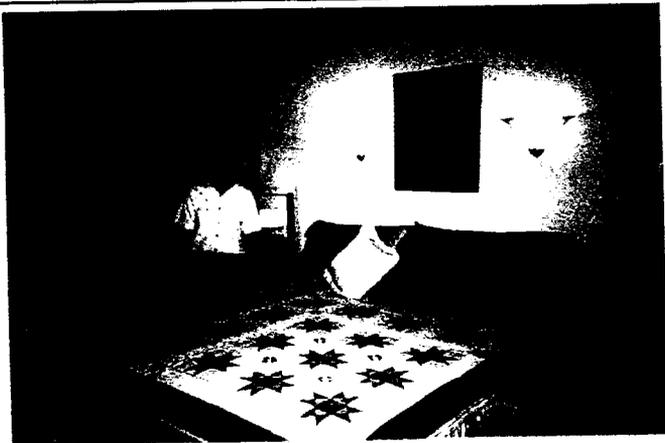


# The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

January 2000



## Harvest Festival Quilt Winner

The home of Donna Brentano was featured in the December Holiday tour of homes sponsored by the Soroptimist of McMinnville. Her home was built in the 1890's and is located on Brentano Lane. Donna and her husband Bud (who was born there 73 years ago) along with their daughter Susan and family have restored this home and reside there together. Pictured is Donna with the quilt made by the "Piecemakers" Quilting Group, which she won at the drawing during the Harvest Festival.

Members are welcome to join in celebrating Ken & Barbara Knutson's 50th wedding anniversary at a reception on Jan. 23rd, 1-4 pm, at the Trinity Lutheran Church, 430 N. Washington, in Dallas. They were actually married on Jan. 20th, 1949.



George Camplair and Bob Kuykendall "surround" an unknown visitor at our Harvest Festival.....



Opal Lahley showing off her talents at the organ in the Museum during Harvest Festival.....

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

One of the Questions asked at the last Board Meeting was "What activities and events do you want for the Museum and the Society in the year 2000?" The only definite event listed was the Harvest Festival in October. The other things we discussed were the list of priorities needed at the Museum. We are still trying to find a solution to new doors at the Museum. They are not standard anything. They will need to be custom built. We have requested bids for the wiring in the "barn". Morgan McGee is

chinking the log building. He will also do some minor repairs. We are still discussing the best use of our limited space especially in the old addition to the church. That area is in need of some new flooring, new windows, new electrical wiring and ceilings. With all of this perhaps the year "2000" is already planned for us. Our promise to you is, "we will do our best to prepare, repair and maintain the museum complex and the society activities into this new century"!! Happy New Year everyone!! Sincerely, Shirley.

## CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS REVISION

At the December meeting the proposed By-Laws were approved unanimously by the membership. Many thanks to Maxine Williams and the rest of the committee for putting together an excellent document that should not require any more changes for many years. (knock on wood)

## This Months Quiz....

Anyone recognize this young lady from her 1930-31 Yamhill High School student body photograph? Here's a clue... she's now a tireless volunteer at the museum. (Answer at bottom of page 3)



*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 - 2000**

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472-7328

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843-3081

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Robert Kuykendall  
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Dan Linscheid  
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(Vacancy)

Volunteer Coordinator

Maxine Williams  
472-4547

Librarian

Olive Merry Johnson  
472-6070

Newsletter

Dan Linscheid  
843-2625

Car Pool Coordinator

Joanne Watts  
835-5893

**MUSEUM HOURS**

Sept 1 to 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

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McMinnville OR  
97128



Some very strange looking characters showed up and joined the fun at our Harvest Festival.... Make sure you mark it on your calendar for next year!!

**JOHN WHITE**

Sept 13, 1929—Nov. 14, 1999

Our Society suffered a great loss with the passing of John White last November. John was born in Portland to James and Aubrey White. He was raised in Portland but spent considerable time with his grandparents in Newberg.

He graduated from Hill Military Academy on Rocky Butte in 1947, and served two years in the Army. Following his discharge, he worked for his father in the wholesale auto parts business.

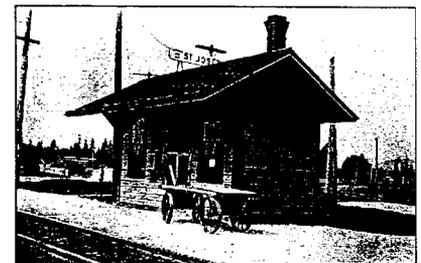
He married Betty Mutton on April 21, 1956 in St. Helens, where they lived until 1959, when they moved to Gresham.

John enjoyed studying postal history and stamp collecting and was a member of numerous Canadian Philatelic societies and the Oregon Stamp Society. He was also active in the North West Gresham Neighborhood Association and had been a member of the Gresham Volunteer Fire Department for many years.

John was a published author and also editor of this newsletter for the past seven years. He is survived by his wife and son James W. of Portland.

John's diligence in researching early Yamhill County and writing articles and books is clearly evident to visitors at our Museum.

