if, a few generations down the line, some child would ask his mother what it was like living in the early days of Oregon, and what if that mother was unable to give a satisfactory answer?

That very thing could have happened had it not been for this organization. I can guarantee the last eighty years have gone by in a flash, yet some happenings could already have been forgotten had it not been for this group. Now I am not referring to huge political events, national catastrophies, wars, or things like that. Newspapers, even in the early days did a fairly good job of covering them. I am talking about every day events which faced our ancestors as they made the tortuous trip across the Oregon Trail, the hardships which had to be overcome in settling their claims, and their determination to make Oregon, as a whole, and especially Yamhill County, one of the best places in the world to live.

In 1957 a small group of people, spearheaded by Dr. James Alley of Amity, decided that something should be done to keep those stories alive and to preserve as many artifacts as still existed. A small article appeared in a summer issue of the McMinnville News Register requesting that anyone interested in starting a Yamhill County Historical Society should contact Dr. Alley.

I was spending that summer at Pacific City, but my father, knowing I was addicted to Oregon and Yamhill County history, clipped the article and mailed it to me. I immediately had a letter back in the mail to Dr. Alley expressing my interest, and offering to help in any way. That was the beginning of my involvement in this Society, and boy! Did I get involved! Gradually a few more people became interested in the project and after several preliminary meetings the first official meeting of the Yamhill County Historical Society was called to order on Monday, October 21, 1957 in the Fireplace Room of the Yamhill Christian Church.

After a welcoming address by Dr. Alley the first item on the agenda was the election of officers. There was absolutely no question as to who the first president should be. Reverend Robert Kuykendall of Yamhill, a grandson of Nathan K. Sitton who had come to Oregon on the very first wagon train of 1843, was the unanimous choice. Bob had worked hard to achieve the goal of starting the society, and has continued to give his support through these many years. His officers chosen were Dorothy Wortman Gunness, Vice President, Neita Lewis Terry, Secretary, and Soren Sorensen, Treasurer.

The Board of Directors consisted of Eugene Marsh, James Alley, Mrs. William H. Brandt, Patricia Turner Shawver and Frank Wortman. An Advisory Board was made up of Senator Carl Francis, Dr. Kenneth Holmes, Victoria Case, Dr. Margaret Ramsey, Betty Shawver Orr, Dr. Milo Ross, and Dr. Levi Pennington. These groups were picked to represent all parts of Yamhill County, and I can't believe how lucky we were to have them involved! Many of these people descended from early pioneers who helped settle our marvelous country. I believe that Reverend Bob Kuykendall and his wife and I are the only survivors of this original group, mainly because we were the youngest ones to be involved.

Following a welcoming address by Bob the Star Spangled Banner was played on the historic DeMoss triple golden chimes by Mrs. Rae Bond Alley, accompanied on the organ by Mrs. Fred Braley. On that first night guest speaker was Thomas Vaughn, Director of the Oregon Historical Society. He stressed the need for groups like ours in every county, and also brought to light some of the snags we would encounter along the way, but emphasized that determination and dedication would overcome these obstacles.

Senator Richard Neuberger then spoke on the various things of interest which should be preserved, such as pioneer cemeteries, historic buildings, artifacts of the early days, and the histories of pioneer families. He, also, stressed the need for determination, hard work and cooperation to achieve these goals.

Let me tell you, this small group took to heart everything these men had said, and immediately set out to accomplish the seemingly impossible.

Thirty people was considered to be a huge crowd in those days, and look at us now! And, oh my goodness, the food! Every person brought two or three of their favorite recipies, and we all ate as though we were never going to get another meal. I will never forget dear Lawrence Schreiber who would pass up all of the meat, vegetables and salads, but would fill his plate with a piece of every dessert on the table, then head back to his place with a huge grin on his face, ready to dig in. Every person took on responsibilities to make a success of our venture. As my personal project I started interviewing descendants of pioneer families to make sure their stories were recorded, and those were some of the best days of my life. I drove people like Ward Sitton, a son of Nathan K. Sitton, Dr. Ralph Storey, whose mother was a Cozine, Mrs. Carrie Martin, whose mother was a Malone, and many others around the county, and listened in awe as they related where certain families had lived, where early businesses had been located, and all had fabulous stories to tell. You will never know how thankful I am to have had this experience.

