

The West Side

CELEBRATING
1957 50 2007
Years
Preserving the Past
Enriching the Future

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society January 2007

Christmas Memories

At our December general meeting, Nancy Thornton coordinated various presenters on a trip down Christmas memory lane. Twila Byrnes, Lois Brooks, Shirley McDaniels and Nancy recited some of their memories and seasonal odes. Lester Herring also recalled some of his own Christmas family memories from his youth. Thanks to all who helped...

From our President:

My trip to Germany & Austria Nov. 27th to Dec. 8th was wonderful. We were on a river boat down the Danube to Vienna. I don't believe we missed any church, castle, abbey, palace, musical performance, sightseeing, lots of walking, steps and watch out for those cobblestones. It took me about a full week to recover from the "jet lag" and a cold but it was worth it.

So much of the county has been without electricity as a result of the wind and rain storm. We lost power for about 7 hours. There are many small areas who still do not have electricity. It does make you realize how much of our lives depends on electricity. It is sad to see the loss of so many great trees all over the county.

Gloria Lutz loaned me the book, "All Together in One Place" by Jane Kirkpatrick. I want to have it read before her appearance at the McMinnville Library in January. Remember there is only so much space so it is a "first come" basis for seating. Check the Newsletter elsewhere for exact time of this event. Looking forward to a busy and productive 2007. Shirley

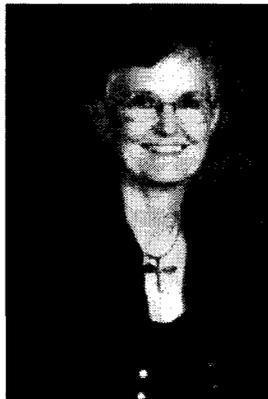
Jane Kirkpatrick To Speak

We are pleased to co-host a presentation by renowned historical fiction author Jane Kirkpatrick at the McMinnville Library. She will speak at 2 p.m. in the Carnegie Room, and while admission is free, seating is limited, so plan on arriving early.

Jane is an award winning author of numerous books, and was given the Western Wrangler Heritage Award. She has penned two non-fiction books and at least twelve fiction novels as well as numerous articles and essays. Jane, a licensed clinical social worker, lives on a 160 acre ranch with her husband in eastern Oregon.

Literary Guild, Doubleday, Crossings and Book of the Month book club have featured her titles.

Jane is an international speaker, and we are sure she will have an inspiring message for young and old alike. Don't miss this one. The Library is at 225 N.W. Adams in McMinnville.



Board Meeting Highlights

Our December Board meeting was attended by Shirley Venhaus, Marjorie Owens, Annita Linscheid, Kathy Peck, Ken Williams, Gloria Lutz, Lorna Grauer, Eileen Lewis, Dan Linscheid and Shirley McDaniel. Also present was Katherine Hewitt new part time director for new Museum project.

Treasurer's Report: Ken had no itemized report from Carol but had up-to-date reports from the Building Committee, the Memorial and Miller Funds. **Correspondence Secretary:** Marjorie reported two pieces of correspondence. **Membership Secretary:** Kathy reported she has received all but eleven membership renewals based on the July 2007 prorated renewal. **Suggestion To reinstate Life Member status:** It was suggested by Shirley V. that the life membership status be reinstated. After some discussion and advice from Katherine Hewitt it was decided to table the subject at this time.

Museum/Library Report: Things are running smoothly in the museum. Lorna was able to purchase two mannequins suitable for use in the museum. **Publicity:** No report. **Old Business: Request not to publish minutes until approved:** It was agreed to put draft minutes in the newsletter and if any corrections need to be made upon final approval that correction will be included in the following issue. **Covered Wagon in Parade:** The covered wagon was in the Christmas parade this year and information about the museum handed out.

Blacksmith donated items: These items are now being stored in the building at the new museum site.

New Business: Volunteer Report: A volunteer meeting was held December 1st at the museum. **Oregon Historical Society Request:** No action taken. **Loss of Crystal Rilee-Bulbs:** Small bags of flower bulbs were given at Crystal's funeral service which will be planted at the museum. **Update on new site:** The well has been drilled, resulting in 15 gpm at less than a 60 foot depth. **Steering Committee Meeting- (to be held at 2:00PM-Wed. Dec. 13th in the Log building).** **Heritage Days:** Daryl and Angela Flood joined us to report on Lafayette Heritage Days. Daryl is Mayor elect for the city of Lafayette and Angela is chair of the Heritage day's committee. She stated that she is not sure their event will take place next year but is committed to work hard to bring the community together to make this event happen if not next year then the year after. They are of the opinion YCHS is a real asset to their community and is looking forward to working with us and including us in their Heritage Day Celebration. She will keep in contact with YCHS on this matter. Annita Linscheid,

Have a Wonderful 2007

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 - 2007**President**

Shirley Venhaus
472-7328

Vice President

Lorna Grauer
843-3251

Secretary

Annita Linscheid
843-2625

Treasurer

Ken Williams
835-3110

Membership Secretary

Gloria Lutz
472-7563

Corresponding Secretary

Marjorie Owens
843-3081

Board of Directors

(Vacant
Position)

