

The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

March 2006

Fort Yamhill Presentation

Dennis Werth, longtime resident between Grand Ronde and Willamina, was our speaker on Fort Yamhill at our February meeting. Between 1856 and 1866 this fort bustled with a mixture of U.S. military men and native American tribes from around the northwest. The property, just over the Polk county line, is now owned by the Oregon Parks department.

Dennis studied archeology in college and knows a lot about this particular fort. He has on occasion been able to correct some of the beliefs held by state employees regarding the fort, its purpose, and location of facilities. For example, it was believed that the fort was constructed to protect the white settlers from the natives, but Dennis pointed that with the expansion of the white settlements in the northwest, the natives, who were generally perceived by settlers to be savages, needed protection.

The location of the blockhouse was another point of discussion between Dennis and the State Parks folks. Dennis was able to show that there was an earlier site prepared for this structure, which is reflected in the official records. However, the stories handed down by many pioneers from the area over the past 150 years placed it in an entirely different location.

Dennis recently visited the blockhouse in Dayton, and noted the fact that it has deteriorated drastically over the past 150 years. Only the top part of this building was moved from the agency in 1911, and the remaining bottom portion was left to rot or be cut up for firewood.

Original military artifacts from the fort are very rare, given the fact that nearly every square inch of the site has been picked over for 15 decades. Dennis also discussed Lt. Phil Sheridan's stay in the area, and the fact that he probably did not stay in the Commanders Quarters during his stay. We thank Dennis for his interest in the fort and his work in giving this presentation. He obviously knows the history of this area very well.

Board Meeting highlights

The February 14th meeting was attended by all officers and directors. After the minutes were approved, Carol Reid gave the Treasurers report, which was also approved. The board voted to allow the Basketry Guild to keep a CD containing their curation results of our basketry. It was also moved and approved to have the Wednesday workgroup create a policy for volunteers to use in handling artifacts. A bid of \$19,000 for repairs to the Log Building was approved. The board established a limit of \$350 for any purchases by the Steering committee. Also, the board confirmed the policy that all monies received by the society go through our Treasurer. Discussion was also held regarding the newly purchased cash register, meeting minimally three times/year at the Public Works auditorium, and the setting of a Feb. 22nd meeting for the board to discuss policy matters relating to the new museum.

From our President

Growing Pains: Because of the consistency of concern and care for the Historical Society by the volunteers, because of hours of work and dedication for the preservation and accessioning of articles donated to the Museum, because of the far sighted members who see the future of the Museum in the realm of Yamhill County, the Yamhill County Historical Society has developed an excellent record which has led to people trusting the Board of Directors and the volunteers to do what is right.

As a result of these good works the Community is becoming aware of the care artifacts are given at the museum and are willing to donate more of the family treasures to our keeping.

With this excellent track record we find ourselves moving more into the main stream of Yamhill County's historical interests. We are not only working with pioneer families and their decedents but also with new comers to our county who love history and want to learn about where they are now living and have their children experience things of the past.

Barbara Knutson continues to provide wonderful speakers for our General Meetings. We are so happy to have Barbara continue to do this. Thank you. I was hoping Ken would have on his apron at the last meeting. Ken is so good at helping set up the tables and for this we give him a special thanks!!

Thanks to Millie Armstrong's efforts we have received a hat collection for display, fun activities and maybe to be sold at the garage sale (If they get past the volunteers). We will be seeing more of this collection.

With a heads up from Gloria Lutes, Marjorie was able to obtain a map storage unit to be used in the Stoller Research Library.

The Board has contracted with a specialist in maintenance & preservation of the logs in the Miller Log Museum. This work will take place when the weather allows.

There will be a combination Board/Building Committee Meeting Wednesday, March 8th, at the Log Museum to discuss policy and communication. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

A "Slide Presentation and Talk" featuring the new Museum site will be shown at the March 14th General Meeting. See you there. Shirley

*The Yamhill County Historical Society is a nonprofit
tax exempt educational and public service*

OFFICERS - 2006

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Carol Reid

Newsletter

Dan Linscheid

Car Pool Coordinator

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-5893

Librarian

Jean Sartor
472-6312

MUSEUM HOURS:

Sept. thru June:

Sat. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

or

By Appointment

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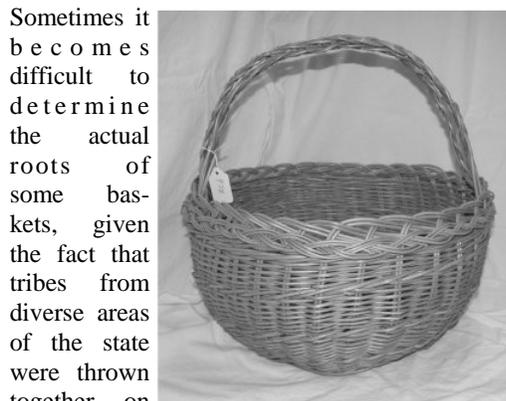
YCHS

More on our Basket Collection

On February 18th the ladies from the Cultural Committee of Columbia Basin Basketry Guild returned to continue the curating process on all of our woven artifacts.



