

The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

October 2006

Board Meeting highlights

The meeting was held at the Trinity Lutheran Church, Sheridan. The following Officers and Board members were present: Marjorie Owens, Annita Linscheid, Kathy Peck, Ken Williams, Gloria Lutz, Lorna Grauer, Eileen Lewis and Shirley McDaniel. Treasurer Ken Williams reported an ending balance of \$10,251.39. Correspondence Secretary Marjorie Owens said we have the help of the young man working on his senior project and that military uniforms are on display. Membership Secretary Kathy Peck reported she has received about a 2/3 return on membership renewals based on the July 2007 prorated renewal letter sent out. Museum/Library Report: Lorna Grauer reported discovery of a rare book being housed in the church: it was moved to the log building which is a better environment. Miller Funds: Shirley has talked to the administrator for the Miller Funds and received confirmation of certain upkeep efforts in our the buildings we can be compensated for from that fund. Cook Book: Lorna has put together the guidelines for submitting recipes and stories for our 50th anniversary cook-book. She asked for help in contacting sponsors. New Brochure: We need to decide which photos should be included for the brochure and what to highlight about ourselves to best advertise what we have to offer. Under old business, Carol Reid, President of the Genealogy Society arrived to go over the proposed contract between their group and ours concerning housing their books and reference materials at the Museum. The contract was agreed to as written with two suggestions added, as recommended by Attorney Jerry Hart. Shirley will call for bids on repairing the sprinkler system to cover a smaller area. Nancy Thornton has offered to have next years YCHS picnic at her house. The Harvest Festival will not take place this year, although we may have it next year to coincide with Lafayette Heritage Days. Ed Roghair Services and Memorials: Those who attended reported a very nice tribute to Ed. Shirley handed out a proposal from Janice Marschner for the board to look at. Shirley will propose some changes for Dan to make in the monthly news letter. New Complex: The well drilling will start in October and an power pole will be installed. Official transfer of property has not happened as yet. Mr. Stastny will be paid for work and workshops completed to date. Next meeting: October 10, 2006 at the county public works auditorium in McMinnville. The program will be a delegation from Polk County historical society discussing the funding and construction of their new museum. Annita Linscheid, Secretary

Hi Everyone,

Every year about this time I make mention of how fast the summer went. Once again I am amazed about the passing of time. Next week I am going to my family reunion in Nebraska. Speaking of the passing of time, I started out with 33 first cousins, now I have 17. I return on the day of the October meeting and am not sure I can arrive back in town in time to attend.

The agreement was signed whereby the YCHS and the Genealogical Society will share space at the museum. We are looking forward to working together now and in the future.

When was the last time you visited the museum? I believe you would be pleasantly surprised at the number of changes that have been made. New exhibits (Uniforms, buttons & etc.) are now in place. The volunteers have spent many hours rearranging and completing these exhibits. You will be tested next month on specific items so better get up there and have a look.

Check out the article else where in the newsletter about the George Fox Share Day at the museum. Seven hours later, two truck loads of yard debris, and a lot of work the day ended. The 10 girl, 2 men group left a much tidier museum. It is such a pleasure to work with this group as they constantly thank you for letting them come and help.

Sincerely, Shirley

NEW MUSEUM SITE UPDATE

We are still waiting for the completion of the transfer of the additional 7 acres from the McPhillips & Kauer families to the YCHS. Lot line adjustments and the partitioning process does take time. In the meantime we are proceeding with the site work. Since we were not able to obtain water service from McMinnville we will drill a new well. Arrangements have been made to do this sometime in November. An electrical engineer will be hired to work with McMinnville Water & Light to locate the power source and bring it to the existing building and be ready for future use.

Anyone who would like to donate to this development is certainly welcome to do so. Plans to complete the construction of the agricultural building are in the works for 2007. The second workshop with the architect Don Stastny is scheduled for Wed., Oct. 11th, at 2:00 pm at the Log Museum. Anyone interested in this project are welcome to sit-in on this meeting. For more information please contact any member of the board or planning committee. Shirley V.

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 - 2006

President

Shirley Venhaus
472-7328

Vice President

Lorna Grauer
843-3251

Secretary

Annita Linscheid
843-2625

Treasurer

Ken Williams
835-3110

Membership Secretary

Kathy Peck
472-6562

Corresponding Secretary

Marjorie Owens
843-3081

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835-7531

Gloria Lutz
472-7563

Shirley McDaniel
662-3528

Dan Linscheid
843-2625

Program Director

Barbara Knutson
843-2069

Volunteer Coordinator

Louise Heindl
662-4218

Newsletter

Dan Linscheid

Car Pool Coordinator

Joanne Watts
835-5893

Librarian

Jean Sartor
472-6312

MUSEUM HOURS:

July and August:
Fridays and
Saturdays. 10 a.m. to 4
p.m. or by appointment

605 Market Street

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YCHS

Lafayette Oregon
Phone: 864-2308

50th Anniversary Cookbook

To submit a page for our cookbook, write your recipe down on a sheet of paper or recipe card, and submit it with a photograph, past or present, and drop them off at the museum Wednesdays, Fridays or Saturdays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Or you can bring it to the next YCHS meeting. The photo can be of your family or of a place in Yamhill County, and it should be 5"x7" or smaller. It will be returned to you. Make sure to include a description of what the photo contains, 150 words or less. If you have questions call Lorna at 843-3251 or Marge at 843-3081. We truly want to celebrate the past and present of our county and our organization and you and your friends are encouraged to submit a recipe and photo.

