

The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

March 2004

From our President

What Do You Collect?? It seems just about everyone collects something. Reasons for doing so are many: My mother had one of those, I was given one when I was young, I have always been fascinated by them, I drove one when I was in high school, My Dad had a tractor like that, My best friend gave me my first one, I retrieved my nephew out of one, and etc. Sometime the collection remains small, depending on the availability of the item you are collecting. As a rule though the collection grows & grows. When friends are traveling they will bring back gifts to put with your collections. Next you find it necessary to build special cabinets and display cases, and sometimes even buildings to house your collection. Your spouse or family may wonder where it is going to end. Most collectors find great pleasure in their collection and love sharing it with friends.. Finally you reach the end of the collection. Either you have begun to collect something else, you have no more room or there just aren't any more. Now, what do you do with it?. They still require dusting, none of the family shows any interest in taking over the collection and there they set. Well, you could always donate them to your local Museum!! Button collections are fascinating to me. Also in a museum on the Columbia River, I saw the most amazing collection of Rosaries. I might suggest to Barbara that the members could bring a sample of some of their collections to the Christmas Meeting this year and we could compare stories of how why we collected these items. From one collector to another. Sincerely - Shirley

Museum West Fund Raiser:

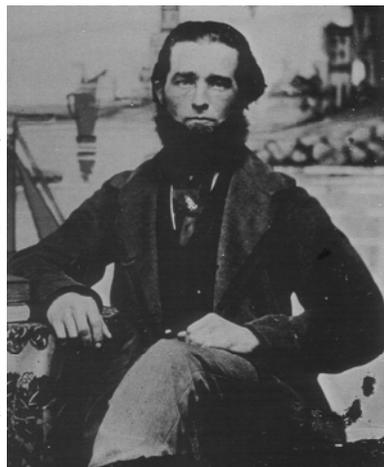
Colin & Millie Armstrong have agreed to host a "Recycle Sale" for the society on August 12, 13, 14 & 15. All items, including clean and mended clothing may be dropped off at 1819 St. Andrews, McMinnville, or call Millie at 503-472-6489 or Shirley at 503-434-0567 for pick up. Pick up and delivery has already begun with an "Organ Donation". For more information contact the above. Please do not leave them at the doorstep. Make sure someone is home. Start your "Spring cleaning" early this year.

Visitations:

Monday, February 16, a group of Tiger Cub Scouts (Den 8, Pack 522) of McMinnville, toured the museum, colorful in their bright orange T-shirts and blue and orange caps. One teen-age brother and eight adults, including Marcia Arvin, the den leader, accompanied the eleven small people; becoming so involved they kept trying to answer questions intended for the scouts. Ed, Twila and Lois.

Treachery and Intrigue!

Those were the words used by our January guest speaker regarding her distant ancestor Joel Perkins, the founder of Lafayette. Virginia Johnson, one of two remaining descendents of Joel, has researched the life and times of Joel and his heirs extensively, and she presented to our attendees a very unbiased and factual record of the facts surrounding the murder of Joel, which occurred in early August of 1856 when he was returning from California with his family to Lafayette. Virginia had two photographs of men who 'might' be Joel... but no one is sure which one is the real photo, but this mystery may soon be solved. (She will be speaking with another elderly relative who may be able to answer the question.



The photo on the right is from an early daguerreotype which is believed to be Joel, but she also had a second photo of a man which has strong resemblance to descendants.

Joel was murdered by John Malone, an employee and friend, who ended up hanging himself in jail after implicating Joels' wife, Laura Hawn Perkins. Laura was a daughter of Jacob Hawn, Hotel Proprietor in Lafayette. Joel and Laura were married in 1849 when she was fourteen years old. Joel and Laura had two children at the time of his death, and she delivered another following his tragic demise. The estate left by Joel included the Lafayette property, a Rouge River home, properties in El Monte, Mexico and Los Angeles county, California and some valuable property in Portland on the corner of Yamhill and Front Street.



(continued on page 5)

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

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472-7328

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Volunteer Coordinator

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Newsletter

Dan Linscheid 843
-2625

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Joanne Watts 835
-5893

MUSEUM HOURS

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

June 1—August 30:
Fri-Sat-Sun 1 to 4 PM

or

By Appointment

605 Market Street
Lafayette Oregon
Phone: 864-2308

New Email:
yamhillhistory@
onlinemac.com

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YCHS

Turkey Rama began in 1961 as a joint venture with the Chamber of Commerce. It grew from the Pacific Coast Turkey Exhibit show and competition. Both events were designed to spur turkey consumption. What started as a banquet for the growers ended as a barbeque for the public. As the years passed, it became more of a community festival. Profits benefit local human services organizations.

