

The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

March 1999



B. White photo

Thelma McKibben displays a photo of her grandfather at work in a patient's parlor.

SPEAKER TELLS OF HIKE ALONG THE OREGON COAST

Thelma McKibben opened her program with a brief history of her family and roots in the West County area. Her maternal grandfather, Sam Evans, was the first dentist to practice in Sheridan. He carried his equipment with him and attended to the dental needs of patients right in their homes.

After this introduction Mrs. McKibben moved on to the principal topic, a journey from Astoria to Yachats taken by her parents accompanied by their close friends, Florence and Ray Bennett. This adventure had been documented in detail by two diaries, both of which were read to the delight of the audience. One of these was kept by Mrs. Bennett and the other by Mrs. Lux, Thelma McKibben's mother.

The trip began August 17th 1917 at Astoria where supplies were purchased and some clothing sent ahead to Newport via parcel post. From there the journals described a series of walks on the beach, hikes over headland trails, rides across inlets aboard various forms of watercraft and the tourist accommodations encountered en route. One of the more candid descriptions was that given by Mrs. Lux concerning an overnight stay and breakfast at a Brighton inn. Completing their journey at Yachats, the two couples returned home on August 28th.

It is always entertaining to hear first-hand accounts of past adventures, and with the aid of two well written journals, Thelma McKibben easily held our attention throughout the program

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

I now have two new words to add to my vocabulary: "jitney" and "natatorium". I don't believe it shows my age as much as my place of birth in Nebraska. Where I was born and raised the closest railroad was 50 miles and the only swimming places we had was a dam that only had water in it when it rained and it was about one third water and two thirds mud. I really enjoyed Thelma McKibben's talk.

If you recall, the last thing I said at the last general meeting was "get involved". I think that is a good motto for the upcoming year. We have so many things going on: The County Awareness Day on May 8th, the Oregon Treasures Exhibit June 24th & 25th and the Harvest Festival October 16th.

Now there are all degrees of "getting involved". It could be working at the museum one day a month, baking cookies or treats for one of the events, making a phone call to remind someone of a meeting, asking a friend or neighbor to attend one of our meetings or events, car pooling, getting a new member, bringing a sample of

handiwork for Laura's exhibit in the log museum, donating a family treasure to the museum, writing a note to the Society if you have enjoyed something you have seen or attended, table decorations, always being there to help, taking care of visiting school groups, becoming a member of the board of directors, a new table cloth for a table to give it some color, being present to make a motion to accept the minutes at the general meetings, restoring a forgotten piece such as the sleigh with lots of rubbing to bring back life to it and enjoy the results. No matter how big or small your efforts are, we hope you enjoy what you do and know that all of these are appreciated. This is what makes the Yamhill County Historical Society and museum is made up of and what makes it such a wonderful group to work with and be a part of. I visit with members and guests. It is an important job that we do maintain the museum, but for me the biggest pleasure is working with all of you. Thank you.

.....Shirley

DEDICATION OF EWING YOUNG OAK TREE

Thanks in part to the efforts of our Heritage Tree Committee, the Ewing Young Oak tree located at West Chehalem has been designated an Oregon Heritage Tree in recognition of Ewing Young's important contribution to the state's history. The site also has been selected for a statewide Heritage Tree dedication ceremony on **Wednesday, April 7th at 11:00 am**. In addition to placing a plaque to commemorate the old oak, Senator Mark Hatfield is scheduled to be the keynote speaker.

As we all know, Ewing Young was a famous American trapper, trader and entrepreneur and it was the need to settle his estate that led to establishment of the Provisional Government of Oregon. The 153 year old oak grew from an acorn planted May 6 1846 by Amanda Bayley Smith to mark the location of Young's grave.

The tree and grave site are located about 3.3 miles west of Newberg on Highway 240. A single lane access road across the private property of Mr. & Mrs. Jack Root provides limited access to the Ewing Young tract, which is about a quarter mile north of the highway.

The hosts, Oregon Heritage Tree Committee and Oregon Historical Society, have joined in extending us a cordial invitation to attend the ceremony.George Williams



G. Williams photo

Ewing Young Memorial Oak

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 - 1999**President**

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472-7328

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835-3673

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Maxine Williams
472-4547

Librarian

Olive Merry Johnson
472-6070

Newsletter

John White
665-5376

Car Pool Coordinator

Joanne Watts
835-5893

MUSEUM HOURS

Sept 1 to May 31:
Sat-Sun 1 to 4 PM

or

By Appointment

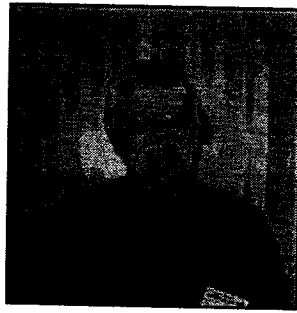
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ANNUAL DUES

\$10.00 Individual
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\$125.00 Life

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McMinnville OR
97128



B. White photo

Betty Brown

MARCH GENERAL MEETING & POTLUCK DINNER

The **March 9th** YCHS gathering should be one that few will want to miss. Speaker for the evening is to be Lee Lau of Stayton who will present a program on Sam Simpson, well-known writer and early poet laureate of Oregon. Prior to this, will be our regular potluck dinner at **6:30 pm**. The place is the **Christian Church at 302 Fifth Street in Dayton**. Bring a friend along with your potluck fare and table service. You'll be glad you did.

