

# The West Side

Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society

October 1996

## OCTOBER 26th HOME TOUR DRAWING WIDE INTEREST

Although the date is still nearly a month away, inquiries and reservations are being received from a broad area. In addition to a booking from Salem for 30 people, interest also appears high in places like Beaverton and Portland. Brochures are now being distributed throughout the county which should generate even more in the way of local activity as well. Tours will depart on a regularly scheduled basis from the museum in Lafayette between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM. Because of limited seated capacity in the vans and to avoid overcrowding at the homes being visited, reservations are being taken and strongly advised.



*"Westerlook" built in 1912 by Charles S. Ladd.  
One of the five historic homes on the tour.*

Also included with the tour are demonstrations of traditional homemaking handicrafts which will be ongoing throughout the day in the Miller Log Building. Highlights of these activities include the well known and highly skilled Chehalem Valley Quilters plus a demonstrations of a variety of crafts such as needlework tatting, and knitting presented by Artistic Needles of McMinnville. Spinning, rug making and a lot more will be on tap as well.

Light refreshments will also be served in the log building throughout the day.

Cost for all of this is only \$10.00 per person (\$8.00 for YCHS members in good standing). Don't delay, make your reservations now and don't forget to invite a friend.

**FOR RESERVATIONS CALL:**

**472-5181 (days) - or - 472-7328 (eves)**

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

A memorial service was held for Harvey Stoller on September 19th. His smiling face, wit and concern for our society will be missed.

At the last board meeting we answered roll call with our most memorable first day of school. Can you believe one member admitted that on the first day of school they got a spanking? Guess who.

It was my pleasure to spend an afternoon in Albany Oregon. The purpose of my visit was to learn about the historical house tour they have twice a year.

The bathroom in the church building began getting a

### HARVEY STOLLER

1916 - 1996

Since the very beginning Harvey willingly served this organization in a great number of official and unofficial capacities. He quietly undertook whatever task was at hand and completed it well. Family man, respected within his profession, solid citizen.

It was a pleasure to have known him.

fresh clean look during the September 13th work day. I also believe we may have removed some webs that had reached the antique status. Once again we thank all the members who were present. Also thanks to the Yamhill County work release crew and their supervisor, Lonnie.

We now have some great flyers to promote the historic house tour. If you know of a person or group that would be interested in the event, please stop at the museum and pick up some of these flyers.

Olive Johnson and myself participated in the first LDS genealogical fair held at their facility in McMinnville. They hope to make it an annual event and we have been asked to be a part of it. We displayed our publications, handed out historic house tour flyers and membership applications.

Please take time to notice the flowers planted around the Miller Log Museum sign. It's beginning to look like someone cares.

October is going to be a very busy month and we will need everyone's help. Thanks,

Shirley

**OFFICERS - 1996**

President

Shirley Venhaus  
472-7328

VP/Program

Barbara Knutson  
843-2069

Secretary

Betty White  
665-5376

Treasurer

Don Crawford  
434-9843

Financial Secretary

Lila Jackson  
472-8510

Corres. Secretary

Dolores Robertson  
538-0767

Board of Directors

James Vincent  
472-7239

Robert Kuykendall  
662-3354

Harvey Stoller

Ed Roghair  
472-6909

Historian

Jim Lockett  
472-5005

Librarian

Olive Johnson  
472-6070

Newsletter

John White  
665-5376

Publicity

Elaine Rohse  
472-6827

**MUSEUM HOURS**

June 1 to Aug 31:  
Wed-Sun 1 to 4 PM

Sept 1 to May 31:  
Sat-Sun 1 to 4 PM

or

By Appointment



Fr. Martinus addressing YCHS at Sheridan

**YCHS HEARS OF EARLY CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES**

Guest speaker for the September 10th meeting held in Sheridan was Fr. Martinus Cawley of the Trappist abbey near Lafayette who related biographies of the Catholic priests Adrien-Joseph Crockett and Felix Bucher, both of whom served as early missionaries to the Siletz and Grand Ronde Indian reservations. He also spoke of Mother Catherine Drexel, benefactress of Fr. Bucher and concluded the hour with a brief account of the Jesuit novitiate at Sheridan. Experienced in researching Church history, Fr. Martinus offered a rare perspective from which to view these particular facets of the county's heritage.