Turkeys had become more than a million-dollar industry for Yamhill County before the late 1960s, but small scale growers were starting to drop out. Richard and Patsey Miller did so in 1964 because he secured a job with a steady income thereby avoiding the financial ups-and-downs associated with turkey growing. Patsey's family, the Appersons, continued on.

Artificial insemination was introduced as a way to lessen the wear and tear on hens resulting from natural reproduction. Poult were sexed and sorted at the hatchery. Hens and toms were never allowed to commingle. Because hens would be repeatedly artificially inseminated in late winter and early spring, overall turkey production increased. This led to ever greater marketing activities and the introduction of bunch meats - ground turkey, turkey sausage, sliced turkey breasts - and turkey parts.

Feed costs were always a concern. They represented about 2/3 of all costs associated with raising turkeys. Good feed, corn and soybeans that had a high conversion rate to meat, was a Midwestern product. The resulting high transportation costs meant that local turkey growers were paying \$10 or more per ton beyond what growers in other regions were paying. This translated to a loss of about thirty cents per bird - a significant loss when profit margins were never great.

Turkeys moved off the range in the late 1960s. Don Walker built what was then state-of-the-art grow-out sheds. Twenty-one of them in 1969. These buildings, almost 8,000 square feet, gave growers more control over the turkeys, eliminated some natural hazards and led to better feed conversion rates. Turkey maturity was reached about four weeks sooner than range finished birds - dramatically reducing feed costs.

The birds were changing. Bronze turkeys left dark spots in the flesh where the feathers were attached. These dark spots detracted from the visual appeal. To eliminate these spots small white turkeys whose feathers didn't leave dark spots were being crossed with the broad breasted bronzes. Soon the broad breasted white turkey had become the industry standard. Larry Stoller, an Amity area turkey grower, thinks that the local industry slowly began losing efficiency in the late 1970s.

He defined efficiency as the cost of growing the birds - feed, freight and processing costs plus money spent on land and equipment. One attempt to improve the federally mandated upgrading of the chilling process actually decreased the plant's efficiency thereby resulting in another small loss per bird for the growers. Other turkey growing areas - California, the Midwest and the Southeast - had advantages that Oregon didn't have: close proximity to large population centers, close proximity to feed sources, lower wages and/or no unions.

These problems slowly grew in significance during the 1980s. Verl Sauter, who was 'the banker' for many of the county's growers from 1958-86, knew that the market price for turkeys was a specified national number. He knew that the local growers were raising ever larger flocks while the profit margin on turkeys was getting thinner. Not a good picture financially. Smaller growers—with less investment in equipment, etc.—were slowly driven out by these small setbacks. The larger operations - with 100,000 or more birds per year - were better able to withstand those loses, expecting the market would recover. It always had.

By the mid-1980s turkey management had changed significantly. Huge environmentally controlled buildings with automated ventilation and electronic controls were beginning to be built. Four of these buildings erected on ten acre sites became the industry standard. Typically there was a young flock in the brooder house - one of the smaller buildings with 17,000 square feet - and an older flock in the three grow-out buildings.

Day old poult were sorted by sex at the hatchery, delivered to the brooder house where hens and toms were kept separated. After about five weeks the hens were moved to the other 17,000 square foot building. Toms took over that entire brooder house for about two to three more weeks before being placed in the two larger buildings (20,000 square feet each). The turkeys stayed in these buildings until they were shipped to the only remaining killing plant in Oregon. Once the brooder house was vacated and thoroughly cleaned, it was ready for the next batch of poult (25,000) which came on a pretty regular basis about five times a year. This was year-round growing. Initially it seemed like the perfect way to raise turkeys by eliminating so many of the earlier problems and it provided a year-round income.

Ultimately it was one of the major reasons the industry ended in Oregon. That conclusion is based on hindsight.



(Turkey Story cont.)

The growers didn't see it coming. In fact, Anthony Bernards, a Dayton farmer, was aware of the nice profits that turkey growers reaped in 1984. He and his brother raised 2-3 flocks in 1985 making a three dollar profit per turkey. That was reason enough to sign up to have those four big environmentally controlled buildings erected on his farm during the winter of 1985-6. The 1986 production brought good profits. Then "the bottom fell out in 1987; no one made a profit." There was too much supply with demand decreasing. The Bernards brothers, average size growers raising 100,000 - 125,000 turkeys annually, felt obliged to stay in the industry because of the lease agreement on the new buildings.