## Origins of the Yamhill County Historical Society (cont.)

We had some wonderful, informative speakers at those early meetings. I can't begin to name them all, but a few special ones stand out in my memory:

- I. **Dr. Ralph Storey** told of his early memories of Yamhill County and the history of the Cozine family.
- II. **Vincent Mercier** spoke on the early Grand Ronde Indians. Vincent had the blood of seven tribes in his veins due to the relocation of tribes from all over the west to the Grand Ronde Reservation. He wrote his college thesis on these Indians and had just completed the one and only copy when his house burned to the ground, so that information was lost forever. What a pity we couldn't have a copy for our library!
- III. **Valois Johnson** spoke of her participation in the centennial wagon train from Missouri to Oregon in 1959. This group lived as nearly as possible in the same manner as the early pioneers on their trek across the Oregon Trail.
- IV. **Carl Francis** presented tapes he had made of interviews with Mrs. LaBonte on the Grand Ronde Indians. We had some good chuckles over these tapes and Mrs. LaBonte, in no uncertain terms, gave the Indians' views on Phil Sheridan. They definitely did not consider him the hero that he later became in our history.
- V. **Victoria Case** spoke on early pioneer laws.
- VI. **Professor J. A. Jonnason** spoke on early transportation, and later gave the history of Linfield College.
- VII. **Dr. Levi Pennington** told of the coming of early Quakers to the county, and the history of Newberg College.
- VIII. **Frank Wortman** spoke on the early 1900's McMinnville Dramatic Club. I have to say here that my father was a complete ham and frustrated actor all of his life. He took part in every production, and saved all of the manuscripts, programs and photographs. In going over them I can't help but compare them to the movies and television programs of today.

Many people related wonderful stories of their families' settlement here. Others spoke on the histories of various towns and businesses. Subjects ranged from road signs to meteors and everything in between.

One of our glaring mistakes was that we didn't get copies of these speeches for our files. And I freely admit that we did make mistakes in those early days. Perhaps our most glaring one was while we were trying to find a place to establish a Yamhill County Museum. We had searched high and low for a suitable location with no success. Either the places were not for sale, or the buildings were in such a dilapidated condition that it was beyond our means to restore them, or there was no parking space--the list went on and on.

Then in 1968 the marvelous old Hembree house, located at 8th and Ford Streets in McMinnville became available, and it seemed to be exactly what we were looking for. It was built about 1883 by Judge William Ramsey, said to be from lumber out of the original Cook School building and the old Lafayette Courthouse. Dr. Margaret Ramsey, daughter of Judge Ramsey and one of our charter members was born there. It was later sold to Wayman Hembree and for years was known as the Hembree house. In the 1920's it was sold to Dr. Charles Williams and was used as a hospital. After the hospital was moved into new quarters it was occupied by various families and during the depression it fell into a sad state of disrepair. As children some of us had to walk, or run, past this house on our way to Cook School, and we were sure the goblins were going to fly out and get us. It was in that bad shape.

During World War II Lee Waugaman restored the building enough to make a few low income apartments when housing was so hard to come by.

Then the Bethel Baptist Church purchased the property in 1955, and an extensive remodeling job was done. The house was turned into a sanctuary and Sunday School rooms, a basement, adequate kitchen and social room were added. It was put up for sale by the church in 1968, and seemed to be exactly what we were looking for. The Society voted to purchase it for \$20,000 and plans went forward. We had all kinds of publicity. Newspaper articles and pictures were spread all over the News Register. We were fairly jumping for joy, and admit we felt pretty darned smug.

Well, we were so naive in those days we didn't realize that since we were affiliated with the Oregon Historical Society we had to have their O.K. and permission to make such a purchase.

After fact they sent a delegation out to inspect the building, and you wouldn't believe all of the reasons they found why it would be unacceptable as a museum. You have never seen faces as red as ours, mine the reddest of all, since I had more or less spearheaded the movement. Of course the deal fell through and we had to admit we had pulled the granddaddy of all boo-boos!

Fortunately the Poling Memorial Church in Lafayette soon became available, it passed the State Society's inspection with a few minor changes which had to be made. The rest is more recent history which I'm sure you are

**Origins of the Yamhill County Historical Society (cont.)**

all familiar with.

To begin with we started holding our meetings in various towns around the county, but after the purchase of the museum we tried holding our meetings there. However, our membership soon outgrew the kitchen and dining facilities, and we went back to meeting in other towns. I must tell you a few stories that were the outcome of my interviews with some of the old timers in those early days. One afternoon Ward Sitton had made arrangements for a gathering of all the surviving Sitton brothers and sisters at the home of Jenny Sitton Kuykendall, Bob's mother, at Yamhill, so that I could hear their stories. When I walked into the room they all started jabbering in the Indian jargon which they had learned and spoken as children. They took one look at the bewildered expression on my face, they all laughed uproariously, and repeated what they had been saying in English for my benefit.

