

# The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

April 2004

## From our President

**Update:** A committee has been meeting to work on progress of planning and building the new Museum on the five acres on Durham Lane and Highway 18. We have been discussing the use of water, septic, lay-out of the structure, community education of the project, support groups, and of course the major topic: FUNDING! This is a great opportunity for the Society, but will require much work and dedication of its members and the entire county. On April 14th at 7:00 p.m. a meeting will be held at the County Public Works Auditorium in McMinnville, the purpose of which will be to allow the public to get first hand information concerning the new project and getting more people involved. Anyone wishing to attend, please accept this as your invitation.

To rule out any doubt, we are not abandoning the existing facility in Lafayette. It will continue to be an important part of Society activities such as the "Research Library and Storage and Display of Artifacts". We have recently applied for a matching grant to remove the water problem in the basement of the church, add insulation and paint the exterior. The following year we are considering having an engineer check out the foundation and the condition of the steeple. The third year project might be installing a new heating/cooling system. All of this would make it more acceptable for the preservation of the artifacts that are on display. If you have any questions, please contact us. Your interest and involvement is an important part of the endeavor. Sincerely, Shirley

## Board Meeting Highlights

The meeting was called to order at the Yamhill County Public Works Building. **The Treasurers Report:** Carol Reid reported a beginning balance of \$8,086.92, income of \$764.25, expenses of \$1111.55 leaving a balance of \$7,739.62. **Correspondence Secretary:** Marjorie Owens reported answering fifteen inquiries. She also stated she has been itemizing the income from research, copies, donations etc., to aid in better tracking of monies. **Membership Secretary:** Linda Miller has some ideas for a membership drive and reminders for current members when their renewals are due. She will be working on this. **Volunteer Chairperson:** Carol Reid reported that we need to find someone to volunteer the first Sunday of each month at the museum. She then showed everyone the new brochure she had worked up including the booklist and membership form which was approved for distribution. **Old Business:** Shirley Venhaus reported she had gotten a letter from the IRS in response to her request to have the late fine of \$1500 forgiven for the year 2002, reporting that the fine has been waived.

## (Board Meeting Highlights cont.)

**Mormon Church Report:** Carol reported everything is on track for our participation in this event. After receiving some revenue data from Carol (photocopies) and a justification proposal from Dan, the Board approved purchase of a new photocopier, after Dan gets a chance to insure the specifications submitted by the low bidder will actually fit the needs of the society. **By-Laws:** Dan has not heard back from Walt Gowell on this matter yet. **2004 Budget:** Carol has mailed out copies of the revised budget report. The new budget was approved as submitted. **Garage Sale:** Millie Armstrong says she has received many items already and her storage area is filling up fast. **Museum Report:** Shirley reported on estimates for repairs on the church building. The bids for a dehumidifying system are not in yet. The Board agreed to put \$2,000.00 from the Cultural Trust Fund into the new building fund. **The new "Yamhill County Museum of History"** meetings will be held March 18, 1:00pm in the Prudential Office, and the larger meeting with invited guests, March 30, 7:00pm First Federal Board room. (Note: this latter meeting date was subsequently changed to April 14, 2004, at the Co. Public Works Auditorium.) **New Business: Librarian:** Jean Sartor has requested a purchase of books for resale: "Go Ahead On'er", five copies and "Amish in Amity", twenty copies. This was approved. **Preserving Oregon Grant Application:** Shirley has applied for this grant of \$21,785.00 for matching Miller Funds to fund the church projects, waterproofing, insulation and painting. **Report sent to Miller Foundation:** Shirley sent an itemized annual report to Oregon Community Foundation—Miller Fund detailing money used out of this fund for maintenance: there is \$8,863.00 left in this account. **Secretary:** following discussion, it was agreed to send board members who were absent at meetings a copy of the agenda and other reports along with the board minutes. **Online Mac. Bill:** The Board agreed to start paying the monthly internet access bill: Shirley has been paying this for more than a year. **Utility Bills:** Shirley will meet with Lafayette city council Thursday to talk with them about the possibility of cutting our water-sewer bill, which is now \$75.00 per month per building. The consensus is this is very steep for water and sewer service in the two buildings. **Executive Session:** Nomadic Teacher contract. **Resume meeting:** Due to time constraints it was agreed to break and resume meeting after the General meeting. **Meeting re-convened:** At this point in the meeting the board went over a few items on the agenda to tie up some general loose ends.

