

The West Side

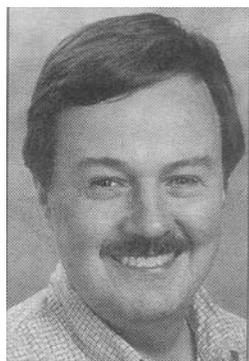
Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

February 2006

Professor Love on Oregon's Name Origins

Due to circumstances beyond her control, Linfield student Sirpa Peterson was unable to give us her update on our Century Farms, but one of her Professors from Linfield was ready and able to fill in for her. **Professor Thomas Love** has spent lots of time and energy tracking down the origin of the name of our state. He used an overhead projector in displaying copies of maps and documents supporting his conclusions. For a more detailed account of his discoveries and conclusions, the reader is referred to the News-Register Viewpoints article published on January 28th, which was written by Prof. Love.

In his article, the Professor said "the name of Oregon has the most complex history of any state name of Native American origin." He and Ives Goddard were awarded the OHS 2005 Joel Palmer award for their article entitled "Oregon, the Beautiful". We thank Professor Love for taking the time to give this presentation. It was obvious he has done his homework.



Board Meeting highlights

The Board met January 10th at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in McMinnville. Reports were received from our Treasurer, Correspondence Secretary and Volunteer Chair. A consensus was reached to offer our book, "Old Yamhill", at a 20% discount at our next general meeting for members. The Columbia Basin Basketry Guild visit was discussed (see elsewhere in this newsletter). Kathy had some tickets ready to sell for the Children's Tea Party to be held next month. The McDonald Funds have been withdrawn and placed in a 60 day CD, giving time for the Board to give proper consideration to how to reinvest them.

The Board was given a proposed budget for this calendar year, along with a clarification by Ken Williams, who assisted Carol Reid, Francis Dummer and Dan Linscheid on the budget committee this year. The budget was approved during the meeting.

A \$50,000 donation has been received for the hiring of a full-time director with a stipulation that the amount must be matched by YCHS funds before hiring someone. Gloria Lutz has submitted a grant proposal for a trailer to house the covered wagon, which is now stored in the Durham Lane storage building. The Board approved renewal of Kathy Pecks' food handlers license in time for the February Tea.

(For a full copy of these minutes, please visit the museum)

Hi Everyone,

The fact that at the age of 6 years old I had the pleasure of retrieving an 18 month old nephew from the depths (10 ft) of a farm outhouse pit may have something to do with my collection and strange attitude about the fast disappearing "outhouse". I have music boxes, reproductions of every kind, many, many books and wonderful calendars. This also includes Christmas tree ornaments, ear rings, necklaces and other memorabilia. At one time I had 3 life size usable buildings but when we moved from Colorado there was no room in the van. I even know a couple outhouse jokes. It is an honor to know that when people see an outhouse that they think of me??? This year I received 2 calendars. Both are on the wall of my office at home. They give me great pleasure. People collect certain items for many reasons. That is the reason for my collection.

If you have not sent in your First Federal vote for a non-profit organization, please keep in mind the YCHS. Every little bit counts. Thanks.

Gloria Lutz has been responsible for the acquisition of the "Covered Wagon". This Wagon was built in 1992/93 in honor of the Oregon Trail Celebration of 1993. That year the Wagon was taken to 32 schools in the county and many community celebrations. A building was built at the Fairgrounds to house the Wagon. In 1997 YCHS attempted to acquire it but had no facility to store the wagon. Ownership of the Wagon was questioned and it was finally determined that ESD was indeed the owner. With Gloria's determination ESD gifted the Wagon to YCHS. It now is in storage. Gloria is now proceeding to obtain grants to build a covered trailer to transport the Wagon. The covered trailer will allow better care of the Wagon in transporting plus a display of items that would be found in crossing the Oregon Trail. Plans are to have the trailer painted with scenes of the Oregon Trail and the Covered Wagon. The schools are already requesting to be part of the program. We do thank Gloria for all her hard work and volunteer hours to make this forgotten Wagon once again an important part of our history and the YCHS.

Donations for the new museum site and buildings continue to come in. We have a lot of hard work ahead but the end result will be worth it. Thank you.

Hope to see you at the February Tea.

Sincerely, Shirley Venhaus

We've received donations of obit cabinets from **Nancy Thornton, John & Merilee Dowty and Glen & Jeanette Christensen**. Thank you for your willingness to support our efforts to improve our service and meet our goals.

The Yamhill County Historical Society is a nonprofit tax exempt educational and public service

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Newsletter

Dan Linscheid

Car Pool Coordinator

Joanne Watts 835
-5893

Librarian

Jean Sartor
472-6312

MUSEUM HOURS:**Sept. thru June:**

Sat. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
or

By Appointment

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YCHS

Museum Report

Our Wednesday workgroup continues in their preservation efforts. All of our land title abstracts have been carefully identified, placed in archival envelopes and stored. They are working on similar preservation efforts for our photograph collection.

