

The Historacle June 2010



The Official Newsletter of the **Talent Historical Society**

105 Market Street, Talent, Oregon 97540 541-512-8838 talenthistory@gmail.com

CELEBRATE 100 YEARS OF TALENT IN 2010

2010 is the Centennial year of celebration in Talent. Due to the rapid growth of the Wagner Creek area, and the City of Talent in particular, many of the current residents of the area know little about the past history and development of the Upper Bear Creek Valley. While the Talent area is the second oldest settled area in Jackson county (Jacksonville—due to its gold rush in 1851—is the oldest) most current residents in the Rogue River valley are unaware that Talent, then called Wagner Creek, has a rich agricultural history and heritage. The citizens of this area settled here before the three largest cities in Jackson county even existed--Ashland, Medford and Central Point. With that in mind the following decade tables have been created. This list is not complete, and the more recent developments are sketchy in the extreme. The Talent Historical Society is located between the Community Hall and the new County Library, and we are open from 1:00 p. m. to 5:00 p. m. Wednesday through Saturday. Our telephone number is 541-512-8838. If you would like to suggest additions to any of the decades listed, you can contact us so that we can update our tentative historical listing. Look on the following pages for the key developments in Talent's history since 1910 when the community first incorporated as a city.

100 Years of Talent Area History

1910-1919

Incorporation of Talent as a city. V. A. Dunlap elected first mayor.

Population of Talent in 1910 was 250.

Shadler addition begun on Gibson Street. New houses built there. 1910

**Fire destroys most of the business district of the City of Talent in
January 1911.**

**Brick School Building on Wagner Street built. Present Community Hall,
which was the Talent school, becomes city property. The high
school was housed on the second and third floors. Elementary**

students used the first floor, and primary students and the cafeteria were in the basement. Auditorium built on first floor. March 1911. Methodist-Episcopal Church on Wagner Street construction finished. Pastor's residence built. 1912

Community Club established (male and female members). 1912 This club soon became the Talent Community Club and was comprised of about 15 women members on the average over the years.

The area school district divided into Valley View and Fern Valley during 1911-1912

Bond election provides for a municipal water system for the City of Talent (city secures first water rights.) City digs well on Foss Road. 1912

Talent Garden Club started. 1912

Bagley Canning Company located in Talent. 1912

Talent Public Library started by Community Club action. 1913

Christian Church building completed. 1913

Elizabeth Anderson, early Talent area pioneer, dies. 1913

City of Talent passes speed control ordinance: 17 miles per hour. 1914

Parent Teacher Association formed. 1914

Wagner Creek bridge on Talent Avenue constructed. 1914

Talent Avenue, then Pacific Highway, became part of the longest Highway in the world in 1915, stretching 6,000 miles from Canada to Mexico. Jackson County was the first county in Oregon to offer continuous paved surface for its entire length. 1915

Talent Irrigation District established. Water shortage prompted the creation of the district. 1916

1920-1929

City of Talent population reaches 278. 1920

Women's Federated Club assumes responsibility for the Talent Public Library. 1920

International Order of Odd Fellows erects building. Second floor dedicated to lodge activities. Several businesses flourished in the ground floor over the century. The well-remembered Talent Café was housed on ground floor. Subsequently, the top floor burned. Presently, Hanscom Hall occupies the ground floor. 1920

Women in Talent Community Club join Oregon Federated Women's Club. 1921

Emigrant Creek Dam constructed. 1924

City of Talent population reaches 421. 1928

Mae Lowe organizes Talent area Campfire Girls club. 1928

Gymnasium construction starts at Wagner Creek school complex. 1929

Bagley Canning Company moves to Ashland.

1930-1939

Chamber of Commerce organizes. 1933

Chamber of Commerce militantly urges City of Talent to apply for grant to provide sewer service to residents to eliminate out-houses. 1933

Community Center re-roofed. 1933

City of Talent posts signs on many vacant houses to discourage children from trespassing and destroying property. 1933

Talent Community Club members can food for indigent families suffering from the ravages of the Depression.

City of Talent installs sewer lines and sewer treatment plant. 1935

State Highway Commission relocates Pacific Highway which is now Talent Avenue to present location of Highway 99, bypassing the City of Talent business district. 1936

Chamber of Commerce disbands. 1936

Talent News Flashes begins publication by Mae Lowe. 1937

First Talent High School annual, the Lookout, published. Later the name was changed to The Talent and then to The Bulldog. 1938

Girl Scouts organized. 1938

Six man football started as competitive high school sport. 1939

1940-1949

City of Talent population: 381. 1940

All Talent community organizations work on Red Cross projects, creating bandages, kimonos, pajamas, etc. 1940

Talent railroad sidings utilized to load and unload military supplies for Camp White. 1942

Lions and Lioness Clubs organize in Talent. 1947

Railroad depot torn down. 1948

Veterans of Foreign Wars organize group in Talent. Install a memorial to Soldiers killed in World War II. 1948

The sawmill located east of the railroad at the corner of Front Street and Colver Road burned down.

Passenger service on Southern Pacific abandoned.

1950-1959

City of Talent population: 739. 1950

Passenger trains stop running through Talent. 1950

Camp Yaiewahnoah (the Campfire Girls Camp) on upper Wagner Creek Forks established by Alice Burnett and Mae Lowe. 1954

New high school building constructed off Christian Avenue. 1958

Wagner Creek School District sends high school students to Phoenix rather than to Talent's new high school. 1958

Talent officially becomes a city instead of a town.

Jackson County builds public library building behind the Community Building.

City of Talent builds concrete block city hall next to Community Center.

Skeeters Logging Company at corner of Valley View and Highway 99 is sold. In 2010 the Quick Shop and the South Valley Bank occupy the Skeeters' property.

