

The Historacle

The Official newsletter of the
Talent Historical Society

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New Focus for THS board

At the turn of the year, Talent Historical Society selected a new board president, Bob Casebeer, to assume leadership when John Morrison resigned. Karl Slack was elected as Vice - President but the secretary and treasurer remained the same (Katherine Harris and Ralph Hunkins). President Casebeer immediately began formulating goals for the Talent Historical Society and the board. Last month a document was sent to the membership asking for input in the goals and called for more volunteers for the Historical Society. So far, our membership has been as silent as the tomb. Mr. Casebeer has a lot of energy, but he wants assurance from the membership that we are headed in the right direction. Please respond by calling 512-8838, or dropping by the office to share your ideas. We appreciate your membership and would love to actively engage in conversation with you about how you

would like THS to proceed into the future. As you will read in this newsletter, we plan to apply for a grant to pursue the Welborn Beeson diaries, we will be doing a cemetery tour this spring, later in the summer we will participate in a Hanley Farm event and of course, the Harvest Festival in the fall. We need volunteers to help with any and all of those efforts and comments if you think our time could be better spent.

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Grant Sought to Transcribe Diaries

Recently, the Oregon Cultural Trust invited state cultural organizations to apply for a grant monies. We are hard at work preparing a narrative that explains what we would like to accomplish with the Beeson diaries. A detailed budget and plan for the project will help us compete with other Oregon organizations that are also asking for funds. The funds would offset costs incurred in travel to and from Eugene, copying and transcribing the diaries, and paying for printing costs when the diaries have been transcribed. If you would like to be involved in the process please give us a call at 512-8838.

An amusing sampling of the diary is listed below:

June 28th 1862 Saturday... Wallace and Oscar are talking of taking the girls down to Camp Meeting tomorrow. I am going to take a load of married ladies. Mother sent to Jackson[ville] for a shaker bonnet by Sam Robison but he says there is not one in Jacksonville large enough. They are all the rage now. The women are all crazy about them. And yet they are the ugliest thing a woman ever put on her head. But such is fashion. Last 4th of July Mrs. Judge Tolman was thè only woman that had a shaker bonnet at the celebration ... and this year there will hardly be a woman but what will have one. I am down on shakers bonnets for life. They are so ugly. Better suited to pick up chips in... [buffalo chips!]



Shaker women wore this distinctive bonnet (internet image)

Stearns Cemetery Tour Planned

This Spring THS is going to conduct a cemetery tour at Stearns Cemetery on Anderson Creek Road. If the weather cooperates we will be able to experience the quiet peace of the setting and learn about the some of the people who are buried there. I will bring up photos and lots of good stories to honor and remember the town founders and residents of long ago. A Wagner Creek resident in 1890 declared the spot to be “as nice a cemetery as there is in the county”. I agree. I went up there the other day when the fruit trees were in full bloom and the sun was still bright. It was a beautiful view and deserves some attention from the current townspeople.

Stearns Cemetery plot (THS photo)



Directions: I-5 exit 21; west on Valley View Road to Talent city center. Turn right on Talent Avenue, left on Main Street that curves left and becomes Wagner Creek Road. At the 3-way stop turn right and continue on Wagner Creek Road. Turn right on Anderson Creek Road. The cemetery will be on your left. The cemetery is about 2 miles south of Talent. Open daylight hours.

Talent News

More excerpts from the *Talent News* that sound like they could be a part of the debates that go on in our time...

June 1st 1892 [commenting on a series of meetings conducted by Rev. Isaac Morrison]... We would not war against anyone's religious belief as such. Only when an attempt is made by means of legislative enactments, or in any other manner, to force a practical indorcement [sic] of some particular belief do we feel called upon to resist. If there is any right that is exclusively an individual right, it is that of private belief in matters of religion.

