

The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

January 2004

A Musical Meeting

At our December general meeting we enjoyed the very talented Mavericks, who hosted a Christmas sing-along for us. With their guitars, violins, accordion and other instruments they livened up our meeting with a host of old time tunes and carols. The Dayton Tribune kindly made copies of the words to the songs, which helped those of us who are memory-challenged.

The members of the Mavericks include Dennis Brutke and Bob and Marie Bailey, all from Amity, Norm McGrew and Francis Dummer from Dayton, Kurt Hill from Yamhill and Les Tucker from Woodburn..

Our members joined in many of the normal seasonal songs as well as some old time favorites like "Red River Valley", "Beer Barrel Polka", "You Are My Sunshine" and even a patriotic selection or two.

This volunteer group can be found playing their instruments and singing almost any night of the week in various arenas, such as group care homes and retirement centers in two or three counties.

It is always a special treat to listen to and join in with this group. They are no newcomers to our Society, having given presentations to at least several of our Harvest Festivals. Their music is always enjoyed, and we thank them for allowing us to join in with them last month.

From our President

I went to a friend's 60th birthday party last week. It was interesting how a person's life wends its way and she ended up living in Oregon. Most of the people in the Historical Society can trace their lineage to an early wagon train arriving in this state. Not I !! It was a 1973 Chevy from southern California by way of Colorado and Nebraska. Nebraska is my home state. It is a good state to be from. Both of my grandparents on my father and mother's sides homesteaded in Hayes County, Nebraska. One was a railroader and arrived by train from Illinois. My dad was born in a sod house on the homestead. The other came in a covered wagon from Kansas. My mother was three at the time. Sod was used to build their homes as there were no trees except the cottonwood along the streams. These families were neighbors and my mother and father were married in 1916. Team and buggies were the mode of transportation. I was born on a farm in this county, grew up there, married my high school sweetheart, taught school and eventually moved to Colorado where I first became involved in a historical society in Evergreen. I've been interested in the history of people every since I can remember. I am familiar with the Oregon Trail as it crossed Nebraska along the Platte River. Who would guess that someday I would live at the end of the Oregon Trail. As I said, "It is interesting how a person's life wends its way to living in Oregon. It is now my chosen state and I love it!! Wishing all of you the best in "2004", Shirley

Board Meeting Highlights

The Board met on December 9th 2003 prior to the general meeting. Full minutes of this meeting can be found in the Museum and on our website. The Treasurers' Report was given by Carol reflecting an income of \$792.12, expenses of \$1,164.42, and leaving a balance of \$4,995.61. Our funds have been moved to the First Federal Bank. Financial Secretary Lila reported one renewal and one new member. We now we have about 170 paid and 30 complimentary members for a total of 200. Correspondence Secretary Marjorie reported one piece of correspondence sent. Volunteer Chair Carol reported staffing is sufficient, and she and her husband will cover the extra fifth Sunday that happens occasionally.

Carol reported that we still need volunteers for the March Mormon Church Event. We need volunteer greeters for this. Carol reported the volunteer meeting held on November 15th was well attended and productive. Display and Steering committees were formed. In the near future there will be a volunteer-orientation committee formed to help new volunteers. Nomadic Teacher Contract: Shirley and Dan met with Walt Gowell, Attorney, to get legal advice on the Nomadic Teacher contract. A \$350 refund check was received from the Nomadic Teacher program. Dan will be setting up a meeting of the Steering committee next month, in hopes of making recommendations for changes in our museum facilities. Carol, Dan, Francis and Ken Williams met and have nearly completed next years budget. They will meet once more to tie up some loose ends. The church steeple needs an inspection, since it appears to be leaning and could be a safety problem. Our copy machine is giving out needs to be replaced before it dies completely.

