

The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

October 2000

Donation Land Claimants of the Highlands

Our September program was given by member Phyllis Turner. In what she termed the first installment of her presentation on the Highlands, in the upper Rock Creek area northerly of Sheridan, Phyllis discussed some of her research on the early settlers, the locations of their claims, and their families. Among the names mentioned, Agee, Lady, Cate, Wicher and Bewley were familiar to most of the attendees having a background in local Sheridan and Willamina History. In her research, Phyllis disclosed the strong ties between our early settlers and those in Douglas County. It was of interest to note the early ages at which some of the young ladies married when the Donation Act of September, 1850 took effect. If married by 1st of December of 1850, settlers could claim one square mile of land for the family. If they waited until after that date but were married prior to the 1st of December of 1851, they received 320 acres. Single settlers were entitled to 320 and 180 acres, respectively, between these same dates. It became obvious quickly that Phyllis has done a massive amount of research into the settlement of the Highlands, and we appreciated her presentation and hope we can look forward to the next installment at some future date.

A word from our President

There is a feel of fall in the air. It is such a nice time of the year. The youngest granddaughter who has lived with us for several years will leave for the Marine Corp Oct. 10th. Will certainly be quiet around our house. Guess I will have to get a dog or volunteer for some non-profit organization. On Oct. 6th, at 9:00 a.m. the building committee will meet at the museum complex to discuss needed maintenance and possible future projects. We have a list of suggested needs to consider the best use of space is always one of our considerations.

The nominating committee was chosen at the last general meeting, so please give thought to being a part of the Board. It is one way to learn about the society and contribute to the betterment of the museum. Please contact any Board member and let them know of your desire to help. October 14th is the "Harvest Festival". Come and join in the fun and be sure and bring a guest, Joanne Watts and her committee will be calling the members for help during the festivities and donation of finger foods. See you soon, Shirley

A Plea for HELP

On October 6th at 9:00 a.m., volunteers will be cleaning, weeding, polishing, arranging, at our museum in preparation for Harvest Festival. If you can see your way clear to fit in a couple hours of not too hard labor, it will be deeply appreciated. We will also prepare flyers announcing the Festival which will be made available to hand out or place in strategic locations.

The YCHS website is at <http://www.onlinemac.com/users/dlin>, and our historic photo gallery is at <http://www.co.yamhill.or.us>.

Board Meeting Highlights:

September 12, 2000. Roll Call: The meeting was called to order by President Shirley Venhaus with the following signed in: Francis Dummer, Dan Linscheid, Barbara Knutson, Lila Jackson, Eileen Lewis, Edward Roghair, Majorie Owens, Betty Brown, Marine Williams, Shirley McDaniel and Shirley Venhaus. Minutes: Marjorie moved. Dan seconded a motion to accept the minutes as mailed. Motion passed. Treasurer's Report: Betty handed out a report to members. Discussion was held about the appraisal of contents to see about a blanket appraisal as an inventory would be very time consuming. The report was accepted as presented. Membership/Financial: Lila reported one new member, one renewal, two life members, and noted the loss of Crystal Rilee's husband and Elaine Craig. Corresponding Secretary: Majorie sent a sympathy card and answered four letters of inquiry. Volunteer Chair: Maxine reported volunteers traded around for the month of August so the times were covered. Winter hours are in effect with September volunteers. George and Maxine have a new address: 953 Hillside Park Way, McMinnville and have the same phone number. Old Business: Picnic Report: The covered area at Amity park proved to be a nice area as the threat of rain and a few drops were not a problem. Thanks were extended to Opal for the set-up. Crystal came with her home-grown corn — a nice treat. We plan to have Eileen ask the city for the use of the park for next year's picnic. Harvest Festival update: Annita Linscheid will be asked to be in charge of the refreshment set-up. Joanne Watts will make phone calls for finger food donations. More than eleven crafters have agreed to be on hand with their wares. Barbara will play for the Sing-a-long. Shirley will get out flyers to the libraries in the county and any other places to advertise. Building Committee: general member Matt Dunkel has agreed to join Ben Frum and Board members Dan Linscheid and Francis Dummer will also serve on this committee. This committee will meet Oct. 6 at 9:00 a.m.. Electric Bids Received: Four bids were received. A motion was made by Dan and seconded by Barbara, to accept the bid from Dave Franey Electric. (passed) Trenching is included with an Oct. 14 deadline for completion. Newsletter binding: Two years of newsletters are being bound. Bats are still a problem in the museum. Gardening tools: have been purchased and are in the barn for yard work use. Patsy Miller has agreed to do the yard work. Printing expenses: Dan will call the ESD to get a bid on printing our newsletter. Church painting bid: Lonnie Rose will give a bid on the painting. Drop cloths will have to be used for the scraping as well as the painting. Scraping will need to be done just before the painting so timing is a factor. New Business: Operation manual/directory: Shirley V, with others, have started this process. Question of By-laws vs. Policy was discussed. It was decided to have this policy with Board discretion. Be sure to leave a paper trail of any items that are taken out to be worked on. Dan will check on legality of publishing birth certificates on the net. Some duplicate items may be put on e-bay for sale, again with the approval of the Board. Renewal of dues: for Oregon Museums Association was recommended.