Year-round production was not the only reason for the collapse of the industry. The Oregon Turkey Growers Co-operative, their own organization, was partly to blame. The members. The management. The Board. Members tended to look out for their own needs rather than the group needs. The management did not get close to maximizing efficiency. The Board lacked the wisdom to start at the marketing end of the industry, thereby telling members how many turkeys to grow. These problems can be summed up as 'poor management'.

Anthony Bernards, the last president of the Board of Directors, also faults Norbest, the marketing agent for Oregon Turkey Growers. The Norbest label had been good for a number of years. Unfortunately, the company was unable to provide what the Oregon Turkey Growers needed - marketing savvy. Discontent on the local grower's part led to a search for a replacement. Because the contract with Norbest stated some rather severe penalties for withdrawing, Oregon Turkey Growers never switched.

The economic picture was worsening. According to Yamhill County Extension records 1,100,000 turkeys were sold by Yamhill County growers in 1986 for \$10,257,000. That was good money for the growers. Twice as many turkeys were marketed from Yamhill County in 1991. To make the same profit as they had five years earlier, the value of the sales should have been \$20,514,000. Instead the turkeys brought in \$13,004,000 - a decrease in profits of about seven and a half million dollars. Growers began losing interest as their profits began a steady decline in 1987 and more dropped out of the industry. When Larry and Susan Stoller began, in the mid 1970s, they aimed for \$1 gross profit per bird. At the very end he would have been happy with 50 cents per bird.

A nearly fatal blow was the recall of 'spoiled turkeys' in 1991. A distributor supposedly had committed to buying turkeys from Norbest at a price which ultimately exceeded the nationally set market price. He claimed there were 'spoiled turkeys' - anywhere from 3 to 300 - which could be traced back to Oregon Turkey Growers. The story goes that some turkeys had been left outside, overnight, on a loading dock. Why that happened was never clearly established. 70,000 fresh turkeys were recalled from seven states just days before Thanksgiving. The distributor refused to pay Norbest who sought payment from the growers who then turned to their insurance companies. A long legal battle resulted in a court decision unfavorable to the growers. "The turkeys were spoiled. The growers have to cover the cost." - \$900,000.

Norbest did not support the Oregon growers who provided only about 5% of Norbest's turkeys. Growers in Utah (Norbest's home state) and Nebraska Turkey Growers were able to meet Norbest's needs. There was overproduction of turkeys and a large inventory of frozen turkeys. Oregon growers were superfluous - an unstated but rather obvious reason why Norbest didn't stand behind their growers in the conflict with the distributor.

Payment of that \$900,000 debt, the oversupply of turkeys and financial losses since 1987 led several growers to quit in 1992 after their younger flock had gone to the killing plant. One grower provided the final blow. John Stoller said, "I'll be the biggest grower in Oregon and if anyone gets in my way, I'll walk right over them." John expanded his operation so much that he was producing more than 50% of the birds grown in the state - raising at least 500,000 turkeys per year. Loans enabled him to build 10 of those expensive environmentally controlled buildings.

He had become the biggest grower. He also had financial difficulties going back several years and he owed a lot of money. Knowing this and the sorry financial situation of the turkey business in Oregon, the lenders called in their loans which forced him into bankruptcy. All of his assets, including his turkeys, were tied up in the bankruptcy case. They were not available to be processed at the co-op plant in West Salem. The remaining growers, who collectively accounted for less than 50% of the total number of turkeys, could not cover the full cost of operating the killing plant.

Unable to absorb a second major financial hit within two years, the co-op had to close. According to Gerald Evers, the local turkey growers just weren't able to run a cost effective business. The last turkeys were processed at the plant in April 1993. The Co-op filed for bankruptcy in July 1993. The plant was sold in early 1994.

Many growers lost quite a bit of money. Charles Evers, who raised about 350,000 -400,000 turkeys annually, said, "It was lots of hard work. I made lots of money and I lost lots of money on turkeys. All told I came out ahead." Anthony Bernards still owed money on the loan associated with erecting the environmentally controlled buildings. But there was no income from those buildings. Times were tough.

Some of the ex-turkey growers expanded their other agricultural activities - mostly growing grains and grasses. Others rented out their huge turkey buildings for storage of hay, farm equipment, whatever. A few like Gerald Evers (Charles's son) and Anthony Bernards switched to growing chickens. When you eat a 'grown in Oregon' Foster Farm chicken it might very well come from one of these two farms.