When asked which baskets of ours might be considered most unusual or precious, they brought out the basket shown at the left. This was most likely made by either the Grand Ronde or the Siletz tribe, based on the weave and materials, using both reeds and hazel shoots. This is a very tight weave. The group was confident that the larger basket shown below was made by the Siletz tribe, based on the open, upward slope of the weave and the double woven handle.



Sometimes it becomes difficult to determine the actual roots of some baskets, given the fact that tribes from diverse areas of the state were thrown together on the reservations, and their basket weaving practices migrated to other tribes accordingly.

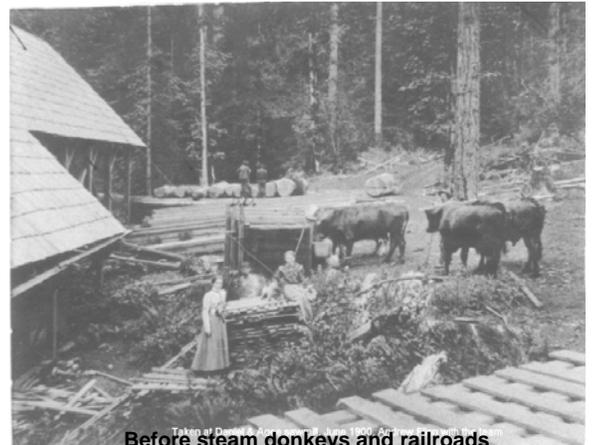
That these ladies love studying and preserving these woven artifacts goes without saying. Although they spent the better part of two complete Saturdays in curating our collection, they will need one more session to finish up.

Recent Donations

Dean Werth of Newberg recently donated some old tools and implements which were once owned by Antonia Crater, for whom Crater Lane in Newberg was named. Dean also donated more of his collection of old photographic reproduction equipment. Dean's knowledge of photography and processing equipment is phenomenal. We need a volunteer to meet with him sometime so we can document these processes, so we can help future generations learn about these items.

CARLTON, OREGON - THE LOGGING CENTER OF THE STATE -By Jim Lockett

Logging and sawmills were early industries in the Carlton area. As the gold rush attracted many men from Yamhill County, the people of this little hamlet realized that "not all that glitters is gold". Their "gold" was the tall green virgin stands of forest that grew between the town and the Pacific Coast. Up to this time there was little the pioneer had to do but take his axe and saw to the woods to shape wonderful logs for a home. With the help of neighbors, an a cabin was built in no time; the value of which was priceless.



Before steam donkeys and railroads

In 1852, Oliver Adams bought John R McBride's place on Panther Creek and soon had a sawmill up and running. It was a primitive affair with the lumber sawed by hand: one man under the log and the other wielding a long saw. Getting the logs to the mill was a chore: requiring several yoke of oxen to drag the huge timber to the mill. Panther Creek seemed to be ideal for the mills: Oliver soon had a second mill going, King and McCullough built a mill on the creek as did George W. Jones. It was 1865 before Jones built a sawmill but he was able to use steam to run his saws. It was a great leap forward. With this lumber now available, the area buildings took on a more modern look.

By 1904, the Carlton Lumber Company built a storage dam on the North Yamhill River to create a 500-acre holding pond. Thus Carlton Lake came into being: a great log storage pond but also a wonderful wild life refuge. For over 50 years, this lake served as the holding pond for several saw mills in the area. However, getting the logs to the mills was still a problem; it was during this time that loggers began to transport their logs by river. The popularity of the river as a route of commerce led to many a conflict. Log floating was a particular point of contention. W.A. Howe of the Carlton Lumber Company would

cut logs upstream on the North Yamhill, build a splash dam, dump the logs into the resulting pond, then release the flood-gates and let the rush of water carry the logs downstream. Invariably, the floating logs damaged property as they made their way downstream. The process was repeated until the logs finally reached the main lake at the Carlton mill site. There were hard feelings and a number of law suits were filed against the sawmill operators.

In the late 1800's the logging industry found *steam*. The steam "donkey" was being utilized to skid logs from far greater distances and some terrain that is more rugged. The giant steam rigs were massive in size and power, giving the logger a quicker and better way to get logs to the river. These rigs, mounted on skids, would pull themselves to

their place of work and then, with a spar tree to carry the cables, pull logs in from incredible distances.