*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 - 2004**

**President**  
*Shirley Venhaus*  
472-7328

**VP/Program**  
*Barbara Knutson*  
843-2069

**Secretary**  
*Annita Linscheid*  
843-2625

**Treasurer**  
*Carol Reid*  
472-9631

**Membership Secretary**  
*(Linda Miller)*

**Corresponding Secretary**  
*Marjorie Owens*  
843-3081

**Board of Directors**  
*Eileen Lewis*  
835-7531

*Francis Dummer*  
864-2637

*Dan Linscheid*  
843-2625

*Shirley McDaniel*  
662-3528

**Volunteer Coordinator**  
*Carol Reid*  
472-9631

**Newsletter**  
*Dan Linscheid*  
843-2625

**Car Pool Coordinator**  
*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

Ewing Young was another pre-1843 contributor to early Oregon History. He apparently was the first American settler to stake his claim in the future Yamhill county. His temperament, influence, and, yes, even his death guided the emigrants in the establishment of their settlements.

Young's "main claim" to fame was a confrontational approach to Dr. McLaughlin and the Hudson Bay Co. (Being labeled a horse thief, his approach to McLaughlin may have been more personal indignation than patriotism). He refused to trade with the Fort, explained, in no uncertain terms, his dislike for the Fort's policies, settled in the valley against McLaughlin's wishes (probably flying the American Flag he brought with him), brought cattle to Oregon, broke the cattle monopoly the Fort enjoyed, built a sawmill and whiskey still to compete with the Fort and finally, at his death, the need to probate his estate hastened the formation of Civil Government in Oregon. An infamous contribution was riling the Indians of Southern Oregon to a point of anger that caused trouble for the next 20 years.

1794, is a possible date for Ewing Young's birth. His father died early in his life so he quickly learned skills needed to survive in the woods of Tennessee. Realizing he needed a trade, he apprenticed himself out as a cabinetmaker. During this time, he learned to read and cipher, giving him a general education and the ability to keep excellent records for his sawmill and farm. (His library at his death included several of the classics, including two volumes of Shakespeare).

Raw boned and standing 6'2", bare-footed, Young apparently feared no man or beast and was considered a Giant in more ways than one. He was the most influential fur trader in the Far West and, surprisingly, became one of the first settlers in Oregon. It was unusual for a Fur Trader to settle down, anywhere, let alone on a farm. Ewing made this change with relish and enthusiasm. Early in life, Young, worked his way out to Taos, (New) Mexico where he carried on his Fur trade. While there, he met and became the common law husband of Maria Josefa Tafoya. In April of 1831, their son Joaquin was born. (There seems to be no evidence that his family came to Oregon with him). He had a store in Taos but his pursuit of beaver and horses carried him west to the mouth of the Gila River, up into California, Utah, Nevada and Southern Oregon. About this time, while in Southern California, Hall Jackson Kelly entered his life.

Hall Kelly, a Boston School teacher, in 1815, was one of the great enthusiasts for bringing the Oregon Country into the Union.

He gave more speeches, wrote more letters, published more articles and "twisted more arms" for this cause than any other man. Historians, grudgingly, give him credit for stirring the interest needed to motivate people to move to Oregon. About seventeen years later, Kelly founded TASESO (The American Society for Encouraging Settlement of Oregon) so, even he, was Oregon bound! But arriving in Southern California (still Mexico) deserted and desperate, he needed someone to go on with him - that person turned out to be Ewing Young.