**OCTOBER MEETING & POTLUCK DINNER**

Our next gathering will be 6:30 pm Tuesday October 8th at the Community Christian Church 2831 N Newby St. in McMinnville

Following the potluck dinner, Jim Lockett will address the group on the personal life of Dr. John McLoughlin. The account will begin with his medical apprenticeship as a teenager in Quebec and from there concentrate upon the more private and family related aspects of his long and illustrious career.

Pack up a table service along with your favorite hot dish, salad or dessert and join us. Guests are always welcome.

**GARAGE SALE - 1997**

At its September meeting the Board of Directors approved a garage sale as a major fund raising project for next year with the date tentatively set for August 23rd. Although almost a year hence, now is the time for members to begin lining up donations for the event.

**NEW MEMBERS**

We welcome the following individuals who have recently joined the Society and hope to see them at the October 8th meeting:

- Jason deVries - McMinnville
- Bryan Doke - McMinnville
- Kelleye Payne - Newberg (Life Member)
- Jon Triest - McMinnville

**BAKE A BATCH FOR LOIS**

In view of rather high interest in the upcoming House Tour, Refreshments Coordinator Lois Brooks is seeking additional sources for homemade cookies to serve tourgoers. Any kind, any flavor.

Contact Lois at: 662-3788.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The membership is reminded that elections are traditionally held at the December general meeting. The principal offices on the ballot this year are those of President, Secretary, Treasurer and two Director positions. Shirley Kuykendall, Lois Brooks and Twila Byrnes have been appointed to serve as the nominating committee. Members wishing to place a name in nomination should contact one of the committee.

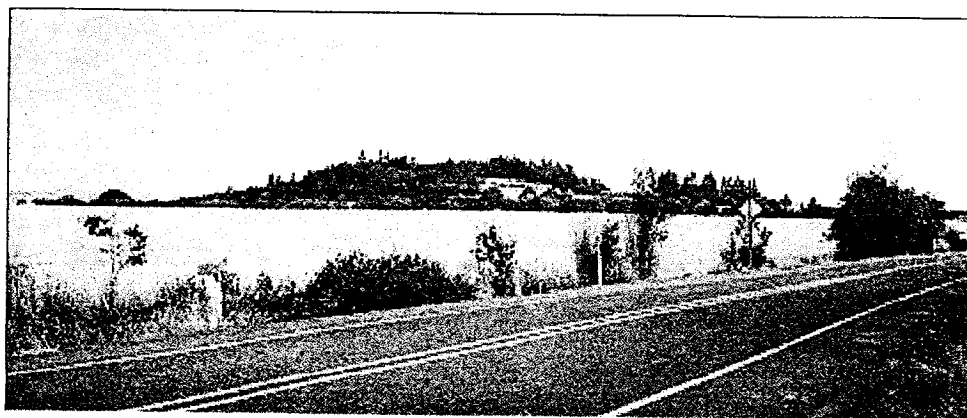


Above is a 1908 photo of one of the homes on the historic house tour. It has since undergone a few design changes....Can you guess which one it is?

## THE GHOST ON ALEC'S BUTTE

by John White

About two miles north of Carlton on Highway 47, lies a low rolling hill which appears on various area maps as "Alec's Butte". With Halloween coming, the



*Southeast face of Alec's Butte as it appears today from Highway 47*

tale of Alec and his uneasy spirit which some say continues to haunt his namesake butte seems appropriate for a brief recounting. Of course, aspects of this yarn were not recorded in detail at the time and have quite likely been colored to some extent over the ensuing 160 years, but there appears to be some evidence the incident did take place more or less as described.