Shirley McDaniel
662-3528

Dan Linscheid
843-2625

Colin Armstrong
472-6489

Program Director

Barbara Knutson
843-2069

Volunteer Coordinator

Louise Heindl
662-4218

Newsletter

Dan Linscheid

Car Pool Coordinator

Joanne Watts
835-5893

Librarian

Jean Sartor
472-6312

MUSEUM**WINTER HOURS:**

Sept thru May:
Saturdays &
Wednesdays 10 a.m. to
4 p.m. or by appointment
605 Market Street
Lafayette Oregon
Phone: 864-2308

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YCHS

Email: yamhillhistory@
onlinemac.com

Crystal Dawn Smith Rilee

June 24, 1915—December 6, 2006

Anyone who has attended our monthly meetings during the past several years will remember Crystal, and we will miss her dearly.

Born on Parrett Mountain in her parents home, she was the only daughter of John and Ella (Parrett) Smith. She had three brothers, Glenn, Curtis and Forrest.

Life on the farm in the 1920's and '30's helped forge Crystal into the hard-working, no-nonsense lady we

all knew. A woman's role in family and farm life was every bit as critical as that of the man of the house.

When the original home-stead house burned to the ground in 1923, Crystal's mother, Ella, attempted to smother the fire on her own without calling the men in from the fields. Seven-year old Crystal, watching flames shoot through the roof of her home, talked her mother into letting her phone a neighboring Parrett to help in putting out the fire. The house was a total loss, but Crystal was able to carry her younger brother to safety.

Crystal went on to become a world traveler, mostly in association with her work for the U.S. government for many years. She married Robert C. Rilee in 1945. Since he was in the Navy at the time, there was more traveling in her future. They had a son, Ronnie, in 1951.

Like so many who survived the Great Depression, Crystal was extremely frugal. The farm, which had been sold off piecemeal over the decades to make ends meet, was gradually increased in size, thanks to her diligence, and now boasts approximately 400 acres of both forest and tillable land.

Crystal did not want to see the farm turn into a rural residential neighborhood, so she, with assistance from her Granddaughter Elizabeth, formed the Crystal Dawn Smith Rilee Foundation, organized to preserve the Parrett family farm for public and educational use. The goal of the Foundation is to "Provide the general public a turn-of-the-century Oregon farm, as well as protect 400 acres from encroaching urban development."

There can be no doubt that Crystal cared deeply about her heritage, and we're thankful that she found a way to preserve a large part of it.

**New Museum Site Update**

The third workshop with the architect Don Stastny was held Dec. 13th at the Log Museum. The over all arrangement of all the structures was discussed. The first phase of the construction was settled on. Site preparation with the well completion (55 feet/15 GPM) and need for electrical engineer and other professional assessments and inspections to follow.

The construction of the Agriculture building and addition to the existing building is the plan for 2007. Katherine Huit will work part time on this project for the Historical Society. Katherine plans on concentrating on Community Awareness and funding possibilities. The Architect will provide a sketch of the proposed site with use of the additional approximate 7 acres. We appreciate those who took the time to attend this meeting.

(submitted by Shirley V.)

Election Results

At our December meeting, the nominees presented by the nominating committee were all elected to office. Shirley Venhaus will continue as our President, and Gloria Lutz will assume the Membership Secretary's position previously held by Kathy Peck. Annita Linscheid was reelected Secretary, and Colin Armstrong will fill the position which was held by Eileen Lewis. Ken Williams was elected Treasurer.

With Gloria moving to the new position, a vacancy now exists on the Board. The term of this position expires at the end of this year. If you would like to serve on the Board, make your feelings known to one or more Board members. The Board will consider all candidates and appoint their choice in the near future.

Colin Armstrong brings lots of experience in various venues to the Board, and his easygoing temperament and insight will be an excellent addition to this group.

Lafayette Heritage Days

We have conceptually committed to joining up with the City of Lafayette on August 11th & 12th of this year, combining our Harvest Festival with that city's Heritage Days. Mayor-Elect Daryl Flood attended our December Board meeting with his wife, Angela. While exact plans are sketchy at this time, we hope that by combining these events both our society and the city can benefit.

Daryl and Angela are community 'spark plugs', and we are convinced good results will be forthcoming from this union. Stay tuned for details!

In this fiftieth anniversary year of the Yamhill County Historical Society, it is appropriate to reflect upon the vision of our founders, our achievements and our future.

In 1957, considering the passing of time and the potential loss of history, a group of local citizens established the Historical Society as a not-for-profit educational and public service organization engaged to protect, preserve and share the history and heritage of Yamhill County. Instrumental in the Society's organization, Dr. James Alley, of Amity, solicited interest throughout the Yamhill County, resulting in a dedicated group of individuals. Dr. Alley called the first official meeting of the Yamhill County Historical Society to order on Monday, October 21, 1957 in the Fireplace Room of the Yamhill Christian Church in Yamhill. Members immediately got to business, electing the first slate of officers. According to Dorothy Guinness in her presentation to the Society in November 2002,

"There was absolutely no question as to who the first president should be: Reverend Robert Kuykendall of Yamhill, a grandson of Nathan K. Sitton who had come to Oregon on the very first wagon train of 1843, was the unanimous choice."