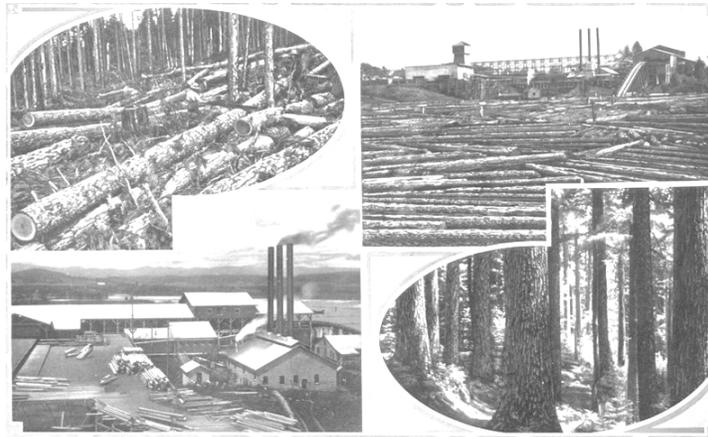
As logging practices improved in the woods, we find the Carlton Lumber Company expanding to use these logs. By 1907, they had sold to Consolidated Lumber Company, a new group of investors with money to expand the company. However, when the river was low the logs did not make it down to the millpond. At times like this, the mill was shut down making unemployment in Carlton a problem. Plans to solve this were in the works by 1909. Owners of the Consolidated Lumber Company set in motion a plan to build a railroad from Carlton to Tillamook. The railroad was named the "Carlton & Coast Railroad". This would provide a method to get the logs from that great forest to the mills in Carlton, making it the lumber center of the state and the gateway to the coast.

By this time, the Consolidated Company mill increased its capacity to 250,000 board-feet per day. They had 90 men in the mill and another 80 in the logging operation. The mill was equipped with an 11-ft. band saw and resaw, powered by a 1,200 horsepower steam engine. The power plant consisted of six steam boilers producing 1,800 horsepower - 250 of which was converted to electricity to run the lights and equipment. The mills needed logs and the train would keep them coming. By the middle of the 1930's the railroad was bringing in 100 carloads of logs each day; dumping them into the millpond. However, some of the logs were diverted to the Southern Pacific Railroad and sent to other mills around Oregon.

The railroad itself is an amazing story. While never reaching the coast, passengers could ride to the end of the line and catch a stage to Tillamook. Even the school was part of the plan.

A freight car was remodeled into a nice classroom and made the trip every week with a teacher aboard to teach in the community that was at the end of the line, Flora. It took the "Boxcar Schoolhouse" four and quarter-hours to get to Flora

but only one hour and a quarter on the return trip. A comfortable teacherage was provided in Flora to accommodate the teacher. At the time, Flora housed about 300 people and the teacher had 11 children to teach. The Teacher, Miss McClintick, says she would not trade places with any other teacher: her 11 boys and girls were anxious to learn and do everything possible to help.



Carlton Logging Operations in woods, lake, sawmill & virgin stand

The building of the railroad grade is a story hard to believe. The first few miles up the river to Pike was easy but as they moved into the rugged coast range, the grade became steep making bridges over deep canyons a problem. Trestles almost 20-stories high were built to carry the trains over the deep abysses. 26 miles of the road was completed and logs began to roll out to Carlton. Tragically, the Tillamook fire of 1939 came along and wiped out the virgin timber; over 26



A Big Log

trestles were burned-out and the grade all but destroyed. But that didn't end the timber industry in Carlton. It was determined to log the burn and thousand of feet of lumber came off the Tillamook burn. Our country was in dire need of lumber and burned timber answered the call.

Loggers moved into the area and logged extensively for several years. As the land was cleared hundreds of volunteers begin to plant trees. Today we have a wonderful forest in that burned over area.

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Effective May 31, 2002

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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 Carol Reid at 472-9631, or 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 notice inside your newsletter, you're at the end of your membership term!

Please check the insert from the December newsletter for info on the transition to an annual renewal date of July. (And don't hesitate to ask if you have questions)

Calendar of Events

Board of Directors: 4:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 14th. Our next regular monthly meeting will be held 6:30 p.m., same day, both at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in McMinnville. Our program this month will be the multi-media presentation of the new museum facility.

New Members/Renewals: We welcome renewing members Patricia Harding, Jo McIntyre, Elizabeth Baltzell, Jean Sartor, Rosmary Vertregt, Eileen Lewis, Dina Nuxoll, and Richard Ulrich and new members and new member Barbara Herring and Victoria Charbonnier.

Thanks for supporting our organization. We invite you to attend our meetings, visit our museum and become more involved in our local history!