Young dreamt of establishing a Mexican Style Rancho! He visualized grassy Oregon valleys where his horses could wander and multiply at will on the ranges. So, in 1834, he "threw his hat in the ring" with Kelly and headed North. His party consisted of about 15 men and over a hundred animals - mostly horses and mules.

Serious problems stalked the party. The Governor of California, Joseph Figiurao, was told that Young's party stole those horses, so he sent out a warrant for his arrest and a letter to Dr. John McLaughlin, calling Young and Kelly horse-thieves! Also, a fur trader's motto seemed to be: "kill or be killed" and "ravish" any unaccompanied Indian female. Atrocities did happen on the trip North and, while repugnant to Kelly, was generally approved by Young.

In the Southern Oregon Rogue River Indian territory, Young's party made a serious error in judgment by indiscriminately murdering several Indians. This incident, historians believe, was the beginning of trouble with the Rogue River Tribes. These people were so embittered that they fought the whites, furiously, for over 20 years. Finally defeated, they were moved to the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation by Joel Palmer.

By this time, Kelly, who was sick - emotionally and physically - was taken on to Fort Vancouver by a friend. Being labeled a horse thief, he was not allowed into the Fort, but was housed in a hut outside and provided medical care and food. He took the first boat home--defeated and depressed.

Finally arriving at Fort Vancouver, Ewing Young found notices posted for his arrest as a horse thief. He was furious! Needless to say, his encounter with Dr. McLoughlin was legendary! The good Doctor said to prove his innocence; then, he would trade with him. He also warned the French Prairie settlers and Missionaries not to trade with Young. However, it wasn't long before Ewing had a sawmill up and running, these people found him trustworthy and he soon became "one of them." In the meantime, Young went on up the Willamette and settled in Chehalem Valley.

**(Ewing Young cont.)**

He claimed all that land from the Willamette River to Wapato Lake and to the top of the Mountains on both sides. He had his Mexican Rancho - several thousand acres! This became an independent settlement, scorning both the British Fort and the Methodist Mission - the first serious break with the British. Ewing sent up a "trial balloon" to see if the Fort was ready to accept him. He sent a bundle of furs to trade for food. McLaughlin, still not doing business with him, sent the furs back with free food for the "poor starving man." This caused another long-remembered confrontation which led Ewing to build a whiskey still! Just as he wanted, McLaughlin was enraged. The Missionaries were also uneasy and asked Young to stop the project. He honored their wishes but, for sure, it helped declare his independence from the Fort.

Another significant event in Ewing Young's life, was leading a great Cattle Drive. If the settlers could buy cows from Mexico they wouldn't have to deal with McLaughlin and, that way, could build up their own herds. So, with the help of Jason Lee and William Slacum, officer in the U. S. Navy, Ewing collected enough money to buy 600 cattle in California. (Interestingly, McLaughlin decided to send money to support the cause). While there, Ewing was glad to get his name cleared of past charges. It took 9 months to make the deal and get the herd home. During this time, they had Indian problems, mutiny by the Young party, and a loss of several cows. Upon reaching the lush green Willamette Valley with 630 head of cattle - mostly heifers - the way became easier for the riders and the cows. This famous Cattle Drive was a great boost to the economy of the Valley.

For the next five years, Ewing Young prospered and enjoyed life. His "Rancho" became a show place with visitors and guests such as Lt. Charles Wilkes who mentioned it in his 1841 diary. But by this time, in February of that same year, Ewing Young was dead. He was buried near his home on the North side of the Dundee Red Hills.

Ewing's death brought about the need for a process to probate estates. A "committee of arrangement" immediately came together to take care of this problem which laid the foundation for the Provisional Government, formed in May of 1843. This not only provided laws of the land but established boundaries so those first emigrants could more easily lay out their Claims. Of course, it took care of Young's estate, all of which went to the Territory for a new jail in Oregon City and to be used for general expenses.