Some of the turkey facilities and range land now support a newer agricultural activity - vineyards and wineries. Walker's Newberg farm is now part of Rex Hill's extensive vineyards. Wilbur Stoller's land, where John Stoller raised his turkeys, has one section of the vineyard called Stoller Ridge. In 1970 David Lett, owner of Eyrie Vineyards, acquired the McDaniel killing plant in McMinnville. The building's features that made it good for processing turkeys also make it good for converting grapes into wine.



Quiz time:

Can you figure out who this young lady is? The one on the left was taken in the early 1920's. This lady has been a great supporter of our society for many years. And those are all the clues you'll get!

The photo on the right was simply too darned cute to ignore, even though it probably won't help you figure out who she is.

You can find the answer hidden elsewhere in this newsletter.



Board Meeting Highlights:

Please feel free to view a copy of the full minutes online at <http://sites.onlinemac.com/history>. The February 10th meeting was convened with the following officers and board members were present: Shirley McDaniel, Annita Linscheid, Eileen Lewis, Carol Reid, Dan Linscheid, Marjorie Owens, Barbara Knutson, Francis Dummer, and Shirley Venhaus. Also present were members Kathy Peck and Linda Miller. The Treasurers Report: given by Carol Reid, showing a beginning balance of \$4,298.53, expenses of \$1,977.03, and an income of \$5,765.42, resulting in a balance of \$8,086.92. Shirley V. asked if Carol could have a financial report prepared ahead of time for her to review. Carol stated that would be difficult for her to do because of the time element involved in having an up-to-date report for the Board meeting. Correspondence Secretary: Marjorie Owens reported seven pieces of correspondence including

thank you letters to several attorneys for pro bono advice in matters involving a proposed contract with the Nomadic Teacher program. Shirley V. introduced Linda Miller to the Board. She has agreed to fill the vacant position of Membership Secretary.



Linda Miller, Membership Secretary

This was appointment was approved by the Board. Betty Baltzell has agreed to take care of the personal letter writing of the Correspondence Secretary, to free Marjorie up so she can have more time for the researching and answering our many inquiries on family history, mostly via e-mail. This was also approved by the Board. Volunteer Chairperson: Carol Reid reported weekends at the museum have been covered with extra effort by some volunteers.

She also reported that John Lyon, a senior from Linfield, is helping at the museum for volunteer hours needed in credit for his anthropology class. **Old Business:**

Mormon Church Report: Carol reported that volunteers are still needed. Shirley M., Frank, Marjorie, Carol and Dan will be volunteering. **Museum Report:** Kathy and Annita showed the Board some examples of items from the textiles that they felt might not belong in the collection as they were just scraps and pieces of no historical value, and asked that the group working on preservation not include them in the remarking and cataloging process. The consensus was to process them but put them aside for review. The process of cataloging all textiles after they receive new tags and are cleaned is being carried out every Wednesday at the museum. This information will be entered into the computer which will then generate the needed paper inventory reports. On a motion by Barbara, seconded by Dan, it was agreed to continue with this method. Kathy is almost ready to produce a printout of the photo listing from our database.

Board Minutes continued:

She is trying to get all the loose ends tied up so an accurate and complete list will result. **By-Laws:** Dan will review The Oregon Historical Society by-laws to see what may need to be adopted by YCHS.

Budget Committee: Frank, Carol, Dan, and Ken Williams have finished with the budget and copies will be mailed for approval at the next Board meeting. The Board then went into executive session concerning the Nomadic Teacher program. Upon returning from executive session, the Board returned to: **New Business: Calendars:** On a motion by Dan and seconded by Barbara the calendars will now be offered for \$6.00. To date seventy seven have been sold out of the one hundred and fifty printed. **IRS penalty:** Shirley reported she has not heard word on her appeal in the penalty matter with them, which related to bookkeeping on the Nomadic Teacher program. **Other Business:** Dan asked about getting some information for a heat pump in the log building to better regulate the temperature and humidity. Shirley has not solicited bids on this yet. **Museum Annex:** Shirley V. reported the warranty deed for the five acres is now in the safety deposit box at the bank. She also said she has gotten very positive response from her letter sent to the membership last month concerning the five acre donation. She would also like to set up a meeting with all who would like to help on this project. She met with the Genealogical Society to update them on our plans regarding this project. She told them there was nothing to update thus far as we are in the early stage of planning. **Garage Sale:** Millie Armstrong is planning the garage sale for August 12, 13, 14, and 15. She has room to store items until then, and Colin will be willing to pick up items for the sale.

Treachery and Intrigue! (cont)

It included a warehouse on the waterfront, which was rented to an early forerunner of the Meier and Frank store. The property was owned by the family for nearly 50 years and was to keep Laura and her family in good hands the rest of their lives. Joel was only 35 at the time of his death.