What a splendid world this would be if all recognized this fact... Why should any God-given religion ask the aid of the state to support it? Really it looks to an outsider that any religion that requires to be bolstered up by the civil power would do well to look into itself and examine its own foundation. Mr. Morrison believes in and advocates religious liberty. He is ready to acknowledge that others may be as honest and sincere as himself and yet not indorse his views. For all this we respect him. We were also pleased to note the frequent attendance of the Baptist minister of Talent. This is as it should be. No one should fear to hear the other side.

From Oral Histories

From an interview with Dorothy Allen Roth in 1998 comes the following story about trusting the bank and never seeing your real money.

...“You see when Wells Fargo that used to be First Interstate, went into that cubbyhole in the store in Phoenix, I said I want out. I don't like this. I don't like banking like that either. You're sitting right out there in the middle, where everybody walking by knows what's going on. And I had an example of that one day down there at that bank... This little old lady, looked like she was considerably older than me, maybe she was, I don't know. And she was this very old thing, but she sat down there in one of those chairs and she pulled this envelope out of her purse and it was a brown envelope and you know it was a Social Security check. And she opened it up and pulled it out and signed it and handed it across the desk to this person and the person counted out several hundred dollars right out there on the desk. Right out loud where everybody could hear it. And she counted out that money for that dear little old lady. She carried all in cash.

My husband... for years, I could not take him to have his check direct deposited. But I finally talked him into it. But he said, ‘No I want to make sure I've got that.’ He didn't have a lot of trust in the banks and things like that. He wanted his money. And for years he would get his Social Security money and he'd go and make sure... so he could see it and make sure that he had it. And then he would go and cash it and then he paid bills ... I finally talked him into writing checks and he said, ‘I don't want checks,’ he said. ‘You've got no receipt.’ I said, ‘Sure you do!’ I said, ‘You have them return your checks and then your checks are your receipts.’ And finally talked him into it, but it took me a while.”

MOUNTAIN INN OPENS AGAIN

The inn on the old Barron ranch, located just south of Emigrant Lake, was at one time the only tavern for 150 miles. One of the original stage coach stops, it has just been reopened as a bed and breakfast by John and Kathy Loram after extensive remodeling. According to John Darling of the Mail Tribune, who wrote an article on the reopening, the Barron house appears to be the oldest standing house in Jackson County,—for years the Birdseye house between Gold Hill and Rogue River was considered the oldest existing structure, but historical research conducted as the Mountain House was being listed for the National Historic Register has determined that the two other old houses in Jackson County—the Birdseye house and the Colver house in Phoenix were built four years after the Mountain House, it being built in 1852, the initial cabin on the site was built in 1851.

At that time, there were just a very few cabins in the Rogue River Valley, but there was a sawmill just erected in Rogue River, then called Woodville. The Mountain House was constructed in part with lumber from the Woodville sawmill.

Actually, the first habitation at the site was a log cabin, but when the four men who built the inn itself they built the first frame house in what is now Jackson county. Four men were responsible for its construction at the junction of the Applegate Trail and the trail to California. They were John Gibbs, who was soon elected as one of the first commissioners for Jackson County, James Russell, Thomas Hare and Major Hugh F. Barron.

The donation land claim laws of the Territory of Oregon required claimants to build a house with a bedroom so they could “prove” up on the land. The three took out donation land claims and built just one house, situated so that the house itself stood on the corner where all three claims joined, technically meeting the letter if not the spirit of the donation land claim law. The spot they picked out lays just south of present Emigrant Lake on Old 99 Highway. The location first was noted historically 25 years earlier by Peter Skene Ogden, the Hudson Bay explorer who was the first Caucasian to enter the Rogue River Valley as far as is known.

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He and his party camped at the location, entering the valley in February from the South after traveling down the Klamath River before crossing the Siskiyou pass and camping at the site. Later Jesse Applegate and Levi Scott and the other men who laid out the Applegate Trail, or the Southern Route to Oregon, also camped there in 1846.

