Celebrate Oregon's 159th birthday with your friends, family and members of our Yamhill County Historical Society. We'll be hosting a party all day at the Miller Museum and the Poling Church in Lafayette.

After the cabin cat welcomes you at the front steps to the museum, you'll meet JoAnne Watts at the front door. Good luck trying to get away from our long time YCHS volunteer and Daughter of the American Revolution, without a plateful of birthday cake and a cold glass of punch. Really, that would probably be enough for me right there; sitting in a log cabin, eating cake and hearing both wonderous and tragic tales of Yamhill County past. But wait, there's more.

The Miller Museum is filled with Yamhill County books and records covering every subject, and probably every person that one can name. And today, at our birthday event, we added several local authors to the mix. Stop and sit awhile at each table, your family history and heritage await.

Next, after another slice of cake maybe, take a trip over to the Poling Church for a tour. This historic site

Spring Cleaning
January at the Miller Museum

The Miller Museum is closed, save by appointment, for the month of January. This has given rise to a hearty group of volunteers doing the Museum spring cleaning in winter.
President’s Letter — Talking Points

In January, about 82 Chamber of Commerce members came to an 8 am Meet-and-Greet at our Heritage Center. The event was sponsored by Visit McMinnville which is a non-profit corporation created by the City and funded by lodging taxes. Its mission is largely to market McMinnville and its tourism attractions. We donated use of our space for that meeting to have an opportunity to get the message out that we are one of those major tourist attractions.

In the process of coming up with something to say about ourselves, the following Talking Points occurred to me. They might be useful to you as well when telling others about why they should belong to the Society and actively participate in its activities.

I usually find it helpful to clear up a little potential name confusion first. I mentioned to our visitors that they were in the Yamhill Valley Heritage Center which is owned by the Yamhill County Historical Society. I pointed out that despite the word “county” in our name, we are not a county agency. Instead, we are a membership organization formed over 60 years ago which enjoys 501(c) (3) charitable status making donations to it tax deductible.

Our mission statement is spelled out in full on our website, but it generally boils down to Discover, Preserve and Promote the Heritage of Yamhill County. In fulfilling that, we have acquired about 12 acres of land with eleven buildings on them covering a current total of about 60,000 square feet of floor space. That includes the 3 building complex in Lafayette, our headquarters. The land and buildings are on our books at about $3.5 Million, but in today’s market they are probably worth well over $5 Million, maybe $6 Million. We do not have a price tag for the thousands of antiques we use the buildings to safeguard, but it’s a lot.

Our two museum complexes, here and Lafayette, are open on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. We have some superb collections. Much of it is focused on our agricultural history over the past couple hundred years, but we have far more than that. We want to do more. One of our future goals is increase our coverage of the native American background before arrival of Europeans. Another is to interact with other area historical museums and organizations.

Plus, it’s not just static exhibits. We put on about 11 to 12 significant events a year ranging from the relatively brief State of Oregon Birthday Party up to the two day Harvest Fest. Events include a Vintage Baseball Game with 1860s costumes, rules and vocabulary (no gloves back then) to Treasurers in the Attic (kind of like Antiques Roadshow where we bring in appraisers) to Handmade Holidays (where local sourced gifts are for sale) to Farm Fest (where crops are planted with horse drawn plows in field competition) to Harvest Fest (where reenactors harvest and bag the crops) to Night at the Museum near Halloween where we provide a frightfully good time for kids. And, those are just the major events. There are others.

At almost all the events, there are lots of activities going on simultaneously. It might be live animals, stagecoach rides, steam tractor rides, blacksmithing demonstrations, an operating saw mill, schoolhouse lessons, hands on science activities,
food galore, live music, presentations by experts on all kinds of topic and special displays such as our fantastic quilt collection.

We got about 10,000 visitors in 2017. A lot were from out of town. I mentioned that the general public can rent the space here including even in the museum spaces. Pricing is competitive and we just installed a useful brand new catering kitchen. Everything from weddings to native plant sales occur here.

