

The West Side



Newsletter and Journal of the Yamhill County Historical Society February 2007

Survivors of the Lewis & Clark Expedition

Marge Owens has researched the Lewis & Clark expedition with a passion, and she shared that passion with attendees at our January general meeting. She obviously spends a good portion of her free time researching the journey, the people and the tortuous trails the participants followed both during and after the famous trek.

Along the way, Marge has gathered a sizeable library of books and documents covering a multitude of aspects of the journey, and she made several recommendations for those of us interested in learning more about these people. She discussed the people who were first enlisted to serve, the changing makeup of party, as well as what happened to these folks after their journey.

Thanks Marge, for adding to our knowledge of the journey and what happened to the members after their return to St. Louis in September of 1806!

Covered Wagon on Parade

Admittedly, this photo is a little dated, but we thought you should see our covered wagon being drawn by a John Deere tractor in the Christmas parade in McMinnville on November 24th. Gloria Lutz rode the wagon.



Below, Ray Kauer, wagonmaster, checks something out before starting.



From Your President

Looking out the window I keep thinking I'm in Colorado, the snow on the ground and trees, the icy roads and the low temperatures. It is pretty scary out on the roads. Be very careful.

You will notice elsewhere in the News Letter a list of those who have donated to the Historical Society in 2006. The purpose of this is to show the support given to us by members and the community. The next issue we will show donations to the new museum site. We will also try to catch up on those who donate items to the Society to preserve and/or use. It is part of the Board's desire to keep the membership informed on what is happening. We will also be putting the next two months program schedules for the General Meeting. The News Letter is our best form of communication so be sure and check it out.

Isn't it impressive to think the YCHS is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year? Thanks to Dan we have a reminder of this event on the front page of the News Letter. We have been searching for a motto to go with the logo and we agreed that "Preserving Our Past, Enriching Our Future" does represent what the Society is trying to do. Katherine, Gloria and myself spent time visiting with Dorothy Guinness in her home in Pacific City. Dorothy was one of the original board members when it was founded in 1957. She has such a fantastic memory for events of those years. One room in her home was planned to hold the huge amount of historical files she has collected over the years. We hope to schedule another visit and get a lot of her memories on tape. You may remember that Dorothy's family was involved in establishing banking in McMinnville.

Update on the New Site: Meetings to form an Advisory Committee and with the Architect, Don Stastny to discuss the engineering process of the Agriculture Building. This will allow us to proceed with bringing in the utilities and locating the septic system. We received a signed letter from the McPhillips Family: McPhillips Farms, Inc is pleased to report that we passed an unanimous resolution to complete the donation of 6.24 acres of our McPhillips Farm land to your organization. We have signed the final papers completing our gift and look forward to the day that you break ground. We are all .100% behind your effort and wish you great success. This is a very exciting time for the YCHS.

Thank you for your support. Shirley Venhaus

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 - 2007President

Shirley Venhaus
472-7328

Vice President

Lorna Grauer
843-3251

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Annita Linscheid
843-2625

Treasurer

Ken Williams
835-3110

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472-7563

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843-3081

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662-3528

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472-6489

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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

Donations & Grants—2006

We have included a list of money's the Society received during the year 2006 from: Visitor donations, Private donations to the museum for general or designated use, Business donations, Memorials, Endowments, and Grants. If the name is listed more than once it means they gave more than once. This does not include donations to the new museum site.

The purpose of this is to show the support the Society has received from the membership and the community. Every donation is appreciated whether it is large or small.— Shirley Venhaus

ENDOWMENTS AND GRANTS

Miller Trust Fund - \$16,914 -Endowment for maintenance of buildings located in Lafayette - Malcom Marquis Fund - \$1,400- Designated by Board for use in Preservation - First Federal Savings & Loan - \$6,000 - Grant for Enclosed Trailer to transport Covered Wagon - Prudential First State Realty - \$1,000 - Designated for Enclosed Trailer

TOTAL ENDOWMENTS & GRANTS **\$25,374**

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Glen Grauer, Patsy Miller, Marian Peterson, Don Barnes, Joseph Azzarelli, Lois Brooks, Eleanore Mitchell, Barbara Miller, Emily Jernstedt, Betty Pekkola, Judy Johnson ,Carol Wood, Elizabeth Baltzell, Mary Sitton, Shirley McDaniel, Lois Brooks, Mark Vernon, Ken Knutson, Dittany Felker and Twila Byrnes