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 - 2000

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Maxine Williams
 472-4547

Librarian
Olive Merry Johnson
 472-6070

Newsletter
Dan Linscheid
 843-2625

Car Pool Coordinator
Joanne Watts
 835-5893

MUSEUM HOURS

Sept 1 to May 31:
 Sat-Sun 1 to 4 PM
 or
 By Appointment

605 Market Street
 Lafayette Oregon
 Phone: 864-2308

ANNUAL DUES

\$10.00 Individual
\$17.00 Family
\$125.00 Life

Mail to:
 Financial Secty
 2430 North Baker
 McMinnville OR
 97128

**October General Meeting
 & Potluck Dinner**

Our October meeting will be held at the Community Christian Church on Newby Street in McMinnville on the 9th at 6:30 p.m. Janet Mauntner, a Sheridan teacher, will relate her recent adventures in a canoe trip along a portion of the Lewis and Clark Trail. Please mark your calendars for this meeting and plan on bringing along a guest or two with table service and potluck fare.

Harvest Festival

October 14th is the date set aside for our Harvest Festival. Last years efforts were well attended and we look forward to good attendance this year. We will again have live music, good food, and a good time for all, so please plan on joining in on the fun. Hours will be from 10:00 to 4:00 at the Museum.

Birth Certificates

We have been informed by a representative of the OrGenWeb effort that Oregon Statutes prohibit public disclosure of birth records in less than 100 years old, and death certificates less than 50 years old. We will be cognizant of this as we continue to develop our online database, to be made available free of charge to our internet visitors.

Tree Evangelist

Member Maynard Drawson of Salem, author of 5 books on his travels in and around Oregon, was recently recognized for his efforts in fostering and preserving our tree heritage. The September issue of Northwest Senior News contained a full page article on Maynard and his enduring efforts statewide to show proper respect for trees.

Born in Oregon as a son of a Greek immigrant barber, Drawson is a promoter of our history and heritage, with special emphasis on large, unusual or historical trees.

If you listen to radio station KBZY (Salem) at 8:40 a.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month, you can hear and chat with Maynard about almost anything.

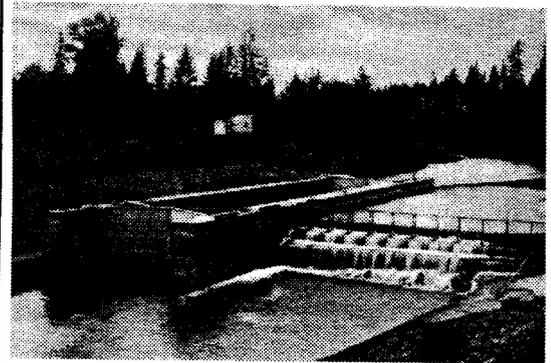
Reminder

The four digit number following your name reflects the year and date our records show you last paid your dues. We now routinely drop those who are in arrears in their dues payments for more than 90 days.

We try to mark with yellow highlight those folks who are approaching this deadline.

**Lafayette Locks celebrate
 100th anniversary**

September 21st marked the passing of 100 years since the Locks were officially opened in 1900.



Visit our website for more pictures of the Locks during the period of construction a century ago. (look under Other Places of Interest once you get to our photo album)

A Call for Help

If you cannot see your way clear to volunteer at the Museum, but would be willing to help in other ways, please let us know. We need assistance in listing Ruth Stoller's biography files for presentation on our web site. If you have access to a computer, this can be done in the comfort of your home at your leisure. People from all around the country email us every week asking for the contents of these files, and we could sure use some help in letting folks know what is in them, to allow the inquirers to know up front a little about the contents instead of the normal dialogue via email that is time consuming and inefficient. Please let Dan Linscheid know if you are willing and able to assist in this task.

Your Comments Welcomed

The Building Committee will soon be meeting to do some long range planning concerning our facilities. Please don't make them work in a vacuum.... if you have concerns or ideas on this speak up or drop a note to the Society at the address noted on the left, c/o the Building Committee. Your dues and your interests are at stake. Help us decide what our priorities and goals should be, what direction we should be going, etc.