Anyone can attend board meetings, but they should request placement on the agenda if they wish to make a presentation to the Board. These will be limited to ten minutes. Presenters will also be asked not to interrupt during the meeting. Annita reported the upstairs shelves are finished and will accommodate the maximum number of archival boxes for the area. "Song of Yamhill", a book written by Gordon Zimmerman, has been published and can be purchased directly from him. The Board agreed to pay the \$36 for next years rental of the safety deposit box, and to review its contents to determine which items need to be kept there and which should be placed elsewhere Five acre Report: December 22nd is the deadline for appeals on the five-acre land use variance process, allowing a living museum facility in a exclusive farm use area. If there is any consideration of working with the Genealogy Society sometime in the future it needs to be given careful consideration. Our CPA, Elaine Andrews, is retiring but has recommended Cherina Hart, CPA. Cherina will be retained by the Board.

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 - 2004President

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472-7328

VP/Program

Barbara Knutson
843-2069

Secretary

Annita Linscheid
843-2625

Treasurer

Carol Reid
472-9631

Membership Secretary

Lila Jackson
472-8510

CorrespondingSecretary

Marjorie Owens
843-3081

Board of Directors

Eileen Lewis
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Francis Dummer
864-2637

Dan Linscheid
843-2625

Shirley McDaniel
662-3528

Volunteer Coordinator

Carol Reid
472-9631

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

New Email:
yamhillhistory@
onlinemac.com

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YCHS

“The Good Life”

Henry Hewitt, a rugged Oregon pioneer, was born in Pennsylvania, Nov. 19, 1822, where he received his early schooling. When he was 16, his family moved to Missouri and settled next to the Daniel Mathenys (Ma-the'-ny). They all were looking forward to the “good life” promised by the Louisiana Purchase. Eventually, Henry became acquainted with Matheny's daughter, Elizabeth, and they were married in 1841.

Henry and Elizabeth were an enthusiastic couple. Listening to stories of adventure and wonders of the West—from an old mountaineer they had met—set their imaginations on fire. At a large public meeting, Henry convinced thirty-six men to make the journey. They formed the “Oregon Company” with all participants signing a contract. They were to leave in the Spring of 1842 (a year before the Great Emigration).

But, in spite of Henry's and Elizabeth's enthusiasm, thirty of the signers reneged on the contract. At best, the trip would be a hazardous one: no wagon train had yet crossed the plains to Oregon. So the Hewitts were uneasy about taking that long trip with such a small group. They decided to wait.

Hewitts join first great emigration

It was spring and there they were about to become part of that First Great Emigration of 1843! The small company, including Elizabeth's parents, Captain Daniel and Mary (Cooper) Matheny, arrived at the rendezvous in early May. There they joined Applegate, Burnett, Martin and about 1000 other souls heading for the “Promised Land!”

Hewitt suggested that the company move along in four columns—side by side—across the land. He felt sure this would provide the best protection from Indian attacks and create less dust. However, making four different roads was hard on animals and drivers and, since the Indian attacks did not materialize, they resolved into a single line.

Accounts of the emigration differ. We know it was not just one long line of 100 covered wagons. The train was broken into two or three smaller companies with each having different experiences. Crossing rivers was accomplished in several ways: some chained the wagons together, some attached canoes to the side of their wagons and some, like the Hewitts, made the wagon into a boat by covering the bottom with buffalo robes. All these methods were probably tried at each river crossing.

Rules governing emigrant behavior also must have varied from column to column. Some complained of constant bickering and fighting while

Hewitt didn't mention his captain so we're not sure which group he was with. However, he did mention Gant, the famous “Mountain Man” hired to guide the train, and Marcus Whitman who joined them along the Platte River and was a great help to the emigrants. The Henry Hewitt family spawned hardworking contributors to the valley society and the state in general. It is exciting and a privilege to learn about these strong families who were tempered by the trail and developed a strong social structure. It's no wonder Oregon is noted for her national leadership and dogged individualism. He also mentions Sticcus, the Indian guide who was held in high regard for getting them through the Blue Mountains.

In any case, try to visualize 100 wagons, 5000 head of stock and 1000 emigrants crossing 2000 miles of road-less wilderness! Every type of behavior “in the book” was played-out over that six months period; 1000 stories—each unique and heroic.