COVERED WAGON TRAILER

The total cost for having the covered trailer built was over \$9000. We increased the axle load to 10,000 pounds which will allow additional uses for the trailer besides just the covered wagon. Ace Trailer in Salem is building the trailer. This will have a ramp and cable that will allow the loading and unloading of the wagon. There is a "man door" on the side that will be used to enter the trailer to see exhibits on display along with the wagon. We are hoping the end of October for delivery. Funding for the trailer is the \$6,000 grant from First Federal, \$1500 grant from Prudential Corp. & Prudential First State Realty. There is approximately \$400 in a fund from the original wagon program. You can see we are about \$1100 short. Efforts are being made to obtain these needed funds. If you would like to donate to help this cause please contact Gloria Lutz - 472-7563 or Shirley - 434-0567 Thanks. (submitted by Shirley Venhaus)

New Museum Exhibits

This month and next we will feature uniforms worn by our armed service men and women. Also, artifacts dating to WWI to the present will be displayed. We were pleased to have uniforms loaned to us by members and community friends.

Thanks to new volunteer David Inman we have two new exhibits featuring memorabilia from past wars. David has organized many of our communication items and they can now be examined in detail, and additional information is now shown with these items. David is a senior at Sheridan High School, and we appreciate his interest in Yamhill county history.

"The doctor is on his way" says the sign in our newly organized exhibit featuring medical artifacts. Medical and dental instruments, wheel chairs and many more items have been reorganized, making it easier to examine. Don't forget to mark your calendar to visit our museum.

(submitted by Jean Sartor)

Serve Day 2006— George Fox University

The Museum facility received a good cleaning, dusting, yard cleanup, etc., on September 13th. The group of students from the University in Newberg were a pleasure to work with.



From left to right, here are the names of these young and energetic workers: Sara Bower, Gtetchen Engelson, Dana Miller, Erica Nelson, Tristen Tamblyn, Karissa Brown, Jerrylyn Tapat, Rich Bass, Natalie Roth, Amberle Mangis, Junko Kamatsu, and Mari Nakahara. We thank them for their good works and the improvements, both inside and out, at our facilities.

From our Volunteer Chair

I thank all those who gave of themselves this year... not once did I need to fill in for an absence. After the Genealogical Society has relocated into our log building, the Wednesday work group will begin sorting and re-cording the 10,000 plus buttons in our collection. Therefore, this relaxing project will be ideal for volunteers with physical limitations. This group also assists Marge with family biography filings, e-mail research responses and research visitors. The Friday work group will continue to scan and perform database entry on our photo and postcard collection (Fridays are not open to the public this time of year). Saturdays continue to be the busiest day for tours and research visitors. A special thanks to Lorna Grauer and Jean Sartor for their extended effort to rotate and reorganize our display cabinets. Louise Heindl, volunteer chair

By Jim Lockett

One of the great Yamhill County escapades involves the coming of the railroad. Railroads enjoyed great vogue on the East Coast immediately after the Civil War. By 1867, a transcontinental line was in the making and the nation was gripped in a railroad mania. With the coming of the railroad, towns would not be so isolated. So every town in the country wanted access. The train was a wonder to behold. Great celebrations were held when the first one arrived. With such excitement, it was not hard to raise the capital to finance this new but expensive adventure. Oregon was ready to bring the railroad to its towns. The real prizes to the investors, if a venture proved successful, were the accompanying land grants from Congress. The federal government provided rail builders with 20 alternate sections of land per mile, 10 on each side of the tracks. The grants were awarded as soon as a company finished 20 miles of track and ran the first train over it. However, Congress limited the Oregon portion of the program to "such company organized under the laws of Oregon as the Legislature of that state shall designate."

With the Legislature effectively controlling the land grants, its favor could be bought. Joseph Gaston joined a group of investors from Portland in forming The Oregon Central Railroad Co. in 1866. His company filed its articles of incorporation on Oct. 6 and won land grant approval from the Legislature.

He was appointed secretary of the board of incorporators. In April 1867, he began taking subscriptions for company stock. Gaston had the main say on where the road would run, and he believed the west side of the Willamette River offered the best route. There were fewer and smaller rivers to bridge, fewer rises and hills to deal with and more people to support the plan. Backers included a group of McMinnville investors led by William T. Newby. Newby wanted the line to bypass Lafayette, then the county seat, and cut through McMinnville instead.

Gaston felt he had a sure thing. Then S.G. Elliott, a railroad promoter from California, showed up. Elliott was associated with a California group scheming to gain control of the Oregon Central Railroad Co. and merge it with their California Railroad Co. He filed articles of incorporation with the state under the name, Oregon and California Railroad Co. At first, Gaston welcomed the prospective infusion of new capital. But to his surprise, Elliott decided, with some powerful encouragement, that the line should run up the east side of the Willamette instead. Gaston put up a gallant fight. After all, he had already graded several miles of right of way on the west side. But Elliott insisted in pursuing an eastside route. And the two became rivals in separate ventures rather than partners in a joint venture as anticipated.