TOTAL **\$720**

BUSINESS DONATIONS FOR GENERAL OR DESIGNATED USE

First Federal Savings & Loan, Davidson Auto Parts, Prudential FirstState Realty

TOTAL **\$2,777.87**

PRIVATE DONATIONS TO THE MUSEUM FOR GENERAL OR DESIGNATED USE

Barbara Hinman, Nancy Thornton, Jack Dowty, Jeannette Christens, Lawrence Rudd, Homer & Elaine Rohse, HMC Family Association, Eleanore Mitchell, Marjorie Bowman, Golden Rule Club, JB Wilson, Marjorie Owens, Andrew Ackerlund, Farrel Fuerst, Mill Creek Group, Chehalem Valley C, Sheridan Study Club, Rick Kikes, Hillside Manor, Alfred Jones, Betty Vanosse, Barbara Chambers, James Kuhn, Robert & Nila Jackson, Donald King, Millie Armstrong, Adelaide Stimmell, Sherry Schmidt, Patricia Chard, Christine Kikes and John Dowty.

TOTAL **\$1,019.47**

Board Meeting Highlights

The meeting was called to order January 9th by President Shirley Venhaus at the Seventh Day Adventist Church, McMinnville. The following officers and Board members were present Annita Linscheid, Marjorie Owens, Dan Linscheid, Gloria Lutz, Colin Armstrong, Ken Williams, Lorna Grauer, and Shirley McDaniel. Also present was Louise Heindl volunteer Chairperson. **Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's report for the month and the proposed budget for 2007 were approved as submitted. Dan/Shirley M. (07-03) Memorials of less than \$50.00 per individual will now be put directly into the general fund. Gloria/Shirley M. (07-04)

Correspondence: None to report. **Membership:** 184 paid members: 52 of these are life members. **Museum/Library:** Dishes from another organization may be purchased if price is reasonable for the museum or resale - A baby grand piano has been offered to the museum. It has no historical value and cannot be sold. The possibility of taking it and storing it someplace off site will be considered - A team of ghost busters known as "Casper" from McMinnville spent some time in the church investigating the possibility of a haunting. A report will be forthcoming - A gentleman who is starting a transportation museum would like to work with YCHS to be able to co-op and share artifacts - The Genealogy Society members met at the museum to familiarize members with the new surroundings of both our museum and their own research materials. **Publicity:** No report. **Old Business: Appoint Director:** Eileen Lewis was appointed as a Board member. Lorna/Gloria (07-05) **Jane Kirkpatrick Reminder:** This event is taking place at the Community Center on January 27th. **Grant Writing:** Gloria is working on a grant. **New Business: New Logo:** Katherine Huit submitted a new logo for YCHS to be considered by the Board. The consensus was it would not be useable for all purposes because when reduced in size it is unreadable. This will be followed up. **Book Honoring Crystal:** The Chehalem Valley DAR would like to donate a book by Shirley O'Neal in honor of Crystal Rilee which contains information on Crystal's family. YCHS will accept it. **Update on new site: Letter from McPhillips:** A letter has been received from the McPhillips Farms, Inc., expressing a willingness to deed the additional 6.24 acres of land to YCHS. **Working with Engineers and Architect:** The building committee will be working with the engineer and architect on planning the design of the new museum complex. **Formation of Advisory Committee:** Charlie Walker, Ray Kauer, Ramsey McPhillips, Bill Stoller and Barbara Roberts are some of the people being considered to be invited to form an Advisory Committee for the new museum complex. **Katherine's Report on December 2006 Accomplishments:** Katherine submitted her list of accomplishments for 2006 and goals for 2007. She also submitted program and fundraiser ideas and called for input from the Board. Respectfully submitted, Annita Linscheid, Secretary

Nestled into the hills on the north side of State Highway 18 about 2 miles East of Sheridan, Gopher Valley rises in elevation from 200 feet at the south end to over 2000 feet at the peaks of the hills encompassing the fertile farmland and timber. Only about 20 square miles in area, Deer Creek meanders through the valley on its way to the South Yamhill River.

The first settlers didn't take up claims in the valley until 1850¹, some seven years after the arrival of the first settlers in the Yamhill valley. Most of these early "Gopherites" claimed 640 acres, while later settlers could only claim half that amount, due to changes in the Donation Land Act after 1850. Among the earliest settlers were Stephen Hussey, Joseph Pearson, William Toney, Peter Carlisle, Edward Warren, Green P. R. Atterbury, Edward Warren, James Morgan and Owen Turner. Some of these pioneers were unmarried, which was another reason they could only claim 320 acres.

An 1851 sketch of the Willamette Valley notes "The Gopher Hole" at this approximate location². There was an early attempt by Mrs. Charles Shortridge to change the name to Lebanon Valley, but the settlers had grown accustomed to Gopher. Furthermore, the town of Lebanon in Linn county was already established. There has been some speculation that the name was given based on the shape of the valley as seen from the air, but this hardly seems possible given the lack of topographic maps or aircraft to determine the actual shape (which does not resemble the shape of any animal).