At our December meeting Bob Kuykendall spoke about how our lives were enriched by John. Several others in attendance offered brief remembrances of John as a man of integrity, with a profound sense of obligation to future generations in his research efforts. John will be deeply missed by all those whose lives he touched.



Early St. Joseph... a picture from Olive Johnson's collection.

**JANUARY GENERAL MEETING AND POTLUCK DINNER**

For our next potluck we will be returning to the McMinnville Community Christian Church, 2831 NE Newby Street, McMinnville, on Tuesday, January 11th at 6:30 p.m. Our program for the night will be excerpts from the 1846 diary of John R. McBride, an early pioneer who was admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court, and later served as our congressional delegate in Washington, D.C.

**HERITAGE TREE PROPOSAL CORRECTION**

The giant black walnut tree being researched by member Ben Frum is located on Cleo and Pat Harding's farm on Oldsville Road. The tree was entered into our County Heritage tree inventory in 1993. A nomination will be submitted to the Oregon Heritage Tree Program term when completed. George Williams is still a member of our heritage tree committee.

**NEW MEMBERS**

We welcome the following new member and hope to become acquainted with her at future Society functions:

Blanche C. Yoast, McMinnville

**LIFE MEMBERSHIP**

Shirley Venhaus, McMinnville

**PASSED AWAY**

John White, Gresham  
George Camplair, McMinnville

A special thanks to Joanne Watts for the donation of the evergreen wreath and boughs for use in the Museum during the Holidays

January 2000

Reita and I moved to Yamhill County about 50 years ago. Having moved from the geological "gold mine" of North Eastern Oregon I felt this area to be topographically unexciting. I love McMinnville, its schools and people, Portland to the East and the Ocean to the West. Then the great Cascades with their beauty, in every season, were just a couple of hours away. I felt my geological curiosity would be met by the Cascades and the Ocean. My Geology classes at Eastern Oregon College had prepared me for that.

As my interest in the history of the area sharpened I found myself wondering about the land where we lived. I signed up for "Geology of Oregon" Classes at Chemeketa Community College. Under a great instructor, Barbara Kirk, I learned that Yamhill County may have seen the most cataclysmic geological changes of any place on earth. We were ocean, then tropics, and finally the land felt the force of the great basalt and ice age floods.

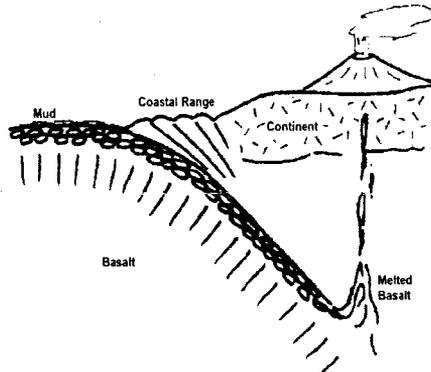
The history of the various land forms we find in Yamhill County is based on evidence found in the rocks and soils around us. It is also based on geological principals developed by scholars. Plate Tectonics (the movement of the earth's crust over the molten rock below) played an important role in this story. Oregon is situated on the leading edge of the North American Plate and had repeatedly been the site of multiple collisions, usually with smaller island arcs. Probably two thirds or more of Oregon is made up of rocks and sediments originating elsewhere 'in the Pacific ocean.

About 250 million years ago the major land form of the earth was one large continent called "Pangaea." The currents below this crust were working 'in opposition to each other and the land split and moved about. The America's split off from the European and African masses and began to move to the West and North. The plate which is our land is called the North American Plate. It is still moving at about 2 inches per year.

200 million years ago we find the North American plate moving west with its coastline well in the interior, about where the Oregon/Idaho boarder is now located. As it moved along/about 6000 miles at 2 inches per year) it overran the ocean plates. These plates are heavier material and, after the sediments were scraped off by the North American plate, sank below the crust of land. The ocean plate, upon reaching depths that were very hot melted and found its way back through the upper crust as molten rock to form the volcanoes of the area. Typically these volcanoes would be about 100 miles inland from the coast. As the North American plate moved over the ocean plate it collided with microcontinents and island arcs that became attached to the plate. The first major collision was the Okanogan Micro-continent about 100 million years ago. The North Cascade micro-continent was the next acquisition pushing the shoreline in the Washington State area almost to the Seattle area. During this time the Wallowa and Blue Mountain island arcs were arriving at about their present location. As Dr. John Allen discussed in his Oregonian Geology articles, a dent in the North American plate was formed. The dent ran from the Olympic Mountains to the Wallowas and then back West to the Klamath Mountains and is generally known as the Columbia Triangle. This, 65 million years ago, was to be our prehistoric coastline. When the dinosaurs died out, Yamhill County was still under water, or rather, still an ocean floor.

The great rivers of the area were flowing and depositing their treasures in the Columbia Triangle. The Columbia River was the largest and at first probably emptied into the ocean near the present Pendleton. The other rivers, entering from the north and south added their load of silt and rock to the new-forming land of the Columbia Triangle. The Columbia itself flowed through the middle of this area, building land as it went.

