

# The Historacle

January 2006

## *The Official newsletter of the* Talent Historical Society

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206 East Main Street • P.O. Box 582 • Talent, OR 97540 • 541-512-8838

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### Ancient Inhabitants Revealed

Thanks to Dennis Jenkins from the Natural and Cultural History Museum at the U of O in Eugene and the Oregon Council for the Humanities, local residents know much more about the early inhabitants of Oregon. Talent Historical Society's annual membership meeting combined with the Chautauqua program titled *Where the Buffalo and Camel Roamed* drew over 100 visitors to the Talent Community Center and created quite a stir among those interested in archaeology and anthropology. Ancient sandals were highlighted along with other artifacts from the Southern Oregon Historical Society collection. The crowd learned about everything from dry riverbeds to animal bones to tiny man-made fibers found in excavations around the Ft. Rock caves in Central Oregon. We will try to have further programs that generate debate, communications and thoughtful investigations.

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Don't wait til it's too late. Record your own personal history now and make it available to the Historical Society!

# What's So Great About Beesons?

This newsletter often mentions the Beeson family in one way or the other. To the uninitiated it might get tiring to hear the name; after all there were others who came here and made even greater changes. So why do we make such a ruckus about the diaries and John Beeson's *Plea for the Indians*?

John Beeson was a nationally known Indian advocate in his time. At great sacrifice to his family, he left the West and traveled in the East lecturing, entertaining, & lobbying in Washington D.C. and other eastern places to improve the plight of the Indians who were being removed almost as quickly as the buffalo.

President and Mrs. Lincoln knew him as did President Grant and subsequent administrations. The Indian Bureau was also well acquainted with his arguments and proposals. A thick packet of letters from John Beeson is stored in the National Archives, documenting the constant stream of letters in behalf of the tribes and Native nations. [Copies of these letters are at THS]

After John left Oregon, his family lived quietly on Wagner Creek. His wife, Ann Beeson and his son Welborn worked the land and their lives would have faded into obscurity had it not been for the Welborn's diaries. He became the town historian whether he knew it or not and chronicled a very human history from dances and celebrations to the drudgery of daily chores, from courtship to crime, from gamblers and preachers to schoolhouses and spelling bees.

Those who have read parts of the diaries agree that Welborn was just as remarkable as his father. Part of his charm is that his writings debunk the old notions that pioneers were always hard-working, upright, faultless individualists. Like the candlelight he worked under, the pages fairly light up the emotional and social landscape of pioneering and settlement in the West with its glories and its failures.

## Welborn Beeson Diary Project Captures State Attention

The Oregon Heritage Commission has honored Talent Historical Society with funding to support the Welborn Beeson diary project. Over \$5,000. has been granted to THS to purchase a new microfilm reader/printer in order to aid the transcription of the diaries. In return, THS will transcribe parts of the microfilmed diaries and distribute the information to libraries, historical societies and individuals to spawn further research and creative projects.

The transcriptions have been moving along nicely with the help of **Karen Carr, Janice Pacitti, Jackie Hanford, and Liz Carter** who have volunteered to help. Another volunteer, **Russ Levin** has been helping organize the mountain of research files relating to the Beeson family.

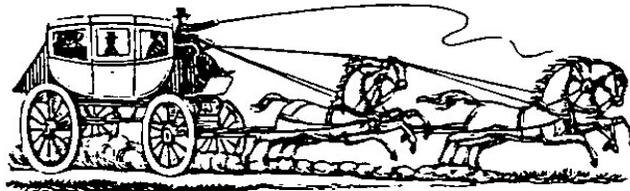
## Road Construction: the Talent Experience

No matter which way you turn these days there are delays from road & bridge construction. Next time a flagger stops you, let your mind wander through the trails and highways of the past.

