

The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

November 2000

From our President

What a great time we had at the Harvest Festival. I was thinking about the "barn" with the new lights, rearranged equipment, swept floors, aisles to walk around in and the fact that someone had even dusted. Ed and Peggy Roghair are in the process of listing and describing all the items on display. Now that is quite a job but Ed is our machinery expert and we are so pleased he is working on this. Then there was the log building: such great "old time" music and fun. We do appreciate the musicians who spent time entertaining everyone. Thanks to those who donated food for our lovely table. Marjorie gifted us with a beautiful fall tablecloth that really brightened things up. This year sandwiches were added and a bountiful supply of grapes, thanks to the Watts. Annita Linscheid and Peggy kept the table heaped with goodies. Upstairs the 'crafty' ladies & gentleman were hard at work. Don't try to buy any of their work as they only give it away. Last but not least was the Church. Opal got a lot of exercise playing the pump organ with Barbara Knutson directing the choir & Jim Vincent singing bass. I should know the name of the mule team driver but I don't. This is his second year with us. Having him parked in front of the log building just seemed so right. I know those who got to ride in the wagon thoroughly enjoyed it. Everyone is so great about helping out. I saw Patsey Miller take off her jacket, roll up her sleeves and start pruning a big bush. By the way if anyone knows where the new little clippers are that were in the barn, please hang them back up. Thanks. Well I just had to let everyone know what a special day it was, sunshine & everything. If you were there you know what I'm talking about and if you missed it make sure you attend next year. My thanks to everyone who helped in any way. We will be discussing how to better publicize this event so we can share this great time with more people. Any suggestions would be appreciated. Sincerely, Shirley

Morgan McGee, who helped build our Log Museum will be busy working on the building in the next few weeks. He will be treating, filling and sealing the cracks in the logs outside. The side towards the church is the most affected by the weather. He will also be rethinking the inside. We do appreciate having Morgan, who is a member of our Society and willing to help us preserve this gift from Verle Miller. Morgan also spends time convincing some little critters to return to the belfry where they belong. Thanks, Morgan for your time and effort.

The YCHS website is at <http://www.onlinemac.com/users/dlin>, and our historic photo gallery is at <http://www.co.yamhill.or.us>.

Board Meeting Highlights

Present were President Shirley Venhaus, Betty Brown, Marjorie Owens, Barbara Knutson, Lila Jackson, Eileen Lewis, Ed Roghair, Dan Linscheid, Shirley McDaniel, and Maxine Williams. Betty Brown handed out the Treasurer's Report, which was approved. Shirley and Dan will meet with a financial representative at Key Bank on October 19th to go over our accounts. Lila reported five membership renewals. Marjorie answered three letters and sent one sympathy card to the family of Helen Webb. Maxine reported volunteers have been punctual, but we still need more help in training an expanded staff. The electrical wiring in the Barn is to be done prior to the Festival. We will be seeking a chair for next years Festival. The cleaning crew did an excellent job preparing our facilities for this upcoming event. The Building Committee met, and set the sealing of the cracks on the south side of the Log Building as priority #1, paint for the Church as #2 and remodeling the back room in the Church as #3. If room permitted, it was generally agreed that demolishing the entire back add-on to the church should be done. Shirley has been nominated for another term as President, Betty Brown as Treasurer, and Eileen Lewis as Board Member. Other nominations can be made from the floor at our November meeting. Shirley is checking on the possibility of placing "No Parking" signs along the south side of the Church. New informational brochures will be printed up. The Board discussed and authorized purchase of a new digital camera for the Society, with proceeds from sales on eBay to go back into our audio-visual fund. Shirley is looking for two tree donations for the holiday season displays. There will be a membership application inserted into our next newsletter.

George Fox Elderhostel visits Museum

In September, Jim Lockett was one of instructors for an Elderhostel held at George Fox College's Tilkum Retreat. The title of his part of the program was, "Treasures of Yamhill County". One of the groups favorite "Treasures" was YCHS's Museum.

They visited on Tuesday, September 19 and had lunch in the Miller Log Cabin. While there Jim told some tales of early Lafayette history and its residents. Then the group spent an hour looking over the exhibits. These people were from all over the United States; only one was from Oregon. Hopefully, they registered. Many left donations.

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

Back in the early days of aviation, Yamhill County had its share of enthusiasts struggling to become pilots. Some of those pioneers were Alex Timmreck, Frank Wortman, Dorothy Gunness, John Howard, Leo Howard and Cecil Conrad. These are still prominent names in Yamhill County.

Alex Timerick learned to fly off a pasture airstrip in Sheridan. He reported that he had had a couple of hair-raising experiences but went on to earn his pilots license. In the 30's Cecil Conrad learned to fly at a pasture airstrip south of Linfield College before the McMinnville Airport came into existence. The second time he soloed he suddenly found himself on instruments, having wandered into a fog bank. On his third solo he took his wife along. Today, he would need over 40 hours of instruction before he could carry passengers. Cecil learned well, as he later flew military air transports in addition to many hours of pleasure flying.