During this time, we know there was volcanic activity and a tropical climate. The Yellowstone Hot Spot may have passed 'in this area on its way to Wyoming causing great volcanic outpourings. There is some new thinking that this Hot Spot started in Southeastern Oregon from a large meteorite. It's trail is easy to see up the Snake River to its presents location. Our Columbia Triangle has been so weathered, covered with basalt and having its own volcanic activity that nobody can really tell. The creation of the island arcs and microcontinents to the North American Plate had moved the subduction zone of the ocean plate way west to about its present location. This also caused volcanic action to move west as the volcanoes are associated with the ocean trench at the subduction zone. Remember, it is the ocean crust sinking and melting that accounts for new lava.



Cross-section showing how descending oceanic crust scrapes off its covering of mud to form a coastal range and then partially melts farther down to generate an inland chain of volcanoes.

About this time another happening provided us with our coast range. Great rifts 'in the ocean crust east of the subduction zone opened and lava poured out building our coast range, starting in the Coos Bay area and building north. This was happening under water and would eventually be one of the greatest outpouring of lava in the world. At the same time the Columbia Triangle was filling and we find many prehistoric plants and animals growing in a tropical climate. The Columbia River still flowed through the middle of this area and some believe emptied into the ocean about where Newport, Oregon is now. There is good evidence of a very large delta in that area. Also Geologist are sure that the river pushed through at Silvercreek Falls and on through Salem. Some think it was the Deschutes River that built the great Delta but the Columbia was, for sure, far South of where it is today.

The next great activity was our famous Basalt Floods. This hot molten rock flowed out of the earth in the upper part of the triangle, usually called the Innaha, Grande Ronde and Yakima floods but generally called the Columbia Basalt Floods about 15 million years ago. The mass of molten rock found weak spots in the crust of the earth and flowed out through swarms of fissures. Over 50 thousand square miles of land was covered. Every few years for several thousand years, the hot, fluid lava

poured out and flowed clear to the Pacific Ocean. Usually a flood would lay a layer of basalt down between 1 foot to 20 feet deep. New flows continued to come until, in places, they were 10,000 feet thick.

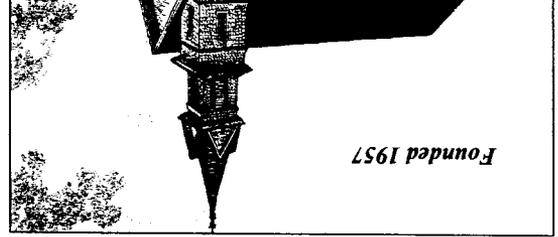
Interestingly, these lava floods followed the rivers clear to the ocean. The first was down the Columbia to the Newport area forming the Yaquina Head. Each flood pushed the Columbia north so the Capes along the North coast, such as Cape Lookout, were poured for us to enjoy. It is also interesting to note that the Eola Hills are of these same Basalt Floods. I like to think of it as "God's Country" rock that poured down to this area from the Grande Ronde area.

Well now, we are down to recent times; just 25 thousand years ago. Our valley is enclosed by the low Coast Range and the Cascades, the Columbia river is about where it belongs although the last 50 miles of the river are continually being pushed north. The first Mt. Hood has been completely destroyed and a second one is in place; approximately 25 thousand years old and still active. The Ice Age is upon us and the tropics are a dim memory of many extinct plants and animals. The Yamhill area with its beautiful coast range, to the west, is a mixture of water-deposited soil, ash and debris from volcanic activity. The stage is now set for the next great cataclysmic event.

Around 15,000 BC the great ice caps of the Ice Age began to melt. In the Missoula, Montana area the melting was fairly rapid but great glaciers downstream dammed the water to great depths. Over 500 cubic miles of water would build and suddenly be released downstream by a weakened ice dam. This water poured across the land creating the Scab Lands of present Washington State. The water had only one place to go and that was down the Columbia. The water rushed past The Dalles, Oregon over 900 feet above the present level of the river. It poured into the Portland area and filled the Willamette Valley to the present Eugene area. The water carried a lot of that good palouse soil and deposited it downstream. Yamhill County got a lot of it. The flood also carried large icebergs with embedded rocks. These rocks, called erratics, were deposited all over the valley. Our biggest one, toward Bellevue, weighs over 100,000 ton. This flooding happened at least 40 times and some geologist say, 100 times. Many times the valley was a large lake after a flood. This lake was named after the great geologist, Ira Allison - "Lake Allison."

These floods brought new soils and rocks to our area but for hundreds of years is was not a habitable place. Steve Beckham reports that the Indians did not move into the valley until 6000 years ago, and just in the south end. It was another 4000 years before the Indians were able to settle successfully in our area. This seems due to the lake, torn-up land, and the lack of flora and fauna to make a living possible.

Given time our valley thrived. So today our Creator has moved us into a moderate climate with extra rich soil and wonderful growing conditions. We may be the newest land on earth and probably the best.



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## YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*January 2000 Calendar of Events*

**Tuesday January 11th, 5:00 PM**

Board of Directors - Community Christian Church - McMinnville

**Tuesday January 11th, 6:30 PM**

General Meeting & Potluck Dinner- Community Christian Church - McMinnville

Bring your Own Table Service - Guests Always Welcome

*(See page 2 for details)*