



Yamhill County Museum, 6th and Market Street, Lafayette, Oregon

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING
DATE: Tuesday, January 9, 1979 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: Dayton Grade School, Dayton, Oregon
POTLUCK: bring your own service
PROGRAM: Pauline Fowler with some history and slides
of Grand Island.

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MUSEUM NEWS

Our December meeting was election of officers - Elsie Warmington is our new president. Do give her as much help as she may ask you for. The cooperation of all officers and members is what makes a good organization.

We had several new members last month and several Life Members. Our measure 13 was defeated but we must carry on with much pep to gather the history of this county, its schools, churches, and people. Many have expressed disappointment our measure didn't pass.

We have 400 school library books to sell from the No. 7 Briedwell School near Amity, also school desks. The property was sold and the articles were donated to us for sale. We have them at our new Farm Tool Building. We have a new supply of donation land claim maps.

If you have a new box and route number, would you please advise us at once. If your newsletter doesn't come, we do not have your complete address.

We will miss Elaine Rohse, our past president- she always came up with a spark of new ideas. Thanks Elaine for two productive years.

Laurence Schreiber gave his family history talk at our December meeting - was very interesting - a large family migrating across waters and the U. S. with their many experiences - was a good program. Laurence gave the Historical Society a copy for our file. We need more family history; if you have an extra printed article we would be more than glad to have it.

There are several groups to tour the Museum on special days after January 1st. An Amity womens group has asked for a speaker. We have lots of books "OLD YAMHILL" at the Museum - they make fine gifts as well as good reading in your spare time.

Hope you all had a fine holiday. Bring your friends to the Museum. We are open Saturday and Sunday, 1:00 P.M. to 4:30 P.M. Tour groups call 472-7935 any time.

ROMA SITTON

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EARLY HISTORY OF GRAND ISLAND

Charlotte Matheny Kirkwood, who came to Oregon as a child in 1843 and settled with her parents at Wheatland in 1844, gave us, in the later years, her first recollections of Grand Island. She said that when the family came to the ferry, the island was a wild, dense, bramble of vines and

brush and trees. She went on to say that no one went there except to hunt for wild berries or nuts and in later years to hunt for wild hogs. Charlotte did not know how the hogs got there, but they may have been put there to pasture by a passing earlier settler.

In August of 1847 two land claims were recorded at Oregon City that were located on the island. These were claims registered with the Provisional Government. The first was taken by P. West and J. N. Chambers as partners for "1280 acres of land the same being part of an island in the Willamette River situated between Yam Hill County and Champoeg County." The other claim by Ezekiel Kennedy is more specific as to location and gives us an indication of how the early settlers got back and forth to the island.

"Ezekiel Kennedy claims 640 acres of land situated on an Island in the Willamette River two miles below Matheny's ferry and bounded as follows. Beginning at a stake on the bank of the West Slough 40 poles above the ford and spring - - - -".

There is no indication that either of these claims was actually lived on - both records end with the phrase, "which he intends to hold by occupancy." Kennedy relinquished his claim by Dec. 15, 1847. P. West disappears from the records and in 1848 J. N. Chambers married Eliza Martin at Oregon City and took out a donation land claim in Polk County near her parents.

The first government surveys to establish township, meridian, and section lines were made of the Grand Island area in 1852. The original map made from these surveys shows W. Athey's claim on the island. It also shows the location of his house a little north of the center of the island. Athey had settled on his donation land claim in May of 1851. Andrew Layson also had a donation land claim on the island on which he settled in June of 1852. John Largeant settled on a claim at the north end of the island in November of 1853. On the 1852 map the island is called Deer or Athey Island.

We do know that a young man by the name of William Lumison also settled on the island about this time. He did not acquire his land by donation, but possibly under the Homestead Act. Lumison married Minerva Cooper, daughter of Enoch Cooper, who lived just west of the island. Andrew Layson had married a sister of Minerva's a few years before. The older Layson children could have been the first white children born on the Island. The Lumison's had six children during the time they lived there.

The Lumisons lived on the Island until tragedy struck in June 1871. Four of the older children were on their way across the slough to visit their grandfather Cooper when the boat overturned and three of the children drowned. Almost immediately the Lumison property was put up for sale. It was purchased by A.P. Magness.

With the advent of the Magnesses, begins the later history of Grand Island.

RUTH STOLLER

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It has been quite a few years since our Historical Society has heard much of Grand Island. Now with Ruth Stoller's early history and with Pauline Fowler's follow-up we are very happy to hear from them both. Pauline has fine slide pictures and the stories of some of the Island floods. The Island has been Pauline's home for many years. She was a favorite teacher for several elementary schools between Dayton and the Island.

ELSIE WARMINGTON

Dues are \$2.00 per year, payable to Y.C.H.S. c/o Marie Winters, 1109 E. 27th St., McMinnville, Oregon, 97128. (State dues \$7.50 ; life membership in County Society is \$50.00)
