

The Historacle

October 2009

The Official newsletter of the

Talent Historical Society



105 N. Market Street • P.O. Box 582 • Talent, OR 97540 • 541-512-8838 • www.talenthistory.org

HISTORICAL SOCIETY POKER CLASSIC II SET FOR OCTOBER 24—2:00 to 8 :00 P. M.

On Saturday October 24, the Society will hold its second Poker Classic tournament—a no limit Texas Hold-em affair—starting at 2:00 P.M in the museum at 105 N. Market Street in Talent.

Prior registration for poker loving folk is required to reserve your spot at a table. Registrants are limited to 40 players, with an \$80.00 buy-in. Contact Lysa Gore, the Society treasurer, at 541-512-8838 to register, or drop by the Society office any time from 1:00 to 5:00 p. m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. If you wish to register by mail, simply mail your name, address, phone number & email address along with an \$80 check made out to Talent Historical Society, to Talent Historical Society, P. O. Box 5 82, Talent, Oregon 97540. Approximately, 75 percent of the \$80 buy-in can be tax deductible because this fund raiser benefits the Talent Historical Society—a non-profit 501C3 entity.

The grand prize for first place has been set at \$400; second place at \$200, third place at \$100, and fourth place at \$30.

Food snacks and non-alcoholic drinks will be available for sale at the event.

This fund-raiser serves to support the Talent Historical Society, which like all historical societies in Jackson County lost its funding which had been available since 1948 when the voters of Jackson county voted to fund the Southern Oregon Historical Society. In the intervening years, SOHS dedicated about \$25,000 to the Talent Historical Society, but all that funding ceased about four years ago when the county commissioners decided to use those funds for general county purposes, thus impoverishing all fourteen of the historical organizations. Today, the Talent Historical Society, like all of the community based historical societies operate and are staffed totally with volunteers. The Talent Historical Society Poker Classic is just one of the activities that supports the research, activities and programs of the Society.

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Gotta Know When To Hold ‘Em!

Talent News Flashes Marked Oregon Centennial

In February 1959, Mae Lowe, publisher of the Talent area News Flashes a publication published weekly from 1934 to 1987, provided Talent area folk with a special Centennial Issue commemorating the 100 years that Oregon had been a state. One article is especially interesting, the “Early History of Talent.”

This year Oregonians celebrate 150 years of statehood, and the Historical reprints Mae Lowe’s centennial article: “ Early History of Talent.”

Jacob Wagner settled in the Rogue River valley in the spring of 1852 and took up a donation land claim of 320 acres on the little stream that was subsequently named Wagner Creek in his honor. On this tract of land, lying near the present site of Talent, he took an active part in subduing the Indians in the trouble of 1853, when Fort Wagner was built on his farm as rendezvous for his family and neighbors.

From “Early Days in Phoenix, Oregon:” In August, 1853, one wagon train of emigrants arrived in the middle of some Indian trouble and had to fort up with Jacob Wagner on Wagner Creek,, the present site of Talent.

Jacob Wagner had his house in the middle of a clearing. Some of Captain Alden’s men (from Yreka, California) had finished setting up the perpendicular logs in a square around the cabin. The four corners were put up higher than the rest and they swung wide, heavy gates at the front and the back. Rough beds were built in all around the inside walls of the stockade, with a passage between them and the house. Cooking was done outside over little fires among the wagons, unless the Indians were to make an attack and then the fireplace in Wagner’s cabin would have been used for everybody. [Note: There was a spring inside the fort area, although the animals also protected inside had to go outside the walls to drink from the creek.]

Mary Hill (later Mrs. Patrick Dunn) forted up there that August 1853 and with her went her cat—the first cat in all of Southern Oregon.

From Welborn Beeson Diary, August 29, 1853: Wm. Rockefeller’s brother Albert , and John McCall, hearing from some other emigrants who are ahead of us, that we were so close, came out of the valley to meet us. They say we are about four miles from the first house, which is the “Mountain House, owned by Russell, Gibbs and Barron. They say that the Indians are very bad in the valley, having killed ten or fifteen men, and burned several houses.

“Started early, two miles to the summit of the hill. Caught sight of the “Mountain House,” with a beautiful green garden around it. We descended two miles to Mr. Hill’s house. Albert Rockefeller’s house is ten miles lower down the valley [Note: The Rockefeller claim adjoined Jacob Wagner’s at present day Talent.] We went down and camped at his house. We passed several houses and farms, but they were all deserted. The people having fled to the Fort for protection from the Indians. The fort is just across the creek from Albert Rockefeller’s place.”