1960-1969

City of Talent population tops 1000. 1960

Talent library and police chief's office moved to basement of Community Building. 1960

Federated Women's Club releases ten acre Camp Yaiewahnoah to Jackson County Parks and Recreation Commission. The camp was operated by Mae Lowe and Alice Burnette for the local Camp Fire Girls 1967

Fire District 5 organized.

Bear Creek Greenway built along Bear Creek in Talent area. First section to be developed.

Talent and Phoenix school districts merge. Talent High School building becomes the new district's only middle school.

Talent area high school students attend Phoenix High School.

1970-1979

City of Talent population: 2620

New city well drilled on Wagner Creek. 1970

Talent Elementary School condemned, torn down, new elementary School built with round buildings on site. New gymnasium built. The bricks from the school were hauled to the lagoon area off Sunset road and buried. 1971

Umpqua Bank opens in Talent.

Lynn Newbry Park created.

City of Talent extends city limits down Talent Avenue.

1980-1989

Water treatment and pumping station installed on Bear Creek. City is being filled by new housing, creating a water shortage. 1980

Water moratorium declared. New housing development put on hold. 1980

Bear Creek floods in January and takes out the Talent water treatment plant. City is without water for ten days. Water is hauled from Ashland by truck.

Charles Roberts Park created on Talent Avenue honoring long-time Talent police chief.

Rick's Market moves to new building. The old Wolters' brick building which stood in the present parking lot of Tark's Market is demolished.

1990- 1999

City of Talent population now over 4,000.

New post office built. Old post office becomes a laundromat.

Downtown Talent receives "old fashioned" lamps and brick pedestrian Crossings using Urban Development funds.

Talent Historical Society formed. City of Talent provides office space in Community building. 1993

Talent Historical Society files articles of incorporation. 23 June 1994.

Fire District 5 and Talent City Fire department merge. 1999

2000-2010

Jackson County builds new public library building in Talent, adjacent to the old county library building, but facing Gibson street. City of Talent owns the site and the building.

Talent Historical Society leases old county library building from the City of Talent. 2005

City of Talent builds new City hall complex, razes the old city hall building.

Talent Skate Park built off Main Street.

Train Depot reconstructed to specifications of the historical structure by Urban Renewal body.

Obviously, a lot more historical items could and should be added to this listing. Some items for which the Society currently does not have dates include the magnificent job done by the Urban Renewal efforts in the past several years which have completely altered the appearance of the town. The dates at which the new subdivisions have been created are missing as are their names. The date at which the old Talent high school on Christian Street was remodeled into the current middle school is missing, etc., etc., etc. The creation of the first state sponsored residence for low income seniors here in Talent is not on this list yet. **Join us in this effort to maintain the knowledge of the key changes in this city. We await your telephone calls, visits, emails, or any other way to add to our historical listings.**

Exhibits at the Society:

The Society welcomes your objects which can be used as exhibits in the museum. This can be accomplished in two ways. Owners of historical objects can donate them outright to the society, or they can loan those objects for a specified period of time. Both things loaned and donations can be loaned or given under conditions mutually acceptable to the owner and to the Society. Our collection policies usually limit what the Society can accept into the historical collection. Basically, the Society focuses its collection geographically on the Upper Bear Creek Valley—that area stretching from Phoenix (which has its own historical society) and the California line (as Ashland only has a historical railroad museum). We collect historical information about the native Americans who preceded pioneer times to the present day. This includes archives of both families who lived in the collection area, and historical documents and books. Our

reference library has a somewhat greater coverage, but basically confines itself to Oregon and the bordering parts of Northern California. Board policies regarding our collection practices were implemented soon after the Society was incorporated in 1994. If you have objects that others would enjoy viewing, contact the Society (See page 10 for specifics). 7

Japanese Army Rifle captured on Guam now at Museum

James Salas has placed a World War II Japanese rifle and bayonet, captured on Guam, on display at the museum. A technical description and a U. S. Army "Intelligence Bulletin" written after the U. S. captured similar weapons at Guadalcanal during that campaign in World War II accompany the exhibit. Drop by the museum and look at the rifle.

Some Recent Donations:

Last month, besides the Japanese Rifle discussed on page 1, the Society accepted some business ledgers originally belonging to Elmer Niswonger, and has transferred them to the Deschutes County Historical Society, as Mr. Niswonger was involved in the realty business in the Bend area over one hundred years ago. The most important of these included the founding minutes of the Bend Realty Board. Some of the ledgers belonging to Mr. Niswonger were kept here in Talent because they detailed the operation of Mr. Niswonger's agricultural business activities here in the Talent area, and these shed considerable light on agriculture practice dating from the 1920s through the 1940s.

Photograph Collection:

Through the magnificent efforts of Jan Wright, our former museum director and author of the recent Talent photographic history which was prepared especially for the Talent City centennial year (2010), and the contributions of scores of Talent residents or former residents, the Society now has over 3,000 historical photographs housed in its computer bank. A very limited number of our photographs were used in the recent book. The Society continues to collect historical photographs and family pictures thereby documenting the past and the current changes to the broader Talent area. We are especially interested in securing copies of any old photographs hiding in the recesses of your family's personal collections.

We do not want the actual photographs, preferring that they remain in the possession of the families who treasure them. However, if brought to our museum, we will scan them into our photograph data bank and return the originals to you, or you can wait while we scan them and take the photographs home with you immediately. In that way each Talent area resident, past and present, can perpetuate the history of this unique area of Jackson County.

Those of us who are fascinated by history are often asked why we want to know so much about the past. Of course, some of us do so because of genealogical desire, but often those who enjoy history merely like stories. Henry Montgomery, the