It is important to note though that we are not just a museum. I pointed out our mission includes much more than just look-at-that exhibits. We teamed up with a genealogy society operation for instance. We offer classes in blacksmithing, a county dance venue, a vigorous restoration shop, a historical photo project and we have a whole historical research wing and library as part of what we do. We also work with the schools to hold what we call Pioneer days classes. Hundreds of grade schoolers come out, dress up and learn something of the early days. We have outreach too. For instance, we send out our covered wagon and docents around the state to promote our area. We appear in parades. The federal prison is building us another one.

Our monthly member meetings and newsletter almost always include some interesting historical talks and articles. My personal favorite was the one about Yamhill County fossils and I don't mean just those of us with white hair. Mastadons. Sabertooth tigers. At the most recent Sunday potluck brunch and general membership meeting, a speaker taught us about the early days of transportation in the county from the problem with mud and no road through steamboats and railroads.

We have some very ambitious long term goals which include, among other things, creating an entire heritage village out in the open space on the north side of the Heritage Center where the first building, the school, is now located. Next up for fundraising probably will be a new “old” general store. We have what goes in it already in hand. We will be working on a building to hold it as soon as we raise enough money for that. An antique fire station, farmhouse, band stand, barn, photography studio and other buildings might appear there someday.

What is phenomenal is how so few have accomplished so much. We currently have just one employee, a part time one at that, and about 400 members. A quarter of those have joined just recently. That's remarkably small number to have done so much great work. We could sure use more members though. It's only $30 for a family membership which gets you into most of the events free. With that, I ended my solicitation to the Greeters group and invited them to tour the Heritage Center and consider joining. There seemed to be a lot of interest.

Feel free to use all or any of these “talking points” yourself. Each of you is our best salesperson. So, talk us up. And, if you have any useful additions, clarifications, corrections or amplifications to these bullet points, let me know.

Charles Hillestad
YCHS President
503.687.1730
charleshillestad@cs.com

Submitted: January 15, 2018
YCHS Board Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2017

DUES ARE DUE ... DUES ARE DUE

Just a reminder you can pay your dues for 2018 at any time. The renewal form is on the back page of your newsletter...or if none of your information has changed, you can just send your check payable to Yamhill County Historical Society, PO Box 484, Lafayette, OR 97127.

Please welcome the following new members since our last newsletter:

- Keegan and Janna Barney
- Gregg and Leslie Rogers
- Noe and Jenny Mendez
- Todd and Vanessa Foster
- Kitty Huddleston
- Rosemary Farris
- Mike and Chris McCoy
- Kevin and Deanna Longley
- Jim and Jeannie Sumerlin

Thank you all for your continued support.

Carlene Kadell,
Membership Coordinator

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GUESTS
Tony Meeker and Cynthia Christensen

Background checks and results for new Board Members were approved unanimously.

New Directors sworn in and Oath of Office signed and filed.

- Todd Holt nominated for, and elected to, a one year term as Treasurer.
- Charles Hillestad nominated for, and elected to, a one year term as President.
- Alex Botten nominated for, and elected to, a one year term as Secretary.
- Dave Rucker nominated for, and elected to, a one year term as Vice President.

LAFAYETTE OPERATIONS REPORT
The Miller Museum, being closed for the month of January, is being thoroughly cleaned and organized for the start of the new year.

HERITAGE CENTER OPERATIONS REPORT
The Heritage Center exterior is in the process of being cleaned and should be completed in a few weeks. Over ten thousand visitors were reported for the 2017 season. New tables and chairs have been purchased and have been shipped to the HC. The Safety Committee has drafted a new set of rules for tractor drivers. The year end mailing has resulted in approximately $20,000 in donations.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS COMMITTEE
The upcoming volunteer meeting has been rescheduled from January 11, to January 18, 5pm at the Heritage Center. Events Coordinator Raylinda is working on possible sponsorships for all major events.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT
Upcoming outreach events are; Oregon's Birthday at State Capitol, AgFest in Salem, AgFest in Rickreall, 175th anniversary of the Oregon Trail in Oregon City, Willamette Valley Ag Expo in Albany.

