

The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

April 1998

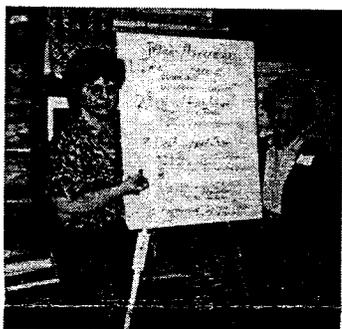
FURTHER CONFESSIONS OF A TRUNK JUNKIE

Using the title above, Lorist of the Luckiamute Arlie Holt related to the March 10th meeting of the YCHS another installment of his ongoing saga exploring voluminous holdings of the late Portland journalist Dean Collins. Following his death in Alaska, Collins' monumental accumulation of correspondence, manuscripts and other writings had been placed in a tin-roofed *cache* on an Island in Kodiak harbor where it was discovered by Holt in 1994. Since then Collins' granddaughter has been periodically forwarding shipments of this historic material to Holt for review. As they are received he catalogs items according to the label on the carton in which they were shipped. Thus an unpublished collection of Collins' poems and an original 250 page philosophical discourse on war are from the "Tawny Port Box". As the speaker recited the many items so unveiled, the picture of a very complex Dean Collins emerged. Certainly more than what one might expect from the former garden editor for the old Oregon Journal.

We thank Mr. Holt for his enlightening glimpse into the life of an often overlooked native Oregon journalist, poet and philosopher.



Characature of "Trunk Junkie" Arlie Holt busily engaged in his work



B. White photo

Diane Cileni and Anne Engen

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING BEGUN BY BOARD

On February 23rd the Board of Directors met to begin a comprehensive evaluation of the Society's goals and establish specific procedure and policy to fulfill them. This first meeting was conducted by specialists Diane Cileni and Anne Engen who volunteered their time to assist the Board in organizing an overall orderly blueprint for discussion that would result in identifying and prioritizing our long and short term needs.

Starting at the top of this discussion outline the Board began by having a hard look during their March 10th meeting at the very fundamental topic of who we are and what we're attempting to accomplish. From this point such subjects as building maintenance, artifact preservation and display, public awareness, membership and a host of other topics will be scrutinized. It may sound a little complicated, but the results should be well worth the effort.

A FEW THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

I was just reading one side of our brochure. It states: "Organized in 1960, the Yamhill County Historical Society is a non-profit, tax exempt, educational and public service corporation established to protect preserve and share the history and heritage of Yamhill County Oregon". No, I'm going to tell you I think that is quite a statement and quite a responsibility!! It further says funding is derived from dues, donations, endowments and other private sources with all services performed on a volunteer basis, If you read all of that you may think this is pretty serious business, but have you noticed how much fun we seem to be having?

Maybe the old adage "You can't mix business with pleasure" isn't always so. We hosted the Oregon State Museum Association, held a historical house tour, conducted a glorious garage sale and presented a wonderful October Harvest Festival.

It was a lot of work, but we also had a good time. We see the results of our efforts in a remodeled bathroom, an added kitchen, new sidewalks, new flower gardens with landscaping and a lot of small things that many people do not even notice.

We endeavor to make people more aware that we are a society for all of

Yamhill County. Our telephone is now listed in the directory and set up so that all messages are received and answered Thanks to certain individuals we are hooked up to the Internet with own website. It may be a slow process but we continue to do what was set up by those who saw the need for this society.

There are those who remember when the individuals on the board of directors had to contribute money from their pockets to help pay the monthly bills. Thanks to the dues, donations, endowments and other private sources we are able to pay our bills and plan for needed improvements and new projects. Fundraising will always be part of our activities and as long as we keep the word "fun" in fundraising we will be a success. So what is my point? In working together, enjoying what we are doing and

accomplishing our purpose have resulted in a job well done!! We can be very proud.

.....Shirley

IN MEMORIAM

GIL OGDEN

A long time member of this society who served us well as treasurer for many years

FRIEDA SCHREIBER

Charter Life Member of the society.