Frank Wortman was one of the first students at McMinnville Airport in the early 1940's. John Howard was the first fixed base operator and Frank learned to fly from him. He was 63 years old when he earned his private license.

John Howard soloed in 1929 at Eugene, Oregon in a Lion Monoplane. The Lion was built from blueprints supplied by Lee Eyerly, an early day aircraft manufacturer in Salem. John worked many long hours building the Lion so that he could learn to fly when the plane was completed. He spent many happy years barnstorming in Oregon before opening the flight base at McMinnville.

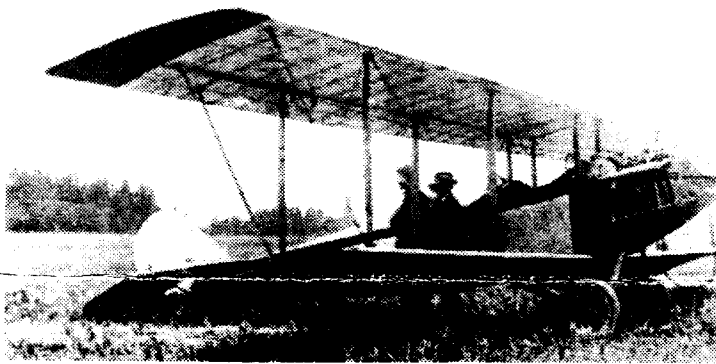
Leo Howard also was one of those first students at McMinnville Airport. He and John Howard were not related. Dorothy Wortman Gunness was the first woman to fly off the McMinnville Airport. She learned to fly in the latter part of WW II and helped organize the "Flying Macs" flying club. They had a two-place Aeronca, a four-place Stinson and a two-place Sky Ranger.

However, Ralph Wortman may have been the real Yamhill County pioneer in aviation. According to Dorothy Gunness, Ralph's niece, he brought the first airplane into the county. A pilot, just out of the army in 1918, had flown into Portland and was giving rides. Ralph offered the pilot \$100 to fly him to McMinnville where they landed on Baker field. The stunt created so much excitement that people dropped what they were doing to see the excitement. This being the first plane in McMinnville, everybody wanted a ride. The pilot gave ten-minute rides for \$25 and had to spend two days here to satisfy the requests. The pilot earned enough money to buy a new Ford Car.

In 1919 Ralph purchased a Curtis Jenny in California for \$3,500. (Pictured below) He hired a Mr. Franzine to fly it and allowed him to give rides at \$15 for 15 minutes to defray the costs of maintenance and fuel.

In about 1925 a man flew in with an Eagle Rock plane. He and Ralph flew over to Hillsboro, Oregon for a big fourth of July celebration. On taking off, the plane crashed into a fir grove where a large picnic was taking place. Ralph was quoted as saying, "A lot of fried chicken turned over in a lot of stomachs after that happened." Well, word of the crash reached home before Ralph did and everyone thought he had been killed. People gathered at his home to help comfort his wife. About the time a crowd had gathered, in walked Ralph, hardy and hale. The mixed emotions of his wife, Ona, on seeing him can only be imagined.

The "Daring Duo" Pilots of the 70's were two McMinnville women, Peggy Morgan as pilot and Pauline Cousins as navigator. They spent two weeks flying 5,600 miles across the nation in a small four place Piper Tri-Pacer. They spent 56 actual hours flying time without any mechanical problems. Taking off from McMinnville they flew



in 300 mile "hops" all the way to New York City. Their big experience was near Rapid City, South Dakota. Instructions to land were confused between two airports. Peggy reported that, "as we were coming in for a landing, we noticed all those enormous bombers with droopy wings. But there are quite a few airports which are shared by both the military and civilian aircraft. And then what should we see but flashing red lights and little brown figures with guns running toward the center of the field."

Landing at a Strategic Air force Command Base during the cold war was not acceptable. However, Peggy said "They were very polite; it took only 30 minutes for them to determine we weren't enemy spies. I guess we looked too dumb to be dangerous." (From the Statesman by Wilma Chalmers.)

The best bargain they had was in Spearfish, South Dakota where they had a nice room complete with breakfast and two-way taxi service to the airport - all for \$6.00. Oh, for the 70's.

These are only a few of our aviation pioneers. Yamhill county has provided many pilots for the military, both during the war years and during peace keeping times. Also, many people from our area moved into the commercial and general aviation fields over the years. Several aviation companies developed. The beginnings of Evergreen Aviation in the early 60's has grown to a world wide, first class aviation organization.

