

The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

September 2006

Board Meeting highlights

The board met on August 10, 2006 in the Log Cabin Museum. Attorney Jerry Hart attended to give his legal insight. The board approved a motion that all names of those voting on an item with a divided vote shall be listed in the minutes to reflect their vote.

Treasurer Williams reported a beginning balance of \$5,346.07, deposits of \$8,063.84, and payments of \$3,712.36, with an ending balance of \$9,697.55. Membership Secretary Kathy reported she has received about a 1/3 return on membership renewals based on the July 2007 renewal letter sent out. Volunteer Chair Louise Heindl wrote a letter containing ideas about promoting the museum.

Marjorie reported lots of visitors for Lafayette Days. It was agreed to waive the entry fee for the August 19th Fly-in event. We will provide refreshments. Old Business: Serve Day, Wednesday, Sept. 6th, 2006: Students from George Fox will again help clean up our facilities for serve day this year. Picnic reminder: August 20th, noon, Ed Grenfell Park. Harvest Festival: October 14th, no one has volunteered to chair this event yet.

A letter has been sent to the Genealogy Society offering to house their research library. Their President, Carol Reid, has submitted an agreement for us to look over for approval. Jerry Hart will review the agreement and get back to us. Covered Wagon: The wagon was displayed at the County Fair and was well received. The board decided to proceed with plans to publish a Cook Book and sell ads to local businesses to pay the printing cost. The selling price will be \$15.00.

Dan is researching web hosting and will be getting more detailed information for the next board meeting. Author Jane Kirkpatrick will be speaking January 27th at the McMinnville Library. YCHS will co-sponsor this event along with the Library and Linfield College.

Under new business, it was decided to allow the McMinnville Travel Bureau to send brochures out to our members for an upcoming cruise entitled "History Comes Alive." YCHS will receive 4% or 5% profit if ten members from YCHS join.

Shirley will contact Mr. & Mrs. Luse concerning what items YCHS will charge against the Miller Fund.

The application for lot line adjustment for our new complex has not been submitted, although the legal descriptions have been prepared. We will be drilling a well and will need to treat the water to make it potable at the new museum.

Attorney Jerry Hart has reviewed the proposed contract with Don Stastny and suggested we get more clarification on several items. He suggested we not sign a contract for Mr. Stastny's workshops until the lot line adjustment is cleared up or ask Don if he will be willing to start the workshops without the contract. Annita Linscheid, Secretary

Hi Everyone,

The picnic location was very nice. The attendance was not necessarily quantity but definitely quality. The afternoon was spent eating good food and reminiscing. We talked about things that we missed: The days when people enjoyed picnics and getting together, Bob Kuykendall saying the blessing and his partner, Shirley, who is always there to lend a helping hand, Crystal Rilee's roasting ears and the funny and sometimes riske' jokes especially the flower joke at the Amity meeting. Lois mentioned when she was president, Crystal was always available to fill in at the museum when they needed help, Miss you Crystal and wish you well, I remembered Lois bringing Roma Sitton to the meetings and events and how happy she was to be there, Harvey & Ruth Stoller's contributions to the society, Miriam Blair's presidency and the times they had, Evelyn Noyes as secretary and the minutes that were not allowed to be changed, Gil Ogden as treasurer and sometimes just didn't have a report, Ed Roghair & all his help in the machinery barn & Peggy for her work with the newsletter, George & Maxine for all they have done for the society (Love Maxine's jewelry), A special mention to Dorothy Guinness as one of the founding members and being with us all these years, I remember being lost at the first meeting I attended, Lois talked about how she ended up teaching in Alaska. It was a good time. Let us not forget all the personal happenings that has made this society what it is as we plan for the future.

Lorna continues to work on the publication of a Historical Society Cookbook. When people hear about the plans many are able to bring out special ones that they have from the past. Let's hope this up coming book will be that special. Watch for a notice from Lorna for recipes and family histories.