In Memoriam

It is with regret that we note the passing of

Elaine Craig of Dayton
And
Robert C Rilee of Newberg
 Our condolences to the families

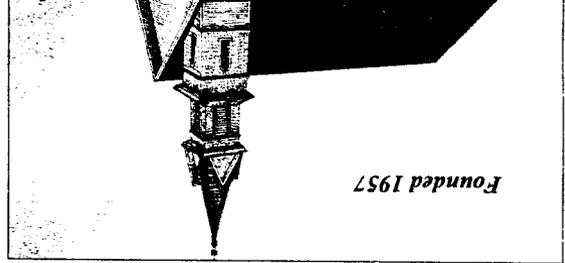
The "**Cold Blooded Murder of Joel Perkins**" shouted the headlines of the local Jacksonville paper dated August 7, 1856. At this time, we don't know the name of the paper but the article is filed under "Perkins" in the Yamhill County Historical Museum. It reads as follows:

"Mr. J.J. Kennard furnishes us with the following facts, which he got from the expressman who brought in the news to the friends of Perkins in Yamhill. Mr. P., who was an old settler in Yamhill, and proprietor of Lafayette, was brutally murdered last week just at the foot of the Siskiyou Mountain in Rogue River, on his way in from California with his family and a considerable amount of stock. It seems that Perkins, preparatory to leaving the house of a friend where he had stopped for several days to recruit his stock, went out in the morning in company with an Irishman who had lived with him a year or more as a servant, to gather up the stock. The Irishman returned in due time without Mr. P. Upon being questioned, he stated that Perkins would be in directly. Night came, and Perkins was still missing. The landlord suspected foul play, and rallied the neighbors to look for Perkins, taking the Irishman along, who by this time protested that Perkins had certainly been killed by the Indians. On failing to find him, Mrs. Perkins and the Irishman insisted on taking the stock and starting on their journey, as there was no doubt but that the Indians had put Perkins out of the way. A small boy, who was probably an adopted child, and was traveling with Perkins, begged the landlord to keep him, and not let the Irishman and Mrs. P. carry him along with them as he feared they would kill him. The boy said he had often heard Mrs. Perkins and the Irishman consulting about killing Perkins while on the road, besides witnessing acts in the absence of Perkins which criminated these parties. The crowd, which had gathered to hunt for Perkins, renewed the search, compelling the Irishman to accompany them. They finally halted, slipped a rope over his neck and drew it over the limb of a tree, telling him that he had murdered Perkins, and he might as well confess it, as Mrs. Perkins had already revealed the whole matter. He began to curse Mrs. P. for a traitor, and acknowledged the crime, describing the ground where the body lay and offered to show the way to it.... Mrs. P. and her paramour are now lodged in jail at Jacksonville."

According to Norris H. Perkins in his book titled "Slow Settles the Dust in Oregon" Joel had left for California gold fields in 1848 with several relatives. He started a trading post near Sutter's Fort on the Sacramento river and then returned to Oregon in June of 1849. He married the 14-year-old Laura Hawn, daugh-

ter of Jacob Hawn. Joel took his bride south and established a ferry on the Rogue River in 1851 and built the first house at the present site of Grants Pass. He commuted on horseback to Lafayette, his base of supplies and store. Joel was one of the two biggest taxpayers in Yamhill County. It needs to be remembered that Joel was the man that platted Lafayette and in 1846 petitioned the Provisional Government to make Lafayette the County Seat. These actions plus his business dealings made Lafayette an important town in the 1850's. Lafayette was actually doing more business than Portland at this time. Joel then took his family to El Monte in the eastern Los Angeles Valley where only Spaniards and Mexicans lived. His son Daniel was born there in 1855. Then in the summer of 1856 he, his family and his employee and friend, John Malone, left with 49 horses and mules to do some business in Lafayette. On July 24th they were rounding up the animals to start North when John Malone, having been drinking, shot Joel through the body and smashed in his skull with the rifle barrel. Malone hanged himself with his jail chains in Jacksonville jail. According to Norris Perkins a motive was never established. This must have been true because Laura was released from jail for lack of evidence. She bore Joel's third child after his death, remarried, raised another family and lived to an old age. The estate left by Joel included the Lafayette property, Rouge River home, property in El Monte, Mexico and some valuable property in Portland on the corner of Yamhill and Front Street. 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.

Another unknown member of the Perkins family reported that "when word of the affair got to Lafayette, men were sent down to bring up the horses and Jacob Hawn hurried down to bring back his daughter and the two children. The whole affair was a terrific blow to the families concerned....And I have never been able to believe that Laura was as involved in the affair as John Malone said she was. If what he said was true, why didn't they run off together, no one would have been the wiser. It is more likely that he was trying to get even with her for some reason. Joel was only 35 when his spectacular career ended. It was a serious blow to Lafayette, where Joel's great energy might have changed the course of history. He had the ability to thwart the political "skullduggery" that routed a new railway and the county seat to McMinnville.



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Lafayette Oregon 97127

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Permit #3
Lafayette Oregon

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY *March 2000 Calendar of Events*

Tuesday, October 9th, 5:00 PM

Board of Directors - WHERE TO MEET

Tuesday, October 9th, 6:30 PM

General Meeting & Potluck Dinner- WHERE TO MEET
Bring your Own Table Service - Guests Always Welcome
(See page 2 for details)