Dorothy Wortman Guinness became Vice President, Neita Lewis Terry, Secretary, and Soren Sorensen, Treasurer. Other members of the first Board of Directors included Eugene Marsh, James Alley, Mrs. William H. Brandt, Patricia Turner Shawver and Frank Wortman. An Advisory Board consisted of Senator Carl Francis, Dr. Kenneth Holmes, Victoria Case, Dr. Margaret Ramsey, Betty Shawver Orr, Dr. Milo Ross and Dr. Levi Pennington. Guinness recalled the group represented all parts of Yamhill County, stating, "Many of these people descended from early pioneers who helped settle our marvelous country."

With that first official meeting began the tradition of a monthly program, which featured speakers telling stories about Yamhill County and Oregon history. The Society held its monthly meetings at different locations around Yamhill County – similar to our gatherings today. Another tradition that began at the first meeting was the potluck, to which members contributed favorite and traditional recipes – a practice that continues today!

Collecting archival materials, photographs and memorabilia, as well as three-dimensional objects, the founders eventually ran out of space in which to store Yamhill County's treasures. They sought a permanent location for the artifacts - a place where interested individuals could see the objects, learn about local history and do research.

Meanwhile, as if directed by providence, the congregation of the Poling Memorial Church in Lafayette sought a new owner for their house of worship. On September 5, 1969, the Society finalized the acquisition of its new home, giving the little church building an important new purpose.

Donations continued to accrue over the years. The Society built a small metal barn to shelter larger artifacts, such as farming equipment, and in 1994, thanks to a wonderful donation from Verle and Dorothy Miller, the Society built the rustic Miller Museum log cabin next to the Church. Reflecting Yamhill County's pioneer heritage, today the Miller Museum accommodates the Ruth Stoller Reference Library, a remarkable quilt collection, changing exhibits, and the newly added Genealogy Society Collection.

Today the three-building campus in Lafayette comprises 7,500 square feet containing a collection of over 15,000 objects! The Society's volunteers work diligently to protect, preserve and interpret the treasures in our collection, creating meaningful exhibits for the Museum's visitors. Thanks to several decades of volunteers spreading the word about the Society's purpose, a fantastic collection of photographs exists in the Stoller Research Library that represents a great deal of the county's early visual history.

Realizing our founders' vision, the Society's Permanent Collection documents Yamhill County's history and serves as a valuable asset to our community. The Museum is a place to view Yamhill County's artifacts and to research and learn the story of Yamhill County - its people, economy and natural history.

So, where do we go from here? With the addition of 12 acres at the corner of Highway 18 and Durham Lane and the help of Architect Don Statsny and his team the Society is creating a new campus plan. This year we will break ground on a 50,000 square foot building in which to house the incredible fleet of farming artifacts gifted to the Society by Ray Kauer. Once the Agriculture Building is complete, we will begin operations at our new site – an incredible start to our fiftieth year!

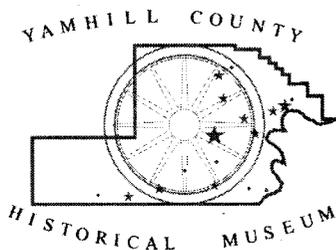
All this is possible because of our Members and Volunteers! Our new site will offer many opportunities for new volunteers, and we must keep up the pace at our current site. Do you know of someone who might want to be a part of the fun? If so, call Louise Heindl for information about joining our team- and if you know anyone who might want to become a member, please contact Gloria Lutz. You will find contact information elsewhere in this issue of *The West Side*.

In the meantime, watch for updates and information on participating in the development of our new site, and opportunities to celebrate Yamhill County Historical Society's 50th anniversary!

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 484

Lafayette Oregon 97127



YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
EST. 1897

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Please make checks payable to the Yamhill County Historical Society. New members can prorate dues monthly from the above table. Membership dues, artifact donations and 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 paid your annual membership dues last July, please contact Gloria Lutz at 472-7563. Rates Effective May 31, 2002.

Whats Happening

Our next regular monthly meeting will be held 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 9th, at the Seventh Day Adventist Church, on Old Sheridan Road in McMinnville. Our program this month will be Marjorie Owens, on Lewis & Clark—What became of them after their Journey?

Other Events:

- ▶ **January 27th:** Author Jane Kirkpatrick, to speak in the Carnegie Room at the McMinnville Library.
- ▶ **August 11th & 12th:** Lafayette Heritage Days— more details later this year.

New Members: We welcome new members Jon Straumfjord, Kimo Mahi, Stevie Ficker, Glen Watts and Matthew Simek. Thanks for supporting our organization. We invite you all to attend our meetings, visit our museum and become more involved in our local history!