According to John Darling, “Russell fetched seed, flour, chickens, livestock and tools from the Willamette Valley,” while Gibbs and Barron “built a cabin and began work on the inn, built of timbers and boards hauled by ox train from the valley’s first mill in Rogue River.” No one is quite sure what Thomas Hare did, but the Mary M. Hill Dunn’s booklet “The Wagon Train to Oregon,” a booklet of her memories, compiled when she was 92 in July 1929, names Hare as one of the four men involved. Only Gibbs, Russell and Barron took out land claims at the Mountain House site.

When the Indian uprisings began in 1853, Gibbs was killed by a friendly Indian who used Gibbs’ own gun to shoot him. His grave is located north of the Mountain House. Russell and Barron bought his claim from the Gibbs’ heirs and after Russell moved to Yreka to start a butcher shop (there being some ten thousand miners in

Yreka at that time), Major Hugh Barron bought the Russell claim.

The Barron family lived at the Mountain House for the next three generations, finally selling it and 700 acres in 1960, 108 years after the house was built. The original inn, which is now the rear section of the Mountain House, was moved from its original location to its present site when the larger, two story front part was built in 1887. There is also a small two story brick building which stands behind the inn which was also constructed in 1887.

The Lorams bought the Mountain House in 2002 and have spent the last three years restoring the building. They are opening the House as a bed and breakfast, and so the Green Springs Mountain House is back in business as an inn after 154 years. Pictures of the historical renovation can be seen on the web at <http://loram.org>.

Talent Insurance Map

Come into the office to check out the “new” map of the business section of Talent in 1930. The map locates the City Hall, the old brick Ames building, Wolter’s store, and dwelling houses, service stations as well as inserts of the brick schoolhouse, and Bagley Cannery. The map was loaned to us for by a friend who graciously allowed us to make copies suitable for framing.

2005 IS THE YEAR OF THE NEW NICKELS

For those who collect coins, the year 2005 is becoming a coin collector's bonanza, for soon there will be four new nickels in circulation and a return to the Jefferson/Monticello design in 2006.

Back in 2003 a law was passed that authorized changes in the nickel's design to honor the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the Louisiana Purchase. One of these is what is called the Peace Medal nickel, which went into circulation in March 2004. The Peace Medal design kept Jefferson on the front but the picture of the mint was changed for a peace pipe motif. Then in August 2004, there was another nickel issued, again with Jefferson on the front, but the reverse side had a picture of a keelboat, the boat used by Lewis and Clark as they voyage up the Missouri River on their way to the Pacific Coast.

Now in 2005 two more nickels are to be released: First the image of Jefferson is to be enlarged, basically a side view of the right side of his face and that will fill about half of that side of the coin. On the reverse side, there will be either a new buffalo design or a picture of the Pacific Ocean with the words "Ocean in View! Oh the Joy!" A couple of fir trees are centered on the coin and around the edge the words "Lewis and Clark 1805," which was the year the Corps of Discovery returned to United States territory after a three year exploration of the Far West.

Then in 2006 the image of Monticello, Jefferson's home, will return to the back of the nickel and apparently the new likeness of Jefferson will be carried on the front.

Don't forget that THS has Applegate Trail bronze, silver and gold coins for 10, 15, and 25 dollars. These collectible coins were minted exclusively for THS and were made in 1996. Supply is limited.

Membership Renewals

Individual

Robert Burnette
Mary Ferrari
Edwin Hanson

Family

Sponsor

John Morrison

New Members :

LaVeta Alwine

Rosa Tycksen

Jim Bradley & Patricia Remencuis

Thank you!

Editorial

Tsunami Victims and Oral History

Seemingly unrelated terms but in fact, a news report was published recently about an oral history project among the devastated tsunami victims. The act of recording their stories and naming those who had passed away seemed to help those who experienced the disaster. What they lost in a day is slipping away from us over time. I know we are very blessed here in Talent but sometimes it seems that our landmarks and community are fading away without notice. In an attempt to keep memories alive our own oral history project is designed to preserve our unique character and just as it helped the tsunami victims to talk about the people and things of the past, it might also help those whom we interview to feel better about the future. Call 512-8838 to schedule an interview.

Talent Historical Society

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