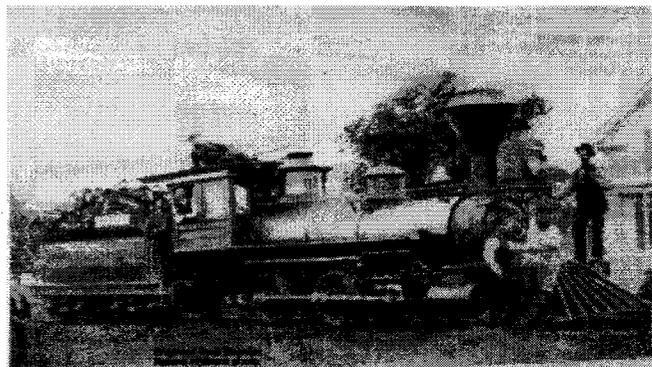
At that point, the Oregon Legislature decided land grants should go to only one of the companies, not both. It decided the first one to get a line up and running would get the land, shutting out the other. The rival companies each broke ground in early 1868 in Portland. The race was on! Gaston had a head start, which rallied investors to his venture. With Elliott's financing drying up in response, the westsider appeared to have the prize within reach.

Then wealthy hotel and railroad man Ben Holladay of Seaside formed the Salem Oregon Railroad Co. to take over the eastside venture. He wanted the grants, and he found a way to get them without the necessity of getting his line built before Gaston's. Holladay, the first Oregonian to hire and organize a team of lobbyists, threw extravagant parties for legislators and showered them with extravagant gifts. He later admitted there had been other considerations as well — more than \$35,000 in cash, a very large sum for that day. But the interloper soon ran into problems of his own.

First, the Oregon Supreme Court ruled his Salem Oregon Railroad Co. had not been legally incorporated, thus was not eligible for federal land grants. Second, he got into trouble with a group of German investors, as it had provided him with \$10.5 million in financing and he could account for only half of it. Holladay claimed the money had gone to pay off legislators, judges and businessmen, but he was simultaneously spending heavily to acquire property for himself. Feeling something was amiss, the investors dispatched Henry Villard to represent their interests and he ousted Holladay in 1874.

Villard quickly hatched a plan to seize full control of railroad building in Oregon. He felt the state had the potential to be a transcontinental player. Gaston never gave up on his pursuit of either the westside railroad or the grants he felt were his due as a result. But he found the going difficult. With continuing financial and political support from the city of Portland and counties of Washington, Yamhill and Polk, he gradually got his road extended 20 miles south. By 1873, it had come to pass through a pair of towns named after him — Gaston and St. Joe. He said his supporters felt, "No man should represent Oregon in Congress who could not labor to secure another grant of land in aid of their road." But the Panic of 1873 halted progress. Then Villard arrived on the scene.

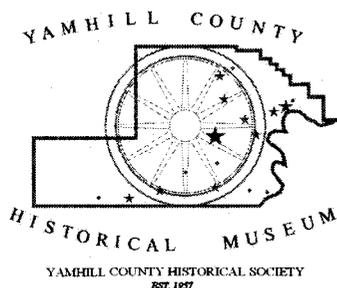
It would be about 10 more years before the line pushed through to McMinnville. And it took even longer for the line to reach its southern terminus in Corvallis. Meanwhile, Villard had extended his tracks south from Portland through Newberg and McMinnville, creating a great "circle of rail." The route was originally plied by steam trains. Later, McMinnville hosted the famous Red Electric. McMinnville reaped a bountiful harvest from this new mode of transportation and the resulting tourist trade. Had he lived long enough, Newby would have swelled with pride when the first train pulled into McMinnville.



YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

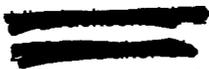
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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Paid July each year

- | | |
|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend | \$50+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter | \$100+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Builder | \$250+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Benefactor | \$500+ |

Please make checks payable to the Yamhill County Historical Society. New members can prorate dues monthly from the above table. Membership dues, artifact donations and gifts are tax deductible.

Members receive the Westside newsletter and access to our research library free of charge. We are an all volunteer organization, and are constantly on the lookout for new helpers. If you can assist us in any way, financially or with your time or talents, it will be greatly appreciated. If you are not sure if you have paid your annual membership dues in July, please contact Kathy Peck at 472-6562. Rates Effective May 31, 2002.

Calendar of Events

Our next regular monthly meeting will be held 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, October 10th, at the Yamhill County Public Works Auditorium in McMinnville. Our program this month will be on the Polk County Museum: how they planned, funded and constructed their new facility at the county fairgrounds in Rickreall.

New Members/Renewals: We welcome new members Henry Chandler, Everett Swain & David Dahle. Henry is a supporter of our society, having donated \$100 to us! Thanks for supporting our organization. We invite you all to attend our meetings, visit our museum and become more involved in our local history!