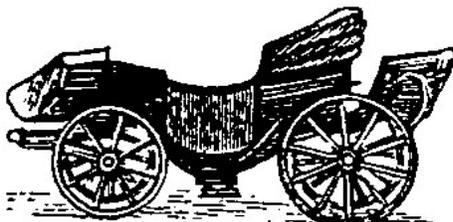
The first peoples made footpaths through the valley or followed the waterways on hunting excursions and gathering parties. In the 1820s and 1830s the Hudson Bay trappers established a route to Sutter's Fort in California. Levi Scott, Jesse Applegate and others blazed a cut off from the Oregon Trail that lead through the Rogue Valley in 1846. The widened trails created for wagon traffic were not worthy to be called roads until a stage coach thoroughfare became the "Road to Yreka". Pack trains used the trails and brought much needed supplies to the early miners and settlers. The flour they brought was gray from the mule hairs and dirt that infiltrated the sacks as the pack animals moved from side to side.



Stagecoaches began to connect Southern Oregon to the larger world in the late 1850s making the trip from Wagner Creek to San Francisco in just 4 1/2 days. Talent briefly had it's own stage stop at Rockfellow's (near the corner of Rapp and Talent Avenue). But ultimately the closest known stop was at Ammerman's (where the ESD building is now on Highway 99 between Talent and Phoenix) Muddy roads, mishaps, and occasional robberies were hazards of the route.



The railroad made the stages obsolete and added to the lines crisscrossing the map in Southern Oregon. Talent had it's own depot and was directly on the railway but was not a popular stopping place for passengers. The roads through town were mainly for the locals to get to and from their farms to market and then home again.



As you sit in your comfortable car waiting for the stop sign to turn to "slow", contemplate the luxury of paved roads, service stations, restaurants and amusements along the way. Remember the mud, washed out bridges, and miserable weather early travelers had to pass through and the wait may not seem so inconvenient.

# *Talent News*

January 15th 1893

## THE BOX PARTY

The box party given for the benefit of the school was a success financially and socially.

Jeff. Bell was auctioneer and created no little amusement by his peculiar manner of inducing bids. The boxes generally sold at reasonable prices considering the hard times, but a delicate white fringe around one of the boxes naturally led to the conclusion that the toothsome morsels within were bespangled with silver and bedecked with gold; so the bidding ran high on this box, which was finally knocked down to a Central Pointer for \$2.50.

It was vaguely hinted however that the successful bidder knew whose fair hands prepared the box, but deponent saith not.

## WINTER AMUSEMENTS from the

# *Talent News*

Jan 15th 1893

Welborn Beeson brought to this office a well developed rose plucked from the bushes in J. E. Foss' garden on New Year's day.

Buck Carlile and James Garvin Sr., who are sinking a hundred-foot shaft on a ledge for Jas. Helms and Geo. Stevenson, report excellent prospects.

Master Freddie Goddard brought a hen's egg to this office the other day that beats all the eggs that have been left here thus far. It measures  $7\frac{5}{8}$  by  $6\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

Mr. Wakefield, the Phoenix shoemaker, moved up to his mountain homestead a few days ago. He found prospectors in every direction.

Boyd Robison called at the *NEWS* office last week and presented us with a package of seeds from a squash, Mammoth by name and mammoth in proportions, raised by him last season, that weighed 118 pounds. We shall plant the seeds and do our level best to raise a World's Fair squash, if it "takes all summer to do it."

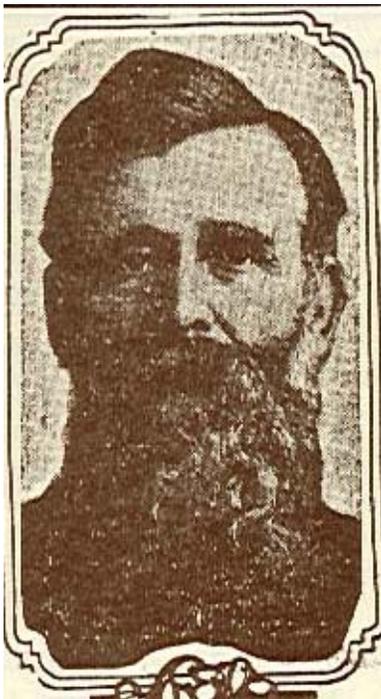


# Anderson Family

Eli K. Anderson was a '49er. and prospected in California gold fields but found true wealth by settling on Anderson Creek in the Rogue River Valley. He and his brothers, Firman and Marion, took up donation land claims along the creek named after them and built the cabin down the middle of the two claims.