Here's a great Holiday Gift idea! Give your friend or loved one a membership to our Society.... (Application form on reverse)



Or, choose from one of our publications:

Title	Subject	Author	Cost
Old Yamhill	The early history of its towns and cities	YCHS	\$15.00
Schools of Old Yamhill	History & pictures of old Yamhill County school districts	YCHS	\$ 5.00
Reflections of Carlton From Pioneer to Present	History of Carlton	Carlton High School	\$18.00
Origins of Yamhill County Road Names		Dan Linscheid	\$3.00
Father Crockett of Grand Ronde	Biography	Fr. Martinus Cawley	\$10.00
Father Felix Bucher, S.D.S.	Missionary & Mystic Of Grand Ronde	Rev. Cletus E. LeMere	\$10.00
Indian Journal of Rev. R.W. Summers	History	Guadalupe Press	\$10.00
1879 Map of Yamhill County	Showing Donation Land Claims	YCHS	\$ 2.00
If trees could talk	Local History	YCHS	\$ 2.00
The Phil Sheridan Story	Local History	YCHS	\$ 4.00
Familiar Friends	Northwest Plants	Rhonda Whittelsey	\$ 9.95

Census and Cemetery Records

Cemetery Records Vol I. Yamhill, Carlton, Lafayette	\$7.00
Cemetery Records Vol II. Sheridan & Willamina	\$8.00
Cemetery Records Vol III. Amity, Dayton, Hopewell	\$10.00
1860 Census, Yamhill County	\$7.00
1870 Census, Yamhill County	\$10.00
1880 Census, Yamhill County	\$15.00

Note: these Census records are also available on the internet at <http://www.onlinemac.com/users/dlin>

Note: there is a \$2.00 charge for postage and Handling for each book mailed



OFFICERS - 2000

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Shirley Venhaus
472-7328

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Barbara Knutson
843-2069

Secretary (Joint)
Shirley McDaniel
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835-3673

Treasurer
Betty Brown
472-7100

Financial Secretary
Lila Jackson
472-8510

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843-3081

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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

Mail to:
Financial Secty
2430 North Baker
McMinnville OR
97128



Old Time Fiddlers—"Swing Shift" & friends, including Jim Toussaint and Bob Bailey of Amity.

November General Meeting & Potluck Dinner

Our November meeting will be held at the Seventh Day Adventist Church on Old Sheridan Road in McMinnville on the 14th at 6:30 p.m. Our speakers will be Ben Frum and Dr. Bull: "Digging and the Antiquities Act". Please mark your calendars for this meeting and plan on bringing along a guest or two with table service and potluck fare.

We will be auctioning off a Centennial Edition of the News-Register, dated June 25, 1959. This paper covered the dedication of the new Council Oak in Lafayette. It has a picture of Bob Ballard, McMinnville Postmaster, Roy Brixey, Police Chief, and County District Attorney Jim Craig on page one. This special 56 page edition contains a wealth of historical articles, including one by our YCHS president Dorothy Gunness on "Pioneer John G. Baker, 26", who built the first cabin near what was to become McMinnville. Round Steak was 79 cents/pound at Safeway. Kings Market had Miracle Whip on sale at 49 cents/quart. Proceeds of this oral auction will go to our Audio-Visual fund.

Below— Upstairs in the Log Museum, these ladies were busy "Bobbin". Opal Shimmin works on Torchon, Joyce Clow on Bucks Point.



Above—these two mules gave numerous wagon rides to our Harvest Festival guests throughout the day. This is representative of the actual vehicles which traveled the Oregon Trail.

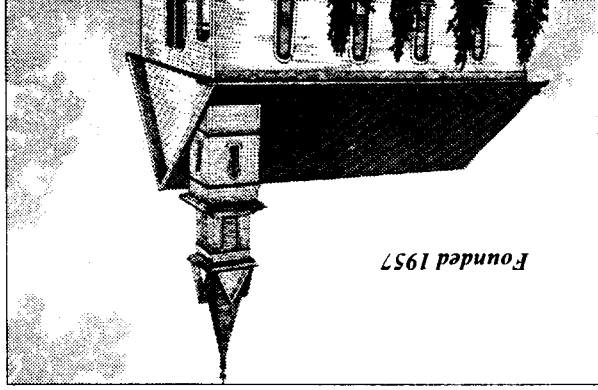
Below— another group of Old Time Fiddlers, with Dennis Brutke at the microphone, Donna Oldham, Francis Dummer, Les Tucker and Bob Crump assisting.



The two groups of talented Old Time Fiddlers added a lot to this years Harvest Festival, and we hope they can return next year.

Below—Barbara Knutson leads Carrie Skuzeski and Darleen Penny in some old time Gospel songs. Opal Lahley assists with the pedal powered organ.





Founded 1957

P.O. Box 484
Lafayette Oregon 97127

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
November 2000 Calendar of Events

Tuesday, November 14th, 5:00 PM

Board of Directors - Community Christian Church, McMinnville

Tuesday, November 14th, 6:30 PM

General Meeting & Potluck Dinner- Seventh Day Adventist Church, McMinnville

Bring your Own Table Service - Guests Always Welcome

(See page 2 for details)