Also be aware that the Historical Society, McMinnville Library and Linfield College will co-sponsor an event with the author Jane Kirkpatrick on January 27th, 2007. We feel very fortunate to be assisting in having this popular author come to our area. Watch for more information on this. Thanks Gloria.

Much discussion has been had with the Board & membership as to the Harvest Festival. We were unable to find someone who would chair this event. The Board has worked together to host it a couple years but with all the other activities this year we felt we could not do it again. Those who have worked on this in the past felt it was time for them to step down and allow someone else to do the job. This year's Lafayette Days was quite a success at the museum with lots of attendance. We are considering changing Harvest Festival to a summer event and have it coincide with the Lafayette event. Please watch your newsletter for decisions on this.

We received a generous grant from the "Malcolm Marquis Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation". It was decided to put this toward preservation projects that are ongoing at the Museum. We are very fortunate to have those who set up these grants for our use. We appreciate it and thank Malcolm and the Foundation.

We are very happy to have Louise Heindl working on publicizing and getting the word out about the Historical Society. Did you notice in the News Register's list of most and best that the Yamhill County Historical Society was voted the "Best Kept Secret" in the county?? Please help us spread the word about the Historical Society. Hope all of you have had an enjoyable summer. See you at the Sept. Meeting. Shirley

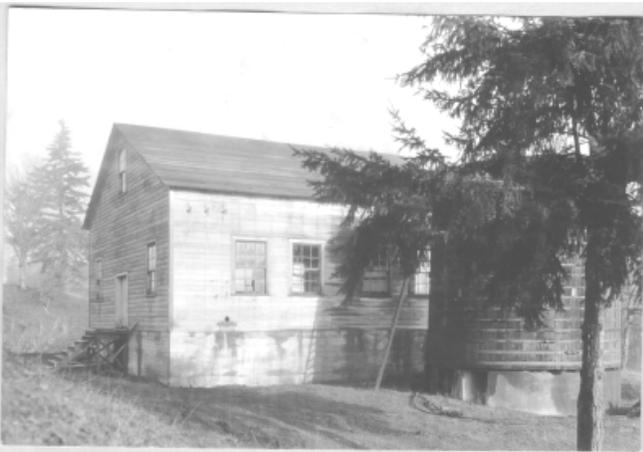
<p>OFFICERS - 2006</p> <p><u>President</u> Shirley Venhaus 472-7328</p> <p><u>Vice President</u> Lorna Grauer</p> <p><u>Secretary</u> Annita Linscheid 843-2625</p> <p><u>Treasurer</u> Ken Williams</p> <p><u>Membership Secretary</u> Kathy Peck 472-6562</p> <p><u>Corresponding Secretary</u> Marjorie Owens 843-3081</p> <p><u>Board of Directors</u> Eileen Lewis 835-7531</p> <p>Gloria Lutz</p> <p>Shirley McDaniel 662-3528</p> <p>Dan Linscheid 843-2625</p> <p><u>Program Director</u> Barbara Knutson 843-2069</p> <p><u>Volunteer Coordinator</u> Louise Heindl 662-4218</p> <p><u>Newsletter</u> Dan Linscheid</p> <p><u>Car Pool Coordinator</u> Joanne Watts 835 -5893</p> <p><u>Librarian</u> Jean Sartor 472-6312</p> <p>MUSEUM HOURS:</p> <p>July and August: Fridays and Saturdays. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. or by appointment</p>	<p>A Plea for Yearbooks</p> <p>We would like to fill in some gaps in our collection of various high school yearbooks, and if you can contribute in any way, please contact Marj Owens at the Museum for details. She volunteers Wednesdays and most Saturdays at the Museum, where she can be reached at 503-864-2308</p>	<p>Museum update</p> <p>Volunteers are busy at the Museum Wednesdays and Fridays. Some of the displays have been completely changed or rearranged so there are new things for members and visitors to view.</p> <p>Over 1500 of our photos have been scanned and entered into our database, along with any information we have on the people, places or items in the photos. Ruth Killius has made amazing progress on this. She is a dedicated and adept typist, very fast and accurate at the keyboard. We give a heartfelt thank you to our faithful group of volunteers who keep plugging away, preserving our artifacts and making a better experience for our visitors.</p>