“Let us be first”

An interesting trait held by Henry Hewitt was his desire to always be first. By pushing his team to the limit, he was the first wagon to cross the Blue Mountains. (At least first with family and supplies in one piece). His plan to arrive first at The Dalles was foiled by David Lenox. Henry was second!

Apparently, the Hewitts did not raft down the river with the other emigrants. Henry's father-in-law, Captain Daniel Matheny, didn't trust the frail rafts that the emigrants were building so he chose to follow an old Indian trail over the mountains. Some references have the Hewitts going down the river but Charlotte Matheny Kirkwood, in her book, “Into the Eye of the Setting Sun,” specifically mentions Elizabeth on the Lolo Trail (Indian for “carry trail”) and, of course, Henry would have been with her. Descendants of the families feel sure that the Hewitts were with the Mathenys over the tortuous land route from The Dalles to Oregon City. They left their wagons in The Dalles and packed their supplies by animals.

Dry place hard to find

Arriving at Oregon City they found every nook and cranny filled to overflowing with families who had successfully made the trip downriver. Since it was raining constantly they pitched their tent in the mud. It was several days before they found a dry room. Later, they moved and settled in the Washington county area.

(cont. on page 3)

Henry H. Hewitt (cont.)

They ate boiled wheat most every meal, and cursed the rain through April of that next year. It was a dismal time for Henry and Elizabeth with their little two-year-old Ann Eliza. Spirits were vastly improved with the arrival of a beautiful spring and their first son, Daniel.

They decided to move up the Willamette River to be closer to their family. Daniel Matheny, Henry's father-in-law, settled where Wheatland now stands and started the first ferry across the Willamette River. (It was on December 11, 1993 that the Matheny and Hewitt descendants placed a plaque at this site to honor the 150th anniversary of the Ferry and the 200th birthday of Daniel Matheny.)

Henry and Elizabeth raised their family at Unionvale, Oregon; just a short ride north of the Mathenys. Of their ten children, nine boys were born after they arrived in Oregon. Ann Eliza, the oldest child (and only girl), was a baby on the Oregon Trail. She became Mrs. John I. Thornton of Yamhill County. The boys became farmers, jewelers, builders, doctors and judges.

Noted sons and daughters

Judge H.H. Hewitt, probably the most noted of the children, served the state and valley for many years. Being a bright child who received intermittent schooling early in life, he was able to attend and graduate from Willamette University in 1870 with a A.B. Degree. He was a teacher at McMinnville College, and Principal in Lafayette, Amity, and Scio. For two years, he was a professor of Greek, Latin and Mathematics in the Albany Collegiate Institute. He married Maggie J. Rowland in 1872; the same year he was appointed Superintendent of Schools for Yamhill County.

Later, in 1877, he was admitted to the bar and practiced with both H. Bryant and O. H. Irvine. In 1888, he was elected attorney of the Third Judicial District of the State of Oregon and in 1894 elected Judge of the same district.

Member Recognized

While Marietta Rankin was helping the ladies this summer working on preserving our quilts, she was also volunteering with the McMinnville Head Start Program. Her efforts earned her a large article in the News-Register on November 15th of this year. And we are given to understand she will soon be receiving more recognition in Seattle for her efforts with Head Start. Congratulations, Marietta. A very busy lady !

Decorations in Museum

Twila Burnes, Jean Sartor, Marjorie Owens and Barbara Doyle recently placed Christmas decorations up in the Log Building and Church. Barbara donated the live tree in the Log Building and Jean donated the artificial tree in the Church. Thanks, Ladies.

Don't forget to vote!