We thank Virginia for her willingness to share the results of her research regarding Joel with us. She has not given up in her quest to discover all pertinent facts regarding this matter, and her diligent efforts made for a very interesting program for our audience. Keep up the good work, Virginia!

Spring Yard Work

Tom Genco and his work crew have requested that we **not** put roundup along our sidewalk edges. They will keep these mechanically edged, which will result in a cleaner and more professional look.

Museum News

Good News! Our Wednesday work group is a wonderful success. Work on the textiles is progressing at a faster pace than expected. Thanks to a great group of ladies, all articles are getting new easy-to-read labels, being itemized for cataloging, cleaned, photographed and put into archival storage boxes for easy retrieval and display. Everyone seems to be having a good time visiting and sewing. We are also getting a first hand look at our wide collection of wonderful articles. So far, we've seen lots of ladies dresses from the 1850s on up to flapper styles. We've seen very elaborate clothing ranging from lots of bead-work, tucks and gathers, braiding and lace, to the very simple, ordinary day clothing. We have also processed some neat old wool swimsuits.

On the first upgraded Wednesday workday a friend of some of our volunteers stopped by and was so impressed with our project she volunteered to help out. She's not a stitcher, so she is now helping clean the articles, which is done by vacuuming; she also has become a member of our society and is very fun to work with. The following Wednesday another friend stopped by to drop off some cotton sheets for our use. She sat down, sewed on several labels, had a short visit and was on her way. A short time later John Lyon returned with his Professor and about nine of his students from Linfield college, to visit the museum. They were very interested in all the work in progress. They asked many questions and marveled at the old clothing.

The Professor said he brings his class to the museum every year and is happy to see these steps are being taken to preserve and protect our artifacts. After asking some questions about the methods being used and watching for a bit, he remarked that he was very impressed, and thought the process was being done very professionally and was well thought out. This coming from an anthropology professor was wonderful news. Hey, we are doing this the way it should be done!!!

Anyone is invited to join us and lend a hand. Some can give an hour, some bring a lunch and stay for the day, but all are appreciated because we really do need all the help we can get. We will be there at the museum working every Wednesday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. We really are having a good time and we're getting a lot accomplished.

The original group working on old photos and quilts, including Marjorie Owens, Jean Sartor, Elma Shuck, Anita Linscheid, Kathy Peck, Elsie Lehman and Eileen Lewis, have now been joined by Joann Watts, Shirley McDaniel, Patsey Miller, Nancy Mahi, Carol Reid and John Lyon for this new textiles process.

Submitted by the Wednesday Work Group

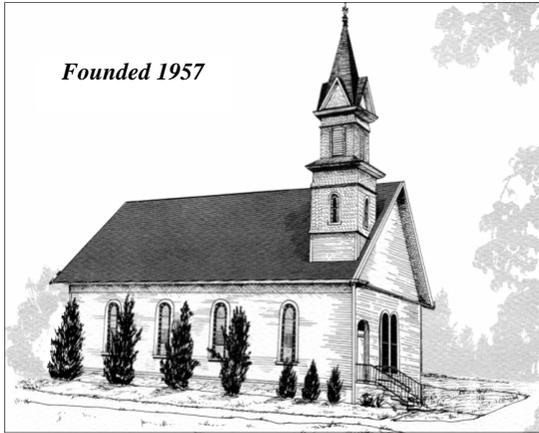


YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Lafayette Oregon 97127

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES Effective May 31, 2002

<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. Annual membership 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 membership dues, please contact Carol Reid at 472-9631, or check your mailing label, which should show this information also. (The month and year indicate your "paid through" period according to our records.) If you see a colored "dot" on your label, you're at the end of your membership term!

Answer to quiz: Crystal Riley

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Meeting Notice:

Board of Directors:

Tuesday, March 9, 5:00 pm

Monthly Meeting:

Same day as Board meeting., 6:30 pm

Both at the Co. Public Works Bldg.
Lafayette Avenue.
McMinnville

This meeting will feature the continuation of our Historic Photos on our website, narrated by Dan Linscheid. Please join us.

Renewing and New Members:

We welcome returning members **Linda Miller, Eileen Lewis, Ruth & V.H. Banke, Marjorie Bowman, Sylvia Bryon, Margaret Evans, Jim & Reita Lockett, Ken & Pat Williams, Twila & Harry Byrnes, Ed & Peggy Roghair, Ken & Barbara Knutson, Patsey Miller and Cynthia Oliver** and new members **Nancy & Henry Mahi, Louise Heindl, and Charles Burgess..** Your support of our organization is deeply appreciated.