<p>New dues structure now in place</p> <p>As of July, we are on our new dues structure, which will make the job of keeping membership lists much easier. Due to a number of reasons, we saw a reduction in renewals, and efforts are being undertaken to increase our general membership.</p> <p>New members will pay dues prorated to the next July, and our volunteers at the museum have those prorated amounts available. We may also post the amounts on our website. We thank you for your patience during this transition period.</p>	<p>A Few Words on Genealogy</p> <p>So you'd like to do some research on an ancestor who lived in another county or state way back when? Try http://www.rootsweb.com/~orgenweb/counties.html for other Oregon counties, and http://www.usgenweb.net/ for thousands of links to other states and territories. Our county genealogical society can be found at http://www.geocities.com/ycgsociety/.</p> <p>At our museum we have thousands of obituaries sorted alphabetically. We look forward to bringing the records of the county genealogical society into our facility to expand the assistance both societies can give to researchers.</p> <p>The county genealogical society is very active and has a number of publications available for purchase. President Carol Reid (our past Treasurer) is assisted by Vice President Nancy Mahi (a past YCHS board member), Recording Secretary Bobbie McClenny, Treasurer Evelyn Wolfer and Membership Karen Lowery. Their group meets at 10 a.m. the first Saturday of each month at the Materials Recovery Facility, 2200 NE Orchard Avenue in McMinnville.</p> <p>This non-profit group has helped many people in their research efforts. While the power of the internet is awesome, local, state and national groups can greatly aid researchers seeking additional information.</p>	<p>About our website(s)</p> <p>If you type in "Yamhill County Historical Society" in the Google search engine, you will find over 900 hits (or website addresses) to our society, the museum, and our historic photo collection. The board of directors is currently considering whether or not to purchase our own internet address, such as www.yamhillmuseum.org or something similar. The cost will be minimal, if we decide to do this. One of the benefits would be that people searching for our museum may be able to find it on the internet quicker. A Google search on "Yamhill County Museum" returns only 39 hits.</p> <p>We cooperate with the Oregon Genealogy website (http://www.rootsweb.com/~orgenweb/index.htm), which is part of the US GenWeb project. This cooperation allows us to serve visitors interested in our history and people in allowing them access to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GenConnect for county cemeteries, obits, biographies & wills • National Genweb queries • Yamhill county cemetery links & files • Our YCHS page & link to our photo gallery • Our publications • A listing of our pioneer surnames • National Archives Online (NARA) <p>We've placed the copyright symbol on our historic photos to minimize usage by those who would take advantage of our society. All we ask is that credit be given where credit is due, in return for their use of the photos. One of our photos was used in the movie "Seabiscuit", and the producer contacted the board and received written permission to use the photo, provided YCHS was listed in the credits at the end of the movie.</p> <p>Many people commented on this to us after seeing the movie, which is a great way to advertise who we are. We've had a web visitation counter on our website since 1999, to help us track the number of visits we get daily or monthly. (over 22,000 'hits' since 1999)</p> <p>We welcome your comments on how we can make our webpage and our society better.</p>
<p>605 Market Street Lafayette Oregon Phone: 864-2308</p> <p>© 2006 YCHS</p> <p>Email: yamhillhistory@onlinemac.com</p>		

By Dan Linscheid

The year 2007 will mark the 100th anniversary of the McMinnville Water and Light Commission. In the spring of 1889, separate Water and Electric Light commissions were appointed by the city council to investigate construction of improved water facilities and the possibility of providing electricity to citizens of the city. By mid-December of that same year, the new water system was in and operational, and the new power generator saw use in the city the day after the first water filled the new mains. The intervening nine months must have seen a flurry of activity in the area.