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 - 1998**President**

Shirley Venhaus
472-7328

VP/Program

Barbara Knutson
843-2069

Secretary

Betty Baltzell
472-7746

Treasurer

Don Crawford
434-9843

Financial Secretary

Lila Jackson
472-8510

Corres. Secretary

Delores Robertson
538-0767

Board of Directors

John White
665-5376

Ed Roghair
472-6909

Robert Kuykendall
662-3354

Dan Linscheid
843-2625

Volunteer Coordinator

Maxine Williams
472-4547

Librarian

Olive Johnson
472-6070

Newsletter

John White
665-5376

Publicity

Elaine Rohse
472-6827

MUSEUM HOURS

June 1 to Aug 31:
Fri & Sun 1 to 4 PM
Sat 10AM to 4 PM

Sept 1 to May 31:
10AM to 4PM

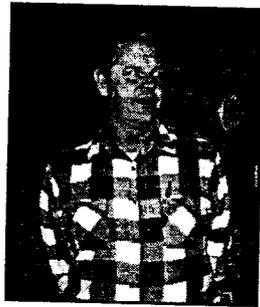
By Appointment

ANNUAL DUES

\$7.50 per person

Mail to:

Financial Secty
2430 North Baker
McMinnville OR



B. White Photo

Dan Linscheid

THE NEW KID ON THE BOARD

Dan Linscheid is a native of the local area, having been born in Amity and growing up in Dallas where he graduated from high school in 1965. He and his wife Annita, who is also a YCHS member, now make their home in the Gopher Valley. After a tour in the Marines Dan returned to take up studies at Chemeketa Community College while working for the County Road Department. He was elected to his present position of County Surveyor in 1994 and since then has earned praise for his work in locating and restoring original claim markers placed by early settlers. For his standard-setting work in this area the Oregon Association of County Engineers and Surveyors named him Surveyor of the Year in 1996 and more recently Dan was honored by the Historic Landmarks Commission.

Certainly impressive credentials for a seat on the YCHS Board of Directors.

.....Maxine Williams

APRIL GENERAL MEETING AND POTLUCK DINNER

Our own Miller Log Museum at Lafayette is to be the site of the April meeting and potluck. Keeping it in the family, long time YCHS member Grant Youngberg will offer a program telling of the Roland, Merchant and Youngberg families plus "A Walk Down Carlton Streets" when he was a boy.

This promises to be another well attended event so dining will be on both the first and second floors followed by a brief intermission to set up the lower floor for the program. Come prepared for an entertaining evening and bring a friend.

COVERED WAGON PROJECT DROPPED

At its March 10th meeting the Board of Directors voted to drop plans for relocating the covered wagon replica and structure housing it from the County Fairgrounds to Lafayette. Cited as reasons for this decision were cost considerations and a growing number of uncertainties connected with the move

UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS: A TOUR OF HISTORIC McMINNVILLE

By Twila Byrnes

On Saturday March 7th approximately thirty people followed Patti Pierce, manager of the McMinnville Downtown Association, on a city tour of homes and business buildings.

We left the Cozine House on NE Third Street and walked east to the old Oregon Hotel with stops for bits of history along the way and to read a plaque displayed on the front of a building to show original construction in 1876. (Readers are encouraged to watch for these plaques on McMinnville historic buildings.) At the Key Bank we admired Rufus W. Hamilton's 1820 building the main one being on the corner around the horn.

From here much of our tour involved stairs. Over the old 1908 Elks Lodge, now known as the Tempo Building, owners Matt and Marilyn Warrix are restoring the upper floors. The contrast between unimproved areas, best described as "a mess", and the the restored portion the Warrix' have made into

NEW MEMBERS

The following are new members joining us over the past month. We hope to greet them in person at the April meeting.