Drawing by Dorothy Vore



Eli K. or "Joe" Anderson

Later Eli's mother and sisters arrived in the Rogue Valley. Pictured below is Eli's sister, Mary Elizabeth Anderson or "Lizzie" as she was called. She went to school at Umpqua Academy and after graduating was the first to teach school in Ashland. Lizzie married a "smooth faced preacher", Rev. George Brown. When he died in 1866, she supported herself by running a millinery shop on the plaza in Ashland until she married the well -to -do, John Marshall McCall. Their home still stands on Oak St. in Ashland and is now a bed and breakfast.



Mary Elizabeth Anderson Brown McCall SOHS # 6286

A Book titled *Cherished Memories The Anderson Story* by Dorothy Vore is available at THS for \$3.00

**Woodford Reames** brought not only his wife and children to the Rogue Valley, he also brought his skill as a blacksmith which was much needed in the community. He had a farm between what is now Talent and Phoenix and lived there until 1879 when he moved to Jacksonville.



Woodford Reames SOHS #8185

Woodford apparently had a bit of a temper as recorded in Welborn Beeson's diary. Woodford and "Joe" Anderson had a quarrel about the division fence between them. Woodford called Joe a d—— cheating rascal so Joe hit him in the face. Woodford and his son, Tom both picked up hammers and ran at Joe. Joe took to his heels and avoided the flying hammers. When the hammers were returned through the air, Tom went and got the gun. Fortunately the gun wasn't loaded so the two parties called it quits and went home.



Mahulda Reames SOHS #8186

**Bob Day Memorabilia**  
has been donated from Judie  
Bunch, the event organizer. If  
you have additions or just want  
to look through the collection,  
please stop by and browse.  
Thank you Judie, for your  
contribution.



If you've got a hitch in your  
get-a-long or a crick in your  
neck, why put off coming in  
when you hurt like HECK?

**Dr. Joel Goldman,**  
Talent's first Chiropractor  
115A N. Pacific Hwy  
(at Seiber's Corner next to  
Quality Paperback Books)  
535-3062



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Jackie Hanford

**Titled Volunteers:**

Oral Historian: Joe Cowley

Comments & letters may be sent to the Editor, The *Historacle*,  
by mail or by email to [talenthistory@jeffnet.org](mailto:talenthistory@jeffnet.org). Members of the  
Society receive the *Historacle* free with membership. Board  
meetings are at 6:00 pm at the Talent Library on the 2nd Monday  
of each month.

The following businesses  
have donated services or ad  
space to THS:  
Tark's Market  
Camelot Theater  
**THE MAIN SOURCE**  
Umpqua Bank

Talent Chamber of Commerce

*City of Talent*

# Membership Renewals

## **Individual:**

Kurt Bailey  
Patricia Bailey  
Mae Baldwin  
Alice Burnette  
Robert Burnett  
Craig Gibons  
Alta Grimes  
Barbara Haade  
Edwin Hanson  
Bert Hill  
Myrna Holden  
Kathy Jerman  
Sally Shockley

## **New Members:**

Judie Bunch  
Robert & Carol Delsman  
Joel Goldman  
William Horton  
Anita Nevison  
Bruce Snook

## **Family:**

George & Colleen Baylor  
Mr. & Mrs. Darrell A. Clapp  
Bob & Annie Dreiszus  
Colleen & Chuck Eccleston  
Robert & Elizabeth Fulton  
Dwayne & Kathleen Guthrie  
Joe Hunkins & Kathy Holden  
Gifford & Marilyn Lee  
Boyd & Dorcas Lockwood

## **Sponsorship:**

Poppy Beveridge  
Judi Drais  
Martha Joseph  
Al Logan  
Ron & Stella Medinger  
John & Nancy Miller  
Lynn Newbry  
Star Properties/Jack Latvala  
Pauline Sullivan

If your name isn't on this list - please send in your membership soon!

## Talent Historical Society

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