Alexander "Alec" Carson, a cousin of the famed frontiersman Kit Carson, was an unindentured gunsmith who accompanied the 1811 Wilson Price Hunt brigade of the American Fur Trading (Astor) Company overland expedition<sup>(1)</sup>. After the American company folded he continued operating on a free lance basis, trading with their British successors. Up until the early 1830's his name also appears in Hudson's Bay Company records as occasionally accompanying their brigades from Fort Vancouver into such distant regions as the Grand Teton mountains and Spanish California. From all accounts he appears to have been a hard worker and shrewd trader.

Sometime around 1834 Carson elected to build a "wintering hut" on the butte that now bears his name. From here he could traverse much of what is now western Oregon trading with the Indians during the spring and summer and return his cabin to spend the winter in relative comfort. Another advantage to this location was that it lay along the main Hudson's Bay Company trail leading south from Fort Vancouver.

Carson also hired a Tualatin Indian assistant about this time by the name of "Boney" and, as was the custom, Boney's wife and young son would accompany the two men on their extended journeys to the south. The story goes that while on the trail Alec and Boney would sometimes split up for a few days, occasionally affording Alec the opportunity to slip back into camp for a romantic dalliance with Boney's wife.

In the late winter of 1835-36 Carson fell seriously ill and was unable to undertake his spring Willamette Valley trading journey when the time came. He then decided

Boney and his son should depart on schedule while Carson stayed behind for a while to recoup under the care of Mrs. Boney.

Whatever suspicions Boney may have had

concerning the joint activities of his wife and his employer were confirmed after a chance meeting on the trail with Click-kowan, a Tillamook Indian, who had passed Carson's cabin a few days earlier. He reported Alec appeared to be reasonably healthy, but neither he nor Boney's wife seemed in any particular hurry to catch up with Boney. Now enraged, Boney, his son and Click-kowan returned to the cabin where they captured and brutally tortured Carson to death<sup>(2)</sup>. A party of Hudson's Bay Company traders passing the cabin in May 1836 found Carson's compound burned and in ruins along with evidence of what they described as "fersum buchery" (sic) of Alec's remains.

Long after settlement of the North Yamhill Valley began during the 1840's, folks continued to tell of nights when long eerie and chilling wails could be heard moving through the trees on Alec's Butte. Also some spoke of sinister dark shadows resembling the shape of a man appearing to dance in and out of a thick mist that would form behind its ridge. Brave indeed are those venturing near the massacre site during the darkness hours as legend has it the dismembered ghost of Alec Carson roams the butte seeking revenge upon his vicious killers.....Of course there are also those who contend a light evening breeze from the east acting upon a grove of trees along with seasonal ground fog might well produce exactly the same effect...but then who can say for sure?

### Footnotes:

(1) About four miles south of Newberg along Highway 219 on the way to St. Paul stands an Oregon Historical Marker indicating the site of the first trading post in the Willamette Valley. Alec Carson was one of four Astor Company traders who helped establish this post in 1811.

(2) Details of the deed itself come from a much later account given by Click-kowan. The Boney family was seldom seen after this and not known to have ever commented upon the subject.

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**YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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*October 1996 Calendar of Events*

**Friday, October 4th, 1:00 PM**

**Historic House Tour Committee - Miller Log Building - Lafayette**

**Tuesday, October 8th, 5:00 PM**

**Board of Directors - Community Christian Church - McMinnville**

**Tuesday, October 8th, 6:30 PM**

**Potluck Dinner - Community Christian Church - McMinnville**

*Bring Your Own Table Service      Guests Always Welcome*

*(See page 2 for program details)*

**Friday, October 18th, 9:00 AM**

**Housekeeping and Touch Up - All Three Museum Buildings - Lafayette**

**Friday, October 18th, 1:00 PM**

**Historic House Tour Committee (Final Meeting) - Miller Log Building - Lafayette**

**Saturday, October 26th, 9:00 AM through 3:00 PM**

**Historic House Tour - Depart From Miller Log Building - Lafayette**