Betty J. Brown - McMinnville
Mildred L. Chodrick - McMinnville
Janet DeWith - Yamhill
Richard L. Eads - Vancouver WA
Kim Nichols - Woodinville WA
Jerry and Janet Smith - Sheridan
-also-

Shirley McDaniel is now a Life Member

ENDOWMENT RECEIVED

The YCHS recently received a bequest from the estate of the late Florence Kinzler Bridenstine, a former member of long duration. The Board has directed these funds be placed in an interest bearing certificate of deposit at the bank pending completion of the current needs assessment. (see page 1)

QUILT TICKETS GO ON SALE

Look for both the latest quilt and raffle tickets for same at the April 14th potluck in Lafayette.

their home is amazing and has to be seen to be appreciated.

On down Third Street were more stairs leading to the beautiful old ballroom over the Oddfellows Hall. We stopped at the old Post Office building to note the renovation of some unique old lamps. Then it was on to the historic Fenton House on N Evans to climb more stairs as we viewed its transformation from private home to professional offices. Leaving by the back door we proceeded to the 1929 Jack Spence House on E Fifth Street. Although now a professional offices, much of the old architecture remains so one may easily imagine family life in the comfortable fireplace room. The last stop was McMinnville's tallest building, the Oregon Hotel, built in 1905 with the third and fourth floors added in 1912. Here a glass of wine was served giving all on the tour the opportunity to pause and reflect upon a very pleasant day.

Remember, A Red Dot on Your Address Label Means Your Dues are Due

A "YAM HILL" SETTLER WRITES TO NEW YORK IN 1846 (Part 1)

By John White

William Dawson was born December 31, 1816 in Scotland and came to America in 1838. He settled first in Missouri before heading overland for Oregon in 1845 with his wife and two very young daughters. Soon after arrival in the Willamette Valley he took up a 640 acre claim on Baker Creek about three miles northwest of present day McMinnville. He later served seven years as a Commissioner for Yamhill County before leaving the farm during 1876 to operate a drug and grocery store at Monmouth.

This letter William Dawson sent to a family friend in New York is quite well written for a person having a limited formal education. Of particular interest are his observations related to everyday economic factors faced by the early settlers and provides a bit of insight into a few of the additional difficulties they faced after completing two thousand miles "on the road".

There is another note of historical interest to this letter. It was written two years before any U.S. post office was established west of the Missouri River. A group of sixteen men (one of whom was Joel Palmer) returned eastward over the Oregon Trail during the spring of 1846 to collect their families or secure badly needed equipment. Most of these men carried letters from other settlers to family or friends in "the States" which were deposited in the first U.S. post office encountered. This letter from William Dawson was postmarked at Hill's Point Missouri on July 11th 1846, which coincides with the arrival of this group, and verifies its eastbound carriage over the Oregon Trail.

In presenting the letter we ask the reader's indulgence in allowing inserted editorial comments intended to clarify or expand upon some of Mr. Dawson's comments:

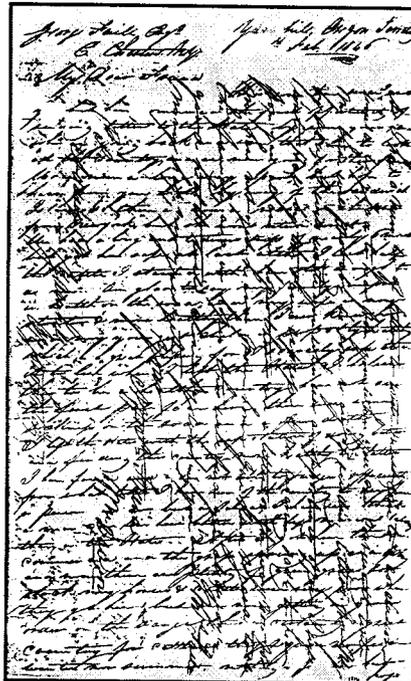
George Faile, Esq . Yam Hill, Oregon Territory
E Chester NY 7th Feb 1846

My Dear Friend,

"It is some time since I wrote you but have commenced at the first opportunity of sending letters to the States by some of our men who are going back and some that came to look at the country and are now going for their families. We are now a long way apart but hope to hear from you still by way of the Sandwich Islands and there is now a vessel in the river from New York but she wont return direct.