MEDIA COMMITTEE REPORT
YCHS has a new Instagram account with 200 followers.

TREASURER’S REPORT
The final payment on the windmill sign has been made.

Visitors at the MACC Greeters event

Board Minutes (Cont. on page 9)
The 1949 Farmall Orchard Tractor Model OS-4 was donated by Steve Draper in 2010. The tractor was used by Steve to haul firewood for his wood cutting business. Repaired to run by Elden Nyquist from Newberg (pictured here).

All Elden did was repair the water pump, distributor, wiring, cylinder head, radiator, generator, starter, and valves. He also rebuilt the carb, battery box, and exhaust system. Finally, he adjusted the valves and put in a new battery.

Sheesh!

Many machines just like this are left in fields throughout our county. Left to rust and decompose, to be disposed of. At the YCHS restoration shop, our history is not disposable. For all you know, your dad, grand dad or great grand dad, learned to drive on that very machine, in that very field, out on Oldsville Road.

Take a careful walk through the Restoration Shop sometime and, if you’re like me, you can literally smell the history. If you grew up around this stuff you’ll know; well-worn tools have a wonderful scent. It’s the smell of history, heritage, and hard work.

Thanks to the team at the Heritage Center Restoration Shop; Chuck Kadell, Walt Stahlnecker, Cliff Watts, Dan Bonfield, Dave Cruickshank, Bill Fuller, Doc Green, Jack McGarraugh, Al Littau, Frank Shurman, Jerry Tessman, Dale Turner, Jim Sumerlin, Ron Baker and Elden Nyquist.
CALENDAR of EVENTS

Special Winter Hours

January 28 & February 25

4th Sundays at the Heritage Center

LIVE MUSIC

by Joe Justin and Janet Kay

2:00-4:00 PM

$7 Adults
$5 Children 6-12
Kids under 6 FREE

Yamhill County Historical Society & Museum

www.YamhillCountyHistory.org

Music & Dancing

Danceable listening music from years gone by

“Music you can’t walk away from” - Dale Turner

Cast your votes!

at First Federal Savings & Loan

What’s happening at the Yamhill Valley Heritage Center

• Braids and Braves Square Dance Lessons:
Sunday Evening from 6-8
• Gone to Pieces Quilting Guild
• YCHS General Meeting
• Soil and Water Native Plant Sale: March 2 & 3

Visit our new website for a full color CALENDAR OF EVENTS!

YamhillCountyHistory.org

Take a look and you can even add your event to the calendar.

Farm Fest & Plowing Competition

April 7, Saturday 10am–4pm

Largest plowing competition with draft animals on the West Coast.

20+ teams of draft horses and mules — Blacksmith, Sawmill, and Farm Demos — Food, Music, Pioneer kids’ activities, Vendors & More

$8 adults – free for kids under 12 Free for YCHS members
will take you back, way back, to a simpler time in Lafayette. Volunteers will be there to help you along.

Our 2nd annual Chicken Coop Theatre will be set up in the back of the church today. The birthday presentation is shown in vivid 3-D images. Yamhill County and our Historical Society are front and center in this musical and well narrated film. Chuck Rogers, writer, Director, and Producer will bring history right into your lap.

Come on over to the Miller Museum in Lafayette, we'll need help blowing out 159 candles!

Ken Rogers and Karen Sitton Saxberg
Chicken Coop Theatre
January General Meeting
Featuring Kory Knutz and Early Transportation in Yamhill County

Our Yamhill County Historical Society General Membership Meetings are the greatest. Sitting with a room full of Yamhill County’s finest historians, a full plate of potluck in hand, and free admission to boot. Meetings are the second Sunday of each month at the Yamhill Valley Heritage Center, McMinnville.

This month’s presentation was “Early Transportation in Yamhill County” by our own Kory Knutz. The Knutz family has been in Yamhill County since 1930 and Kory clearly paid attention to tales of YC past as they were told at dinner table or fireside gathering.

Stories of the land donation claims of 1843 progressing through to the stagecoach mail routes of 1906, along with photos from our YCHS collection were presented to our membership with a wonderful mix half history lesson, half campfire story that Kory always brings to a program. We sat today, enjoying an unusually warm January Sunday, while as Kory told it, our forefathers would have been hoping a praying for a good winter deep freeze to harden up the muddy and rutted trade routes for easier transport of goods and services from town to town or the long trek to Oregon City.

The YCHS photo collection showed us vivid images of Gearin’s Ferry in Newberg, the “floating warehouses” of Dayton, and the Bridge Street Bridge of Lafayette. The Lafayette Locks and the difference between “Yamhill Falls” and “North Yamhill”, long forgotten townships of old.

Kory’s vast knowledge of Yamhill County railroads gave us the David and Goliath story of our hero Joseph Gaston and his battle with millionaire Mr. Holladay of the East Coast. Today, we learned that the term “tanked”, as in gone under or failed, may have been born from the old railroad days. Seems that the towns with water tanks along the rail route could supply the steam engine with much needed water and thus thrived themselves. Alas, the invent of the diesel engine made these once essential train stops irrelevant and the tiny watering towns were said to have “tanked” as the new train passed them by.

As the presentation ended, one of our members asked who it was that cut all the wood for the fabled steam engines running through Yamhill County. As I finished my third slice of pie, we heard the story of “Stinky Dan”, half wood cutter, half skunk trapper.

Thanks to Kory Knutz for the January presentation, and come enjoy our next program featuring Barbara Doyle of the Newberg Historical Society presenting “The Town of Springbook”. This upcoming General Meeting and Presentation will be Sunday, February 10, 1pm at the Heritage Center.

Volunteer Greeters, Hosts and Tour Guides

Volunteer Greeters, Hosts and Tour Guides are needed for the McMinnville Heritage Center and the Lafayette Miller Museum. Both sites are open to the public Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 10am to 4pm. Volunteers typically work the full shift one day per week but some choose to work 2 or 3 days per week because they have so much dang fun.

Volunteers typically work the full shift one day per week but some choose to work 2 or 3 days per week because they have so much dang fun.

If you would like to volunteer at either site:
A) email your request to volunteercoordinator@yamhillcountyhistory.org
B) Stop in any Wednesday at the McMinnville Heritage Center between the hours of 10am and 4pm to inquire.
C) Stop in any Wednesday, Friday or Saturday at the Lafayette Miller Museum from 10am to 4pm and ask for a volunteer application.
Did you know that YCHS has two libraries?

Most Society members know about our excellent Miller Museum in Lafayette. But did you know that we now have a library in the Heritage Center? What was once several messy piles of books, magazines and papers has now been organized into a small reference library, thanks to the efforts of volunteer Frank Schurman. Frank has divided the books and documents by subject, and he says that most of our materials fall into four categories:

- Machinery Information—both industrial and agricultural, including big items like tractors, logging and equipment, and small items like hand tools.
- Processes, both industrial and agricultural, such as information on logging, building wood structures and metal working. Also information on gardening, sewing, food preparation and preservation.
- A few books on early development of communities and families, but the Miller Museum has most of this history.
- Supply catalogs of all types—hardware, animal care, plumbing, electrical, fittings for logging and steam equipment, etc. (This is the only category that has current day information, used for the Heritage Center operation and maintenance.) Some of these supply catalogs go back to the early 1900s, and like all the items in the collection, are really fun to read!

The oldest book in the collection is from 1847. It is part of a series of yearly US Agricultural Reports that were donated by George Lanning.

If you would like to stop by and visit the library, it is in the small room connected to the Roghair shop break room. The Heritage Center will be open from 10-3 on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays in 2018. Many thanks to Frank Schurman for all his organizational efforts!

Cleaning (Cont. from page 1)

Lead by volunteers like Todd Holt, Michael Hafner, Chuck and Sharon Rogers and the Lafayette team, the museum is sparkling for 2018. With the dust and debris cleared, records were organized, files straightened. The most important of historical artifacts and books placed front and center and the furniture, display cases and even the wall hangings were shifted to open the viewing space and provide a warm welcome for each visitor.

YCHS volunteers, on there hands and knees I imagine, in the middle of January, cleaning the floor of a cabin. That sounds about right. Nice job my friends. Can't wait to see the log cabin at our Oregon's Birthday Celebration.

Any way you can get over to my place with your brooms and dustpans? ■

Frank Schurman enjoying the library

Heritage Center library
Exploring Oregon’s Heritage
OREGON’S 159TH BIRTHDAY PARTY AND CELEBRATION OF THE 175 ANIVERSARIES OF THE OREGON TRAIL AND THE HISTORIC VOTE AT CHAMPOEGL

Salem, Ore. – Put on your favorite pair of frontier pants and join us at the Oregon State Capitol on Saturday, February 17, between 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Experience pioneer life during the state’s 159th birthday party. Pound on an anvil and test your blacksmithing skills, have a conversation with Dr. John McLoughlin as you arrive off the Oregon Trail, help build a log cabin and test your skills at many other stations. All activities are free, and you are invited!

There will be music, costumed historic interpreters, games, free birthday cake while supplies last, a pioneer wagon, a stagecoach, and photo opportunities with the Oregon Pioneer and Dr. John McLoughlin, the Father of Oregon.

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department will be hosting an interpretation of the historic vote at Champoeg by the House Chambers where the mural depicting that scene is hung. This is the 175th anniversary of that historic event, and of the Oregon Trail.

The newly preserved Oregon State Constitution will be on display in the East Galleria starting on the actual birthday, February 14th, and will be displayed through the celebration. Members of State Archives will be on hand to discuss the document and its history. There will be an exhibit of winning essays from the Salem Keizer School District “Why I Love Oregon” essay contest.

This event is part of the Capitol History Gateway, a project of the Oregon State Capitol Foundation. You can see a promotional video of the event at https://youtu.be/fYP-n5uyUzY, or check out the event Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/events/546175345726064/. For more information on the 159th birthday celebration call Visitor Service at 503-986-1388 or visit the events page at www.oregoncapitol.com.

YCHS Education and Outreach volunteers Cynthia Christiansen and Gloria Lutz will once again be travelling to Salem with our covered wagon to celebrate Oregon’s 159th Birthday Celebration. SUCH PIONEERS THESE TWO! They would love to have you load up your own wagon (or car) and come visit them in Salem. Wear your YCHS t-shirts, hats and buttons or any of your favorite Dayton, Mac, Sheridan, Carlton etc, gear. See you there! ■
Volunteer Recognition

The amount of talent found among our volunteers continues to amaze! That is certainly true when it comes to our need to have a functioning sound and image system at the Heritage Center. After puzzling for two years on how to proceed to obtain first class speakers in the Davison Meeting Room and Heritage Hall, up stepped Chuck Rodgers and Cliff Watts with the concept of speakers in the ceiling supported by wireless microphones. Chuck and Cliff tackled the job and in a few short weeks acquired the materials and installed the system which is now in use. The sound is great and the system is easy to use. There are speakers also installed in the Museum Hall and the Restoration Shop! Our guests and renters now have quality sound for our meetings and events.

The next challenge was to have a large screen TV in the Heritage Hall that can be a resource for a variety of uses. For example, we have for several years longed for an appropriate way to recognize our volunteers and donors. In a crucial conversation with Chuck and Sharon Rodgers about the concept of rotating names on a TV screen, Chuck said, "Oh, I have that kind of software for the movies I make." The rest is now history! Once again, Cliff Watts installed the controls, the wall mounted TV and a pull down screen for computer generated presentations. Chuck's skills with electronic media found the right kind of equipment to have a large wall mounted screen centrally located in the Museum. This system allows us to recognized our donors and volunteers, our officers and directors, to announce upcoming events and show off some of our historic photographs.

Thanks again to Chuck and Sharon Rodgers and Cliff Watts for making this possible.

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Long time YCHS friend and member, Lois Brooks passes

Thought you might enjoy this 1996 article in fond remembrance...

**Lois Brooks: settling in**

**Spotlight:** History buffs

Lois Brooks

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Each month the News-Register will feature a facet of life in Yamhill County, the stories to appear in Saturday editions. This month’s spotlight is on Yamhill County Historical Society.

By IAN ROLLINS

Linfield student reporter 4-30-1976

When Lois Brooks was a child, her father moved her family around repeatedly. As an adult, her profession did the same.

Lois was born and spent her first three years in Nebraska. In 1930, her family moved west.

"We came to Oregon over McKenzie Pass," Lois said. "Back in those days, it wasn't much of a road. Once we got here, we moved all over the Willamette Valley in our old truck."

Lois went to school in Springfield. Although she was not very fond of school, she decided to become an elementary school teacher.

Lois went to Southern Oregon State for her teaching degree, then taught in Oregon and Alaska.

Lois spent a total of 19 years in Alaska, living and teaching in places like Fort Richardson, Kodiak Naval Base, Nome, Tok, Aleknagik and Toklat. In between those jobs, she lived and taught for nine years in Oregon, including four years in Harney County.

Lois loved to move around and see new things, so she didn’t mind that her profession took her all over.

"I mainly taught fourth-through sixth grades," Lois said. "Fourth grade was always my favorite. The kids are independent enough that they can take care of themselves, but they're still young enough to respect adults."

**Museum volunteer**

Lois came to Yamhill in 1985 and joined the Yamhill County Historical Society in 1986. She served as president in 1991 and 1992, and now volunteers at the county museum in Lafayette once a month.

"My favorite author is Alastair MacLean," Lois said. "His books are so exciting."

Her book collection also has the works of Alaskan authors like Jack London, Robert Service and Rex Beach. She also loves Agatha Christie.

Lois grows potatoes, corn, tomatoes, carrots and other vegetables in her garden, as well as several types of flowers, including poppies, zinnias and marigolds.

Lois is proud of the pumpkins she grows every year. Each of her several nieces and nephews gets a pumpkin at Halloween to carve into a Jack o’Lantern.

"With all the rain we’ve had this winter, I’m not sure when the soil’s going to be dry enough to put my garden in," Lois said, laughing.

Lois is modest about her own volunteer work. "There are so many volunteers that do much more than I do,” she said. But the museum runs on volunteers, and Lois is quick to encourage people to join.
Yamhill County Historical Society was founded in 1957 to encourage an appreciation and understanding of the events, customs, and traditions of the Yamhill County community by protecting, preserving and sharing its history and heritage. The society operates and maintains museums, historical properties and research facilities, advocates for preservation, and presents educational and public services in accordance with its mission.

Collections: Yamhill County Historical Society’s collections include genealogical materials, letters and documents from the late 18th century on, documents from schools, businesses, and other community organizations, and well over 5,000 photographic images. The Lafayette Museum and Heritage Center collections include furnishings, household artifacts, tools, agricultural and manufacturing equipment, dairy, logging and other transportation vehicles, a steam engine, quilts, textiles, historically significant landscaping showcasing native plants and other items that illustrate the history of Yamhill County.

Facilities: YCHS operates two facilities: a museum and research library, and the Heritage Center. The Lafayette Museum and Research Library contains the historic Poling Church and log cabin which house an exhibit hall and research facility. The Heritage Center includes a one-room schoolhouse, exhibit hall, activities building, blacksmith shop, sawmill, space for educational programs, meeting and event spaces. Both locations are open year-round on a regular schedule.