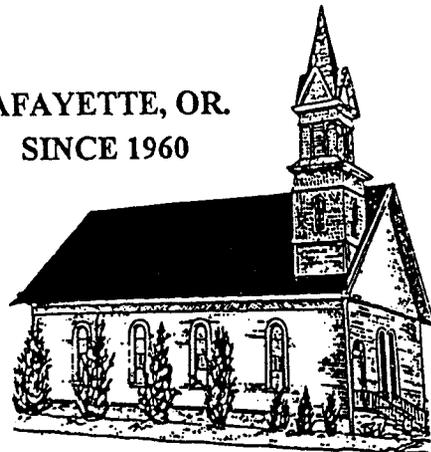


**YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 1995**

**LAFAYETTE, OR.
SINCE 1960**



**MUSEUM HOURS:
SAT. & SUN. 1-4 PM**

- OFFICERS 1995**
- PRESIDENT..... Shirley Venhaus 472-7328
 - VP/PROGRAM.....Barbara Knutson 843-2069
 - SECRETARY.....Betty White 665-5376
 - FINANCIAL SEC'Y.....Lila Jackson 472-8510
 - TREASURER..... Don Crawford 434-9843
 - CORRESP. SEC'Y.....Dolores Robertson 538-0767
 - BOARD MEMBERS: Ed Roghair 472-6909
 - James Vincent 472-7239
 - Robert Kuykendall 662-3354
 - Harvey Stoller 864-2589
 - HISTORIAN.....Jim Lockett 472-5005
 - LIBRARIAN.....Olive Johnson 472-6070
 - NEWSLETTER..... Margaret Roghair 472-6909
 - PUBLICITY..... Elaine Röhse 472-6827



MEETING Tuesday Noon, at the Community Christian Church, 2831 N. Newby, McMinnville, December 12th.

POT LUCK PROGRAM Bring own table service. Guests always welcome. will be presentation of Century Farm Certificates. Also an interview of Roma Sitton, who will also meet the century mark soon. Other Christmas remembrances welcome.

Holiday greetings to all!

The November general meeting with guest speaker Bob Kuykendall was a special event for all of us. Bob was the first president of the Y.C.H.S, and much of the Society's success is owed to the efforts of him and his wife, Shirley. We wish to express our thanks to the Kuykendall family!

Presentation of Century Farm Certificates, honoring the historic Darlene Smith, John Barrett, and Frank Theodore Jernstedt farms will take place at the December 12th General Meeting. Ron Brentano, coordinator of the Oregon State Century Farm Program will make the presentation.

52 chairs and 2 tables have been received at the Log Museum. The cost was \$615.00. We wish to thank Don and Leslie Lutz of Oregon Stationers for their help in obtaining quality chairs and tables at such an affordable price. Additional donors are: Bern and Majel Warren, Walter Wade, George and Maxine Williams, Lila Myers, Harry and Twila Byrnes, Ed and Peggy Roghair, Dolores Robertson, and Shirley Venhaus. The total amount that has been received so far is \$361.00.

Keep in mind that the publications we have at the Museum make great Christmas gifts! Check out our complete collection including new books by Jim Lockett and Jack White.

The next Board Meeting will be Tuesday, December 12th at 10:30 a.m. at the Community Christian Church in McMinnville.

Shirley



THE SECRET LIFE OF A DUNDEE FARMER

Sunday October 18th 1907 began as a typical autumn day for Dundee residents. Church services had been held as usual and tables were set for the weekly gatherings of family and friends. By evening however the topic of all conversations had shifted from the normal fare of farm prices, fashions, politics and the like to speculation concerning the revelation of a major scandal unfolding in their midst.

For almost two decades 63 year old R. C. Crosby had been a highly respected member of the community. Both his dairy business and prune orchard were generally considered to be successful and he enjoyed a reputation for faithfully meeting all financial obligations. The one thing that did set him apart from other Dundee area farmers were his trips away from home conducted three or four times a year. These he explained were because of "outside investments in oil he was forced to look after" and with his obvious prosperity it surely would have been considered somewhat impolite for anyone to query him further on the subject.

Thus it came as quite a shock on that October morning when Pinkerton detectives arrived to arrest Crosby under a Spokane Washington felony warrant claiming forgery and fraud against the Washington Trust Company of that city. The allegations were that on the previous May 29th and using the name of "Oscar Will" Crosby had negotiated a short term loan of \$275.00 from the bank to supposedly close a timber land transaction and for collateral had deposited a forged school bond. Additionally, he was suspected of working similar schemes against banks in Sedro Wooley Washington and Troy Idaho about this same time

Following the arrest the Pinkerton men revealed that they believed Crosby had been swindling banks from Nova Scotia to California for nearly twenty five years using no less than fifteen different aliases with the scheme always involving the borrowing of a modest amount of money to avoid suspicion while securing the loan with forged bonds or occasionally a bogus letter of

credit from a Missouri bank. According to the detectives, Oregon appeared to be the only state left untouched by Crosby and attributed this fact to his not wishing to "foul his own nest"

Proclaiming no knowledge of the allegations, Crosby waived extradition and was immediately transported to Spokane County to stand trial. Although he was positively identified as the veteran swindler by several bankers from Washington and Idaho, Crosby at first denied guilt claiming he had never seen any of them before while offering no other statement on his own behalf. However, when Superior Court convened on October 30th, he plead guilty to all charges asking the court for sentencing leniency owing to failing health. Justice appears to have been a bit swifter in those days because barely two weeks following his arrest in Dundee Crosby was duly incarcerated for a term of five years. Some of the Pinkerton detectives however were upset about this quick conviction since his confession made no mention of what happened to all the money he had bilked nationwide through the years; thereby costing them an opportunity for possible recovery.

Because of continuing ill health complaints, Crosby was transferred from the state penitentiary at Walla Walla to a Portland sanitarium and later from there to the Oregon State insane asylum at Salem. It was from this latter place he escaped on November 5 1911.

Two days later a tip telephoned to Yamhill County Sheriff Henderson suggested Crosby had returned to Dundee to dig up his hoard and was hiding at the home of his family there until able to do so. A subsequent investigation found him tucked away in a roof garret of the house whereupon he was immediately taken into custody and returned the asylum.

The questions of a possible cache of ill gained funds and whether or not anyone might have since recovered it remain unanswered to this day.

(JW)

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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