MUSEUM GARDEN NEWS

With the help of our County Jail Crews and some of my Master Gardener friends, our museum flower beds will have a renovation this spring. With the board's approval, we are putting in a sprinkler system (Won't that be great, no more lugging those heavy hoses.) Bids are now being considered for the sprinkler system.

Our aim is to have an old fashioned garden with examples of many of these heritage plants. Some native plants and herbs will be used too. By mid-summer our new arbor should be gracefully draped with our antique climbing roses.

Those of you who would like to help plant and maintain these flower beds throughout the summer, **your help is needed!** If you only have an hour a week or every two weeks, it would be appreciated. If you have questions or would like to volunteer please call me**Ruth Crawford - 434-9843**

NOTES FROM HERE & THERE

- We now have a vacuum cleaner ready for service in each museum building thanks to the generosity of Ruth Williams. Applications are now being accepted for volunteers to operate them.
- Marjorie Owens of Sheridan has accepted the position of Corresponding Secretary. Our thanks to Delores Robertson who did such a marvelous job in this post for the past four years.
- A committee consisting of Lois Brooks, Twila Byrnes, Shirley Kuykendall and Maxine Williams has been formed to work up plans for turning the old kitchen area of the Poling Church into displays. Ideas, suggestions and assistance are solicited.

OUR NEW BEAN COUNTER

Betty Brown is a native of McMinnville who began the first grade in a brand new Cook School. After graduating from Mac High she attended business college before taking a job with Oregon Mutual Insurance Co. From McMinnville Oregon Mutual transferred her to Salt Lake City in 1944. Soon thereafter she returned to Yamhill County to work for an insurance office in Newberg and later Frank Johnson Real Estate and Laughlin Trucking in McMinnville before retiring in 1985. In 1992 Betty moved briefly to Grand Rapids Michigan, but returned once again to her home town after that.

She has two sons: William is unmarried and works for Boeing in Seattle while Thomas has a graphics design business in Grand Rapids. Two grandchildren, Travis and Molly, round out Betty's immediate family.

LINFIELD VISITS

Early on Friday morning, January 29th, two large vans arrived at the museum and poured out 24 Linfield College students along with their instructor, Katherine Huit. Sharing and explaining artifacts to these young people was a revelation to us who are a couple of generations prior to them. We expect college students to be so knowledgeable, but we found there truly was much they could learn about early life on Oregon and the West. They were great listeners and showed real interest in what they saw.

The young men especially enjoyed Ed Roghair's tour of the barn. Lois Brooks signed everyone in at the Miller Museum and explained the library, filing facilities and history housed there. Highlights in the Church were covered by Twila Byrnes as time allowed. All too soon they were on their way to Champoeg to further their history lesson.

Few of these students were local, the nearest being from Banks and Portland. The farthest U.S. resident was from Georgia and one young man was here all the way from India.

.....*Twila Byrnes*

NEW MEMBERS:

Patricia Zadocs of Yamhill

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS:

Kathi Oriet

Nancy E. Thornton

IN MEMORIAM

It is with regret we mark the passing of members

BERN M. WARREN

LEONA WINTER

- Invitations will soon be going out to city and county officials along with chamber of commerce officers for the May 8th V.I.P. reception. The object is to make these movers and shakers more aware of the YCHS and our role in the community.
- Both the Budget and By-Laws committees still have a vacant seat or two.
- John White has been appointed general chairman for this year's third annual Harvest Festival to be held October 16th.

THE YAMHILL CAMPUS OF BISHOP SCOTT ACADEMY

by John White

Although many of the events related here took place in Portland and most of the principal individuals were residents of that city, a large tract of property in Yamhill County was at the center of things and thus this story is an integral part of Yamhill County history.

Named for Thomas Fielding Scott, the first Episcopal bishop of Oregon, the Bishop Scott Academy was a church administered boarding school for boys and young men established in Portland during the early 1880s. The academy prospered until 1901 when its popular headmaster, Joseph W. Hill resigned amid a dispute with school directors over the curriculum. The effect of Hill's departure was felt almost immediately in the form of swiftly declining enrollment. By 1904 the number of students had dropped to a point where it was no longer economically feasible to continue operations. The Board of Directors closed the school and began selling off the very valuable property upon which it stood. The plan was to hold the sale proceeds with the thought of possibly reestablishing Bishop Scott Academy elsewhere at some point in the future. One of the trustees highly in favor of this course was the Reverend Doctor A. A. Morrison, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church; whose parishioners included a high percentage of Portland's pillars of industry and commerce.

Probably looking ahead toward a comfortable retirement, Dr. Morrison reasoned that a modest investment or two placed through successful members of his flock might just achieve such a goal. The opportunity presented itself in 1908 with the formation of the Walnut Grove Company of Oregon.