The earliest school was about half-way up the valley, and while it was referred to as the Lebanon Valley School (district # 36) in the early 1880's, the Yamhill Reporter (published in McMinnville) called this the Gopher Valley school in an 1886 article³. School district # 42, known as Fremont and later as the McKinley school, was established about this same time period. This school was near the intersection of Grauer Road and Gopher Valley road. A third valley school, originally known as Ryan's Mill (district 82) was established in 1894 about 10 miles up the valley. By 1933 this was called the Osman school, but after that it was known as the Deer Creek school. At least two of these schools burned to the ground and the Deer Creek school was rebuilt, but by 1949 all three districts had been consolidated into district 48 in Sheridan.

Edward H. Taylor was the first and only postmaster serving the community of Gopher, his "office" having been appointed in 1895. In that year, area citizens could pick up their mail at his house, about 6 miles from Sheridan, on the East side of Gopher Valley road. He later moved to the Hussey home, relocating the office to a small room near the front entry. A window and letter slots were cut into the wall. Different sources report receiving mail via stage three to seven times each week... perhaps the delivery days had increased by the time the office was officially discontinued in 1905.

The timber industry boomed in the later days of the 19th century into the 1900's, and a number of lumber mills were established in Gopher Valley over the decades. One of the first was Ryan's mill, followed by Stowe's mill, and later by Thompson's Mill, for which a road leading to the west, and connecting to the upper end of Rock Creek road, is named. Most of these mills were in the northerly end of the valley, with one exception: at one time, a flume carried logs down the valley to a sawmill. This flume can be seen at center bottom in the photo at upper right.

This photo was taken by Earl Smith, possibly in the 1920's.



One of the old timer's who left a lasting impression with everyone he met was Red Snyder. Red went to work at Stowe's Mill shortly after moving onto his place in the upper end of the valley in 1908 or 1910. He lived the rest of his life in the valley, except for a stint in the Army during WWI. Red was a colorful character, to say the least, and his memories of people and events up the valley were repeated often to any listener with time on their hands. Red recalled deer and elk rampaging through the valley in the mid-1930's, as they tried to escape the Tillamook burn.

There are at least two pioneer cemeteries up the valley, one on the Agee claim and the other on the Hussey claim. The Agee cemetery is the larger of the two, taking up about an acre of land about a half-mile beyond the end of the pavement and westerly of Gopher Valley road, near Deer Creek. Isaac Agee and his wife Cordilla (Thornton) Agee are buried here. The Hussey cemetery, the smaller of the two, is on the opposite side of the county road near the end of the pavement. Nathan Hussey and two of his daughters, Sarah Jane and Cornelia are at rest here. Several old timers have related to us that a young boy is buried on the old Oldham property, just easterly of our small farm. He was kicked in the head by a horse in the early 1900s.

Almost all of the earliest pioneering men were farmers, which meant they also served as blacksmiths, in order to make and maintain farm equipment. The first cabins were crude at best, and all furniture was handmade. Most clothing was made in their homes on spinning wheels, and lucky indeed were those ladies who could afford looms! Much of the clothing worn by the men was made from animal hides. Raising a family and getting food on the table were the first priorities. New homes took time & money.

Electricity was brought into the upper end of the valley in the early 1940's. As recently as the 1960's, annual community potlucks were held at least one Sunday afternoon in the summer. When our family moved here in 1973, we shared a party line with two other families. Our children still recall discussions with wonderful old-timers like Earl Smith, Earl and Clarence Turnidge, Frank Morrow and Red Snyder. We've seen a lot of change in the 33 years we've lived in this valley, and we miss these old timers.

¹ History of Gopher Valley—Article by Mildred Agee 1939

²Gibbs & Stallings 1851 Willamette Valley Sketch ³Schools of Old Yamhill (YCHS)

YAMHILL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 484
Lafayette Oregon 97127



Dated Material - Return Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #3
Lafayette Oregon

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Paid July each year

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

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, February 13, at the Yamhill County Public Works Auditorium, 2060 Lafayette Avenue, McMinnville. Our Board meets at 4:30, same place and date. Our program this month will be **Elizabeth Rhode**, on her Grandmother, **Crystal Rilee Smith** and the Crystal Rilee Smith Foundation.

Other Events:

► **August 11th & 12th: Lafayette Heritage Days**— Still being firmed up..

New Members: We welcome new members **Edna Troyer** and **Robert White**. Thanks for supporting our organization. We invite you all to attend our meetings, visit our museum and become more involved in our local his-