Ward told me about riding into McMinnville behind his father on the horse to buy supplies at Dutch Beery's store, located where First Federal Savings and Loan is today. Dutch had a large jar of hard candy sitting on the counter of his store, and when the business was completed Ward was allowed to pick out one piece. He would reach in, stir the candy around with his hand until he found the color he wanted, then would pop it in his mouth. When I think of all the grubby little hands which had gone through the same process it seems a miracle that all of those children survived the multitude of germs they put in their mouths.

Carrie Martin was quite elderly at that time, and seldom left the house. Of course in talking about the Malone family, the subject of the Malone Cemetery came up. Carrie did her best to give me the history of the cemetery and to tell me who was buried there. She hadn't been there for many years, and one day I asked her if she would like to take a ride out to see it. You would have thought I had handed her a million dollars.

The cemetery was in terrible shape at that time. Vandals had broken all but two or three of the headstones, berry vines, brush and weeds covered the whole plot. Carrie did her best to point out approximately where various members of her family, and some friends had been buried. She insisted that Highway 99 had taken the grave of one of her uncles, but there is no proof of that.

In discussing Carrie's interviews with my uncle, Ralph Wortman, he became very interested in the Malone Cemetery. We made several trips out there together, and I could see he was in deep thought. I knew he had hired a man to go in, completely clean up the underbrush, and gather together as many pieces of broken headstones as possible. He then had a wall built around the plot, installed wrought iron gates, and had a bronze plaque installed telling a short history of the cemetery and the Malone family. The reason this story has been related is that I consider it the first major accomplishment due to the Yamhill County Historical Society, and another reason to be thankful for the interviews with the descendants of early pioneers

Dorothy Wortman Gunness



*The Holiday Happening*

**Yamhill County Museum  
605 Market St., Lafayette  
December 7, 12:30—4 p.m**

Make special ornaments for your Christmas tree and help decorate the museum tree.

Purchase yummy home-made foods, bazaar items, a copy of Old Yamhill, the societies 2003 calendar, - all are great gifts for giving or keeping, hear live Christmas music.

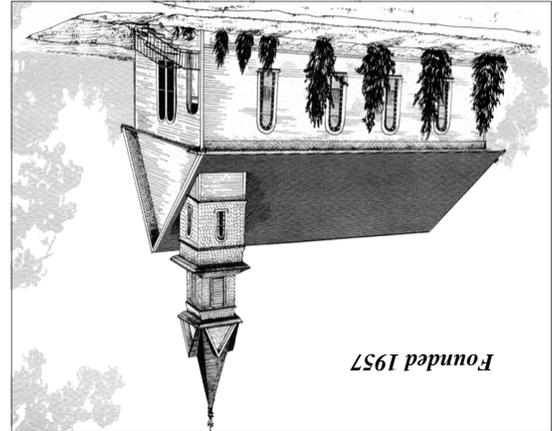
Light refreshments available.

All proceeds benefit the Yamhill County Historical Society. For information call Joanne at 503-835-5893 or Barbara at 503-538-9721.

Yamhill County Historical Society recently received a grant from Spirit Mountain Community Fund. The money - \$4,237 - will partially subsidize the society's Nomadic Teacher, a hands-on educational outreach program. The Nomadic Teacher concentrates on local history themes and supplements Oregon's fourth grade Social Studies curriculum. It also meets the state's educational standards and benchmarks, and is based upon extensive research.

There are four presentations. "The Kalapuya" offers a view of the local Native Americans. "Mountain Men: Trappers and Traders" highlights the life of the first Euro-Americans in the Oregon Territory. "On the Oregon Trail" draws children into the excitement of traveling the Oregon Trail. "Pioneer Life" introduces youngsters to the early settlers and their tools. Each program is designed to give every child an opportunity to see and touch real things that were used by real people in the past.

The Nomadic Teacher is being offered to all Yamhill County schools and school districts in Clackamas, Marion (including Salem) and Polk Counties. The subsidy from Spirit Mountain Community Fund means that schools only pay \$25 for a one hour classroom presentation. And there is no additional transportation cost for the school. For additional information, call 503-538-9721.



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

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

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES**

**Effective May 31, 2002**

- Individual \$15
- Family \$25
- Friend \$50+
- Supporter \$100+
- Community Builder \$250+
- Community Benefactor \$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**

*Meeting Notice*

**Board of Directors:**

**December 10, 4:00 pm**

**Monthly Meeting & Potluck:**

**December 10, 6:30**

**Both at Seventh Day Adventist Church,  
 Old Sheridan Road, McMinnville**

Our December meeting will feature Donna Hulett of Sheridan discussing the history of quilts. (Donna is a descendent of pioneer James Brown) Please join us for dinner; bring potluck fare and your own eating utensils.

*We Hope to See you There!*