That first electric plant was built on the north side of the south fork of the Yamhill, in what was no doubt considered rural property at the time, just westerly of the old bridge leading to Three Mile Lane.

That first water system delivered pressure at 150 p.s.i. to the fire hydrants, which would guarantee "sufficient fire pressure." At the same time the new facilities went on line, the city hired a chief engineer, G.H. Hemstock to oversee the plant. He was paid the grand sum of \$75 per month, and an assistant was hired to help him provide services to customers and keep everything running.



1889 water and light facility

The rate for water supplied to homes was \$1.50 per month, and for a single 16 candlepower electric lamp, the rate was \$1 monthly. By the end of that decade, the charges for lights was proportioned based on the time of delivery, so that if your lights were off by 10 p.m., the rate was \$1. but if you wanted them on until midnight, you paid an additional \$0.25 per month. Customers using more than 30 of those lights per month could reduce their billing by 20%.

A single 50 h.p. Westinghouse wood burning steam engine provided all the electricity to the city. This system only sufficed until the turn of the last century, when the number of customers using lights began causing problems. In 1900, a new General Electric 90 kilowatt generator was put into service, but not before the commission cut the electrical rates in half due to complaints by citizens regarding the quality of service. By the spring of that year, the new system was operational, and things ran smoothly for two years, when a piston rod on the dynamo broke, completely disrupting power in the community.

The water system was improved during these early

years also. A pit was excavated near the river, which was at approximately the same level as the river, and a pipe connected the river water directly to pumps in the pit, a vast improvement over the earlier system of delivery.

McMinnville grew rapidly during these early years, and by mid-1904, a proposal was made to ask the voters in the city to approve a new hydro-electric plant on Baker Creek, to be situated at the intersection of what is now known as Baker Creek Road and Powerhouse Hill Road. The City Attorney was requested to prepare a resolution on the matter and the Fire and Water committee was directed to hire the best engineer available to determine the water flow of Baker Creek.

The city council authorized the superintendent of the water and electric plant to "extend the water pipes wherever the same may be needed for future connections." This basically allowed unlimited growth of the water system to new subdivisions and additions to the city.

A bill approved by the Oregon Senate in 1905 paved the way to the establishment of the McMinnville Water and Light Committee. This bill authorized the Mayor to serve on the committee, and to appoint the other four members of the committee, provided the City council approved of the appointments.

Due to the fact that the city charter needed to be amended to accommodate the addition of the commission, the committee was not able to evolve into the commission until late 1907. Mayor E. Northrup appointed John Wortman, W.C. Apperson, George H. Hauser and Dr. Lewis as commissioners. Dr. Lewis was elected by the committee to serve as chair, and in the spring of 1905 voters of the city authorized the committee to issue bonds, "not to exceed \$80,000," for the "erection and construction of a water and electric light plant to furnish a sufficient supply of pure water and electric lights for the use of the inhabitants of the city." A reservoir was constructed on the hill north of the Masonic Cemetery for water storage. Local attorney Fenton was authorized to prepare deeds for property, easements, springs and water rights for the new system. In December of 1907 the new Commission, chaired by W.T. Macy first convened for business, with new commissioners Alonzo Hull, Elsie Wright, O.C. Murton and D.E. Wheeler in attendance.



YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 484

Lafayette Oregon 97127



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

Dated Material - Return Service Requested

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Paid July each year

□ Individual	\$15
□ Family	\$25
□ Friend	\$50+
□ Supporter	\$100+
□ Community Builder	\$250+
□ 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, September 12th, at the Trinity Lutheran Church, Sheridan. Our program this month will be Chuck Fagan speaking on Yamhill County Postcards.

► 10/14, YCHS Harvest Festival (may not happen this year—lack of volunteers)

New Members/Renewals: We welcome renewing members **Marilyn Grouser, Judith Mickelson, Carolyn Stastny and Martha Works**. Thanks for supporting our organization. We invite you to attend our meetings, visit our museum and become more involved in our local history!