“The fort is owned by Jacob Wagner. All the citizens of this part of the valley are collected in it. It is not safe to go far away from it. A stream called Bear Creek runs through the center.”

From Welborn Beeson’s dairy, August 31, 1853: “We moved across the creek, to the fort, because it is dangerous to go far away from it. They are now trying to make a treaty with the Indians. I like this country very much.”

[Note: In 1853 Welborn Beeson was 17 years old.]

THINGS WE HAVE DONE

In May the Talent Historical Society sent in a proposal to the Meyer Memorial Trust seeking support to continue the employment of our museum director Jan Wright and adding an additional request for a part-time office assistant. As most of you reading this document no doubt know, our proposal was one of many that was denied. However, in the process of making our application, we described some of the past accomplishments of the Society. The board suddenly realized that our own membership might not be aware of some of these accomplishments, so here is the list we sent off to the Meyer Memorial Trust:

Since 2007 here are some of the things the Society has accomplished: Membership has increased by 25 percent. An adequate museum space has been leased from the City of Talent. 105 North Market Street for those of you who have not visited it. Specifically we have:

Mounted a variety of exhibits of historical artifacts in that museum.

Created a Society website. (check www.talenthistory.org) Copies of the Historacle, the Society's quarterly newsletter can be accessed on this website, thus making available to the general public the Society activities.

Printed a complete copy of Welborn Beeson's diaries from the original diaries at the University of Oregon Library, making the roughly 1,500,000 words available to Jackson County readers for the first time. Transcribed the years 1851 to 1887 of those diaries into digital format so that readers do not have the problem of reading Beeson's original cursive penmanship.

Distributed the Civil War years of the Beeson diary (1860 to 1863) on computer disks to every secondary school, museum, library and colleges and universities in Josephine and Jackson counties.

Secured a grant to create a scale model of the hexagonal house built by Welborn Beeson in 1863. The remodeled house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The model is under construction.

Authorized the publication of the Talent pictorial book, written by former museum director Jan Wright and published by Arcadia Publishing Company of San Francisco. This is one of the contributions of the Society to the City of Talent's Centennial Year of 2010. Many of the pictures in the book were collected by the Society in past years.

Welcomed more than 1046 individuals who signed the Museum guest book since January 1, 2009 to September 30, 2009. Not everyone who enters the museum actually signs the guest book so the actual number of visitors is even higher. One of the Talent area food banks operates one day a week from a corner of the museum, but we do not count the individuals who enter the museum for that purpose.

We sublease our stage area to Camelot Theater so that organization can practice their next production while the current one is being performed in their theatre. They only use the museum building at night, and the funds from the rental covers our lease from the city and in addition covers some of the utility costs as well.

Erected, using a Meyer Memorial Trust grant, a small rock replica of the only large Takelma tribe pictograph that exists in Jackson County. It has been housed in the entry foyer of the museum, thus emphasizing that native Americans lived in this area for thousands of years prior to European discovery.

Held a large open house at the museum on 14 February 2009 commemorating the sesquicentennial observation of Oregon statehood. Over 138 visitors signed our guest book that day.

Indeed so far this has been a busy year for the Talent Historical Society.

Book Review

New Biography of Phoenix Pioneer Woman “The Blue Tattoo—The Life of Olive Oatman”

In 1851 Olive Oatman, fourteen, was traveling west toward Zion with her Mormon family. Orphaned after her family was brutally murdered by Yavapai Indians, Olive lived as a slave to her captors for a year before being traded to the Mohaves, who tattooed her face and raised her as their own. She was fully assimilated and perfectly happy until age nineteen when she was ransomed back to white society.

In 1856 Olive and her brother Lorenzo who had survived the attack on their parents' wagons, came to Phoenix, Oregon, to visit their married cousins Harvey and Harrison Oatman. Harvey owned the Oatman Hotel and tavern, and brother Harrison owned the only general store. The only other commercial businesses in Phoenix in 1856 included a saloon and pool hall, three blacksmith shops, two livery stables, a grist mill and a sawmill.

Initially, the visiting Oatmans lived with the family of Samuel Taylor, a Methodist minister and his wife Rachel, a teacher as their cousins had no available space in their own small homes.

Margaret Mifflin, the author of *The Blue Tattoo*, discusses Olive's life in Phoenix in Chapter 11 “Rewriting History in Gassburg, Oregon.” which numbers some twenty pages. Mifflin's book has been noted for its “intense drama along with thorough scholarship.” Kathryn Derounian-Stodola, editor of *Women's Indian Captivity Narratives*, writes that the book is “lucid and engaging.” Mifflin... “conceptualizes Olive Oatman's life by delving into Mohave culture and history (including interviews with contemporary Mohaves) and by explaining why the [Oatman] story captured the American popular imagination and [has] continued to be retold and revisited so many times, in so many different media.”