"We had a long and tedious trip of nearly 6 months but got here safe and well though I wish the cattle I started with I have still enough to do me. Am glad to say my family improved in health on the road & my wife is now stouter and more healthy than I ever knew her and my youngest child is perfectly healthy which is a great blessing for I scarcely expected it to be when I left the States. I believe this to be a healthy country. have not seen the first pale face here. There was some sicklings on the road and a few deaths. I left the States with the expectation of doing better and finding this country more healthy than <illegible word>.

[Dawson's very brief comments concerning his overland journey are somewhat unusual. As a member of the "Lost Wagon Train of 1845" that splintered off to follow Stephen Meek over the



The 1846 Dawson letter. It is "cross-written" which was an early to mid 19th century practice intended to conserve scarce paper and/ or avoid payment of overweight postage charges.

infamous cut-off, he undoubtedly encountered considerable hardship over and above those normally experienced on the Trail. Amazingly he sums it all up with "some sicklings on the road and a few deaths".]

"I have found I am not able to judge sufficiently from what little I have seen of the country to say how a person can do, but as jobs are <illegible>, think a man can live here better with less manual laboring than in the States.

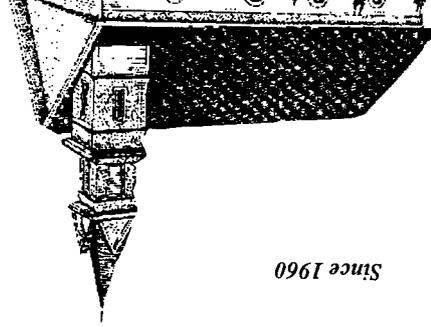
"After I got here the rain commenced and the grass sprung up as in as in spring and now there are plenty of green grass for stock. My horses and cattle were very poor when they got here but are now getting in good order on the range. This is certainly a great country for cattle as they require no feed winter nor summer, nothing is fed here but hogs and they sell very high. Sows from 15 to 30 dollars. Pork to 10 cents per lb. Beef 5 to 6. American cows in trade no money 50 to 75 dollars. Horses 50 to 100 dollars. Wheat sells for 1 dollar per bush in orders on the store and store orders is the calculating medium but they are now trying to have a money currency but they cant succeed until they establish a regular trade. At present a man can make property but no specie and some day property may be equal to specie

[Above, as well as below, Dawson has comprehensively related current market prices. However, these are "store order" values established for the purpose of bartering because, as he states, there was little "specie" (cash) available in the territory. The term "make property" refers to this practice of being paid in goods for services performed or produce delivered.]

"There are a quantity of goods shipped to the Islands, wheat & lumber. The Hudsons bay company ships a great deal of wheat flour to the Russian settlements in the north. They make very good flour. Have two saw mills and two flour mills on the Columbia River and one on the Wallamette River at Oregon City. It is a splendid mill at the City. The Americans have a large mill /saw and flour/ at Oregon City. The American vessel is now loaded with flour & lumber for the Sandwich Islands. Oregon City has great water <illegible><illegible>. Some men are now going to the States for machinery to put up these.

"At present everything sells very high. Shoes 8 dols, boots 12 dols, common ploughs 20 to 30 dols. Shoes & ploughs are very scarce. Some have not shoes. Calico 30 to 50 cents per yard. Sugar 12c per lb. Salt 1 & 2 per bush. Molasses 50 cents to 75 per gallon. Cooking utensils are very scarce. Indeed they are not to be got. The people have to do with what they brought over the mountains and that was not much. we have very little but can do with it until we can procure more.

.....to be continued next month



Since 1960

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

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

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
April 1998 Calendar of Events

Tuesday, April 14th, 4:30 PM

Board of Directors - Miller Log Museum - Lafayette

Tuesday April 14th, 6:30 PM

Potluck Dinner - Miller Log Museum - Lafayette
Sixth & Market Streets

Bring Your Own Table Service Guests Always Welcome
(See page 2 for Program Details)