There is an interesting "twist" in the final story of Ewing Young. In 1854, Joaquin, the declared son of Ewing, showed up and demanded his father's Estate! The Provisional Government accepted his plea and awarded the plaintiff the full estate, plus interest--amounting to about \$5,000.00.

Dr. Kenneth Holmes' book, "Ewing Young, Master Trapper" was the main source of information for this story.

**The Wednesday Workgroup**

Our Wednesday workgroup continues its work on textiles, and we are making good progress. All textiles, except those now on display, have been identified, recorded and relabeled (to date 935 items). The vacuuming, photographing and storage in archival boxes will take a little longer. We are ready to start on the display cases.

We will try to get them processed and back on display quickly to avoid having empty display cases on weekends. If it becomes necessary, we will do a case at a time on a rotating basis with the possibility of a case being empty for only one weekend. After this project we will begin on other artifacts using basically the same process: tagging them according to their attributes.

We will do our best to find different aspects of this project to include tasks to fit the abilities and interests of the volunteers willing to give of their time and effort. We have managed quite well in that regard in the past. Our volunteers are willing to do the necessary work and have a good time as a side benefit, an amazing feat.

This project has been so much like an old fashioned sewing bee, lots of work being accomplished amid laughter and camaraderie. We have had the privilege of having Louise Heindl, one of our newest members, faithfully sewing labels with us for weeks now. We appreciate your help, Louise. Look for next month's update, and feel free to stop by on Wednesdays to see us in action.

The Wednesday Work Group

**Antique Club Meeting**

The March meeting of the Antique Club was held on the 25th in the Log Building. As a result of preservation work being done at the Museum, Nancy Thornton asked that their monthly meeting be held there to see first hand the work in progress. A group of 13 lunched amid treasures hidden under white sheets before they were presented with a show and tell on the project. The attendees seemed to enjoy hearing about the things we have learned and applied on our artifacts. They asked a lot of questions, most of which we were able to answer. A few of their questions related to storage, display or other tasks that will call for additional research before we tackle them. This was a new experience for both of us, but with this group we felt comfortable sharing our knowledge and experiences with the ongoing preservation work. They had many words of encouragement and praised this endeavor. Submitted by Annita Linscheid & Kathy Peck.

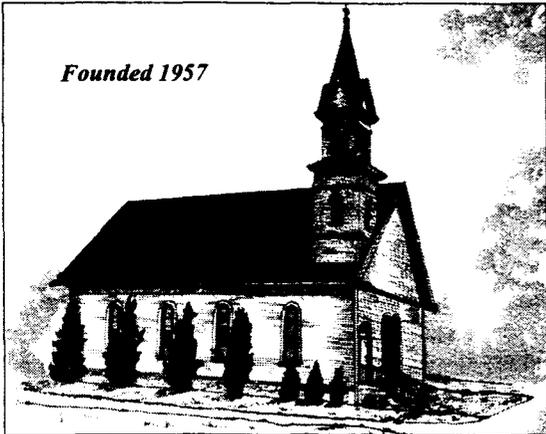
**DON'T FORGET—GARAGE SALE**

August 12, 13, 14, 15, 2004. Pickup or delivery  
Millie 472-6489 or Shirley 434-0567

# YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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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!

**YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Meeting Notice:**  
**Board of Directors:**  
Tuesday, April 13, 5:00 pm

**Monthly Meeting:**  
Same day as Board meeting, 6:30 pm  
Both at the Amity High School, at  
503 Oak Street, Amity

This meeting will feature Gold Rush Letters, presented by Arlie Holt, with the Polk County Historical Society.

*We Hope to See you There!*

**Renewing and New Members:**  
We welcome returning members **Don & Leslie Lutz, Charlotte Filer, Don Rivera, Barbara Chavez, Audrey Lippens, Margaret Macauley, and Carol & Mack Reid,** and new members **Alan & Michelle Baker, Austin Warner and Brenda Kellar.** Your support of our organization is deeply appreciated.