If you bank at First Federal, please remember to vote for our society this next go around.... It helps pay the electric and other bills! Thanks, Shirley

**1080 ACRES OF LAND
FOR SALE!**

PLENTY OF CEDAR TIMBER ON IT, AND GOOD STOCK RANGE; TEN MILES WEST FROM NORTH YAMHILL. PRICE \$2,300 (TWENTY-THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS)

MATT MARONEY

FAIRDALE, OREGON

(from April 4, 1894 Telephone-Register)

Visitations

On November 25th, twelve students, ages 9 to 19 from West Valley Academy, Ballston, visited the museum in the late afternoon. Some of these children come from local school districts and some are private students. They were well behaved and quite alert, and were a delightful group to guide through the buildings.

One young fellow wanted to be sure his teacher "Doris" saw the picture of her ancestors in the Log Building. The Director, Janice Weidner Davidson accompanied them along with three teachers; Doris White, who arranged the tour and who is a former historical Society President; Clinton White; and Carol Glenn. Two fathers and two other adults also joined the tour.

Our museum was included in a special Portland trip to see the Trail Blazers as guests of Damon Stoudamire. Twila, Lois and Ed

Correction Noted

In our last edition, we erroneously noted that Lois Brooks would chair our new Display Committee. Lois has pointed out that she does not serve on that committee, let alone chair it. We regret goofing up on this issue. Lois has served as President of this organization, and continues to assist our society in many ways. Twila Byrnes will in fact chair the Display Committee.

Official Business

At our December general meeting, our members unanimously approved the proposed By-Laws changes, a copy of which may be inserted in a newsletter if there's enough interest shown. Basically, this changed the title of Financial Secretary to Membership Secretary, moving the financial responsibilities of that office to that of Treasurer. Another adopted change related to Honorary Membership, which will now read Honorary Life Membership, and will no longer be limited to a one-year term.

Officers elected at the meeting include Lila Jackson, as newly created Membership Secretary, Barbara Knutson as Vice President, and Marjorie Owens as Corresponding Secretary. These are all four year terms. Marjorie expressed a willingness to step down if someone (like Betty Baltzell?) wants this job more than her.

Thanks for the donations

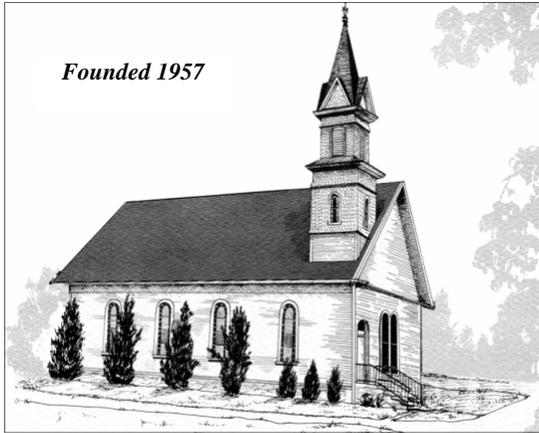
We want to thank those people who went to the effort to donate the muslin for use in preserving textiles in our archives. We're not sure who donated this, but it sure is appreciated.

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 484

Lafayette Oregon 97127

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Dated Material - Return Service Requested

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Effective May 31, 2002

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$15
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<input type="checkbox"/> Friend	\$50+
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporter	\$100+
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Builder	\$250+
<input type="checkbox"/> 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. (The month and year indicate your "paid through" period according to our records.) If you see a colored "dot" on your label, you're at the end of your membership term!

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Meeting Notice:

Board of Directors:

Tuesday, January 13, 5:00 pm

Monthly Meeting:

Same day as Board meeting., 6:30 pm

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

This meeting will feature Yamhill County Century Farms, a study done by Professor Peterson's class at Linfield College. Please join us.

Renewing and New Members:

We welcome returning members **Joe & Coral Dancer, Edna Robertson, Betty Baltzell, Marie Schwalb, Margaret Brixey, Brian & Barbara Doyle, Opal Lahley, Pat Harding, Ken & Pat Myers, Charlene Brown, Marian Gray, Christie & Henry Wyman, Patsey Miller** and new members **Cathy Peck and George & Edwina Meitzen**. Your continued support of this organization is deeply appreciated.