The Blue Tattoo was published by the University of Nebraska Press, and is available on your computer by going to the website <http://www.talenthistory.org/> and clicking on the Amazon.com link. That way of purchasing puts a dollar or two into the coffers of the Talent Historical Society.

Family Data Can Be Found in Society Archives

Besides operating a museum with changing exhibits, conducting occasional programs for members of the Society and the general public, maintaining a website on the Internet, publishing a quarterly and recently authorizing the publication of Jan Wright's pictorial history of Talent, the Society maintains a research library and a research archive.

In the Archives one set of grey boxes are labeled “Talent Families,” a slight misnomer rightfully the label should read Bear Creek Families. For this issue of the *Historacle* you will find below the names of the families listed from A through C alphabetically about which these Archives have some material. Individuals who have any documentary or pictographic materials, etc. about these families and wish to have those included in our archives are urged to discuss the matter with folks at the museum. Here are the A through C family names:

Ammerman, Anderson, Applegate, Arundell, Bagley, Baldwin (Wallace), Baldwin (Mae), Ball, Barlow/Neal, Baylor, Bacon, Barneburg, Bell, Bish, Bentley, Brabbin, Bradley, Brewer, Brittsan, Briner, Brophy, Brower, Burnette, Burns & Williams, Bush, Carlite, Carlile, Clevenger, Charley, Chase, Childers, Clayton, Coleman, Colver, Conner, Crawford, Creel, Cronemiller, and Crum.

Individuals who wish to view the materials are invited to visit the museum from 1:00 to 4:00 p. m. (we close at 5:00) Wednesday through Saturday.

Your family data can be added if you bring it to us.

ANNUAL MEETING 14 NOVEMBER 2009

Author Jan Wright will highlight her Talent book at the annual meeting of the Historical Society with historical pictures highlighting her presentation.

The President's award for outstanding service will be presented to the individual who has contributed greatly to the mission of the Society during the past year.

As usual a brief business meeting will select new members to the Society Board just prior to Jan's program.

Refreshments including grape juice from vines brought to Oregon 150 years ago will flow.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Since June 30, the Society has been totally operated by volunteers. We have a real need for members of the Society or interested folk to work on a variety of projects that are on-going. Clippings need to be filed in the archives; obituaries put in our Obituary books; maps organized and filed, and a host of other projects both clerical and research oriented are among things that can be done with volunteer assistance. Call Bob Casebeer at 5122-8838 1 to 5 on Wednesday to Saturday.

Board of Directors:

President: Bob Casebeer
Vice Pres: Bill Horton
Secretary: Katherine Harris
Treasurer: Lysa Gore
Directors: Lynn Newbry
Greg Goebelt
Ralph Hunkins
Diane Glendenning
John Morrison
Teresa Snook
Grayson Berry
Emeritus: Alice Burnette

Volunteers:

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Willy Herman
Dick Simonson
Pat Bentley
Ralph Hunkins
Bill Horton
Greg Goebelt
James Trowbridge
Lysa, Cecil, & Sarah Gore
Jim Bradley
Robert Burnett
Alicia Moore
Ron Medinger
Margaret Duggar
Bob Burnett

Hampton Family Donations Set for January Display

The family of Dave Hampton who once lived on Wagner Creek Road donated a number of items related to their family business in Talent. Dave and family moved to Talent in 1954 and lived on Wagner Road just out of Talent.

Dave raised quarterhorses, showed his prize animals at a number of horse shows where they won a number of prizes. Dave and his wife Georgia were quite active helping with the Talent Trotters 4-H club. The club awarded the couple a silver plate for their services from 1969 to 1973.

The society is planning a special exhibit of the Hampton donations to the Society this January, so plan to watch for it. Objects to be displayed include several awards, photographs, a crocheted bed spread, and a detailed ledger of the farm's operation dated 1954 to 1957.

Memberships this Quarter

Renewing Members

**Janice Amuchastegui
Poppie Beveridge
Lillian Fullerton
Pamela Grove
Barbara Haade
Bob Wilson**

**George & Colleen Baylor
Jim Bradley
Robert & Elizabeth Fulton
Dwayne Guthrie
Ron Weinhold
Martha Joseph**

New Members

**David C. Bobb
Cheryl Lynn Colwell
Robert & Darlene Ditsworth
Margay Garrity
Steve Isaacson
Terry Maxson
Roger Roberts**

**Betty L. Carleton
Mary A. Delsman
Marilyn Evans
James & Nelda Hanscom
Marilyn Kantor Krauser
Charles May**

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