The Walnut Grove Company purchased 1015 acres of land located about 3 miles northwest of the town of Yamhill that had formerly been the Oak Hill Farm of Charles E. Ladd, son of the well known banker William S. Ladd. The company then planned to subdivide some of this holding into 5 or 10 acre tracts and sell these parcels on a time payment basis. Once a buyer had signed up for a tract, the company would agree to plant and maintain an orchard of walnut trees on it so that in a few years cash generated from crop sales would pay off the mortgage. Just exactly how Dr. Morrison became involved with the Walnut Grove Company is a little unclear but articles filed with the State of Oregon indicate he was one of the original stockholders as well as being both Secretary and Treasurer of the corporation.

Turning back to the dormant Bishop Scott Academy, its Board of Directors, which still included Dr. Morrison as chairman, began considering the possibility of reopening the school, perhaps in some rural location. In the words of Episcopal Bishop Scadding it should "provide a good grammar school education, manual training and healthy outdoor life". Seizing this opportunity, Dr. Morrison wasted no time or effort in promoting the merits of locating a school on the Walnut Grove property.

He further suggested that in addition to purchasing a site for the academy, sufficient additional land should be included upon



View of the tract purchased by Bishop Scott Academy reproduced from a 1910 Walnut Grove Co. sales brochure.

which to plant a large walnut orchard. He argued that operating an extensive orchard would not only provide the desired "healthy outdoor life" for students, but the income so generated would amount to a substantial endowment for the school. So it was that in 1909 Bishop Scott Academy purchased a 100 acre tract containing two original Oak Hill Farm houses plus a barn and out-buildings from the Walnut Grove Company for \$25,000. In view of the obvious conflict of interest, Dr. Morrison, very wisely as

it turned out, abstained from voting approval of the transaction.

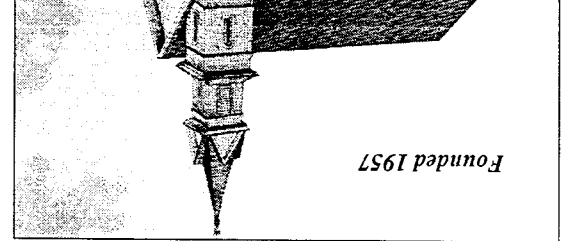
In 1912 construction of a large school building was begun on the site at a cost of \$20,000. Another \$8,000 was invested in equipment considered essential to operate the academy and 10 acres of ground were planted with walnut and chestnut trees.

School opened during September 1913 under the direction of Rev. Barr G. Lee with a very disappointing enrollment of only 6 students. Lee was replaced by Rev. Arthur H. March for 1914, but the attendance barely improved to a total of 11 for that year. This resulted in operating expenses of \$12,306 against a total tuition income for the year of only \$3019.

A new bishop, the Right Reverend Walter T. Sumner, was installed in 1914 and he immediately became concerned over these extensive losses plus the fact he noted St. Helens Hall, a girls school also operated under the auspices of the Church, and a new military academy begun by former Bishop Scott headmaster Joseph. Hill were both enjoying full enrollments. He then convened a committee of respected laymen and educators to evaluate the situation. Their report concluded the academy could never succeed financially at its Yamhill location and further the price of \$250 per acre paid to Walnut Grove was exorbitant when compared to other recent transactions in the area. Bishop Sumner, with full approval of the Church Convention, then acted to take control, closing the school and ordering liquidation of its properties.

Because Dr. Morrison had been an officer of the Walnut Grove Company while also serving as chairman of the Bishop Scott Academy trustees, formal charges of impropriety and mishandling of school funds were brought against him. With one of the best courtroom lawyers in Portland defending him, he was acquitted of any intentional wrongdoing, but controversies generated as a result of this lawsuit lingered on for a good many years.

Dr. Morrison continued as rector of Trinity Church until his retirement in 1929. The \$20,000 Bishop Scott Academy school building was never completed and in 1920 the 100 acres near Cove Orchard were finally sold at a considerable loss to the Salvation Army, who planned to operate an agricultural school on the site. In 1931 the land was again sold and converted into a livestock and turkey farm. Little remains today as a reminder of the short-lived boys boarding school except for Bishop Scott Road that branches northward from Pike Road a mile west of Yamhill.



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YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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March 1999 Calendar of Events

Tuesday March 9th, 5:00 PM

Board of Directors - Christian Church - 302 Fifth Street - Dayton

Tuesday March 9th, 6:30 PM

General Meeting & Potluck Dinner- Christian Church - 302 Fifth Street - Dayton
Bring your Own Table Service - Guests Always Welcome (*See page 2 for details*)

Wednesday - April 7th - 11:00 AM

Dedication of Ewing Young Heritage Tree - Chehalem Valley (*See page 1 for details*)

*Two new exhibits at the Oregon Historical Society
1200 SW Park Avenue, Portland:*

Native American Baskets

. Handmade artworks of beautiful basketry and beadwork, both ancient and contemporary
On display through Fall 1999

"Bridging the City"

History and stories of Portland's many bridges
Opens March 20th