When completed, volunteers and researchers will be able to search for various photos based on the people in the image (if known) or the donor names, allowing the quick retrieval of a scanned image for viewing or printout. The originals will be retained in archival envelopes and will only be taken out on rare occasions. Although it may be difficult to imagine, someone may be interested in seeing our entire collection of a specific type of photo, such as tintype, cabinet or photo postcard. And the database will include descriptions of various items, such as automobiles or city scenes shown in the photos, which will also lend itself to quick searches.

The Board gives wholehearted support to these ladies, as well as some much needed funding for items required to do a proper job. Regular volunteers currently include **Marge Owens, Kathy Peck, Annita Linscheid, Nancy Mahi, Louise Heindl, Neva French, Julie Amen, Ruth Killius, Trudy Dick, Joanne Watts, Farrel Fuerst, Kathy Bruden and Jean Sartor.**

On occasion, we've had some very experienced volunteers and professionals from other museums visit our facility, and they are always impressed with the activities of our Wednesday workgroup. A lot of research is done before they decide on a preservation plan for any given collection. Speaking of research, the ladies are also updating our research library.

In these efforts, much work remains, and no deadlines can be established for its completion, since the tasks and needs evolve with each new collection focused on. The proper cleaning, handling and storage of our irreplaceable collection of artifacts is one thing that our members and the citizens of Yamhill County can be proud of.

Preservation methodologies change as does most everything in our lives, but that is not a valid reason to allow our wonderful artifacts to deteriorate. These ladies continue to use the best preservation processes and materials on our collection, and their efforts will be appreciated for years to come.

Newberg Graphic Donation

We were recently pleased to learn that the Newberg Graphic has donated a ten year subscription to their publication to the society. They recently featured a large article on our dream of a new museum on Durham Lane. We thank the owner and publisher !

Basket Lovers curate our collection

Beginning in January and finishing this month, a volunteer group of ladies have been curating our collection of over 60 hand-woven items. These ladies are very knowledgeable and efficient in performing their assigned duties, whether it be cleaning, photographing, identifying or preserving this collection.

Some of our baskets were mislabeled and all were determined to have been made for resale. One was obviously (at least to them!) made in Alaska,



Board Members Annita Linscheid and Nancy Mahi enjoy a laugh with four of the ladies curating our basketry collection.

and a couple of them originated from the southwestern United States. **Julie Daly**, far right in the above photo, serves as co-chair of the **Cultural Committee of Columbia Basin Basketry Guild**. She is assisted by her co-chair, **Kaye Van Valkenburg**.

This non profit group also made recommendations on the proper care, preservation and display of the items.

They've got their routine down pat, and perform this service free of charge. When they are done, we will receive a book containing copies of the color photos, as well as the measurements, condition and the age and tribal affiliation of each item. These ladies are basket fanatics, as witnessed by the tiny solid hand-woven gold basket Nancy Mahi is holding in the above photo, made by one of their members. This basket was less than 1" tall, and about 1/2" in diameter.

During their initial visit, they spotted the neatly organized boxes of quilts and textiles in the upstairs of the Log Building and asked to see how they were stored and organized. These ladies were very impressed with the efforts of the Wednesday workgroup in their preservation efforts.

We thank this group for their willingness to perform this valuable service for our society. Our collection is better than ever, thanks to them.

Yamhill County Gets A Railroad by Jim Lockett

February 2006

One of the great Yamhill County escapades involves building a new system of transportation. Railroads were in vogue back east and a transcontinental line was in the making. 1867 was railroad mania time! The transcontinental railroad was completed and with the coming of a railroad, towns would not be so isolated. Every town in the country wanted a train. It was a wonder to behold and great celebrations were held when the first train arrived. Moreover, with this excitement it was not hard to raise the capital necessary to finance this new but expensive adventure. Oregon was ready to bring the railroad to their towns.

The real "prize" to the investor, if successful, was the Land Grants: Congressional grants provided 20 alternate sections of land per mile - ten on each side of the road. The grants were awarded when a company had finished 20 miles of track and ran a train over the route. Congress required that the Oregon portion be built by: "Such company organized under the laws of Oregon as the Legislature of that state shall designate" This one cause trouble later on since the Oregon Legislature was responsible for awarding the grants and their favor could be bought.

So then, Joseph Gaston and a group of investors from Portland formed "The Oregon Central Railroad Company." The articles of incorporation were filed on October 6, 1866, and the Oregon legislature approved the grant. Joseph Gaston was appointed "Secretary of the board of Incorporators." In April of the next year, he took subscriptions for the company's capital stock.

Gaston also had his idea of where that road would run. He believed that the west side of the Willamette River offered the best route. There were fewer and smaller rivers to bridge, level land to cross and more people ready to support the plan. This would include many McMinnville investors under the leadership of William T. Newby. The investors had some say about the route; Newby wanted the train to bypass Lafayette and go through McMinnville. Gaston felt he had a sure thing until the appearance of a Mr. S. G. Elliott, a railroad promoter from "sunny" California. He was part of a California scheme planning to get control of the Oregon Central Railroad Company and join it with the California Railroad Company. Soon articles of incorporation were filed with the State of Oregon under the title, "Oregon and California Railroad Company." At first, Joseph Gaston felt that the added investment would be of value to his company. He raised large sums of money for Elliot, but to his surprise, Elliott decided - with some powerful encouragement - to run the line up the east side of the Willamette.

Joseph put up a gallant fight since he had already graded several miles of track to go down the west side. About this time the Oregon Legislature decided to give the land grants to the company that finished first. So the competition of the Eastside Railroad and the Westside Railroad became fierce. Both broke ground early in 1868 in Portland, Oregon, and the race was on!

Mr. Elliott's financing did not carry him very far; it began to look like Joe Gaston would be the winner of the land grants.

Then Ben Holladay entered the picture. He was the first to hire and organize a band of lobbyists in the history of the Oregon Legislature. He ended up with the Railroad Grants. He later admitted that he had lined the legislator's pockets with over \$35,000 cash, plus extravagant parties, gifts and other "Goodies."

Joe Gaston reports: "But notwithstanding this hard-earned success, Holladay was now face to face with a state of facts that would have paralyzed a less reckless and unscrupulous operator. The supreme court of Oregon decided that the Salem Oregon Railroad (Eastside) Company was not a corporation." Nevertheless, an even greater problem was facing Holliday. He had sold ten and a half million dollars worth of bonds in Germany but could only account for half of it. The money had gone to "buy" various legislators, Judges and businessmen but there was still five million unaccounted for. It is known that Holliday enjoyed the wealth, spending a large sum to purchase personal property. The German investment companies, aware that something was wrong, sent Henry Villard over to run the "show." Arriving in 1874, Villard quickly ousted Holliday and started his plan to have full control of all the existing Oregon railroads. He saw the Oregon railroad system as having transcontinental power and influence.

Now back to the Westside Railroad that seemed doomed for lack of any land grants. The citizens of Portland, Washington, Yamhill and Polk counties stood loyally by the old company: not only giving financial aid for the grading and bridging the first twenty miles of its roadbed, but also throwing into the scale the weight of their political influence. Joseph Gaston said that these people believed: "no man should represent Oregon in congress who could not labor to secure another grant of land in aid of their road."

By 1873, the railroad had passed Gaston and ended at St Joe - both named for the great Joseph Gaston! The panic of 1873 stopped the train at St. Joe for some time. People using the train had to get out to St Joe to ship their goods or to get a ride. It was about ten years before the train moved on through McMinnville, then on to Corvallis and beyond. Newby would have felt very proud to see the train arrive in McMinnville.

Soon Villard had tracks from McMinnville through Newberg and on to Portland. This provided a great "circle of rail" that people enjoyed riding. These trips on old steam trains, and later by the Red Electric, were great outings. McMinnville reaped the harvest with this new transportation and tourist trade.

Discount Book Offer

At our February meeting, YCHS members will be offered a one-time 20% discount on our own publication of "**Old Yamhill**". You must be present to purchase, and we are limiting this to one purchase per member/family. This is the 30th anniversary of the publication of this book, so here is your chance to pick one up. We will have a number of these at the meeting so be sure to attend if you want one.

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES Effective May 31, 2002

□ Individual	\$15
□ Family	\$25
□ Friend	\$50+
□ Supporter	\$100+
□ Community Builder	\$250+
□ Community Benefactor	\$500+

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 notice inside your newsletter, you're at the end of your membership term!

Please check the insert from the December newsletter for info on the transition to an annual renewal date of July. (And don't hesitate to ask if you have questions)

Calendar of Events

Board of Directors: 4:30 p.m., Tuesday, February 14th. Our next **regular monthly meeting** will be held 6:30 p.m., same day, both at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in McMinnville. Our program will be presented by **Dennis Werth** of Grand Ronde on the restoration of **Old Fort Yamhill**.

- **Childrens Tea Party—Feb. 11th**

New Members/Renewals: We welcome renewing members **Marion Gray, Brenda Kellar, Charlene Brown, Charles Burgess, Marjorie Bowman, Christie Wyman, Marcia Mikesh, Louise Heindl, Ruth Banke, Barbara Steers, Jim & Reita Lockett, Joe & Coral Dancer, Margaret Brixey, Ken & Pat Williams** and **Jim Vincent** and new members **Darrel Jones** and **Betty Vanosse**. Thanks for supporting our organization. We invite you to attend our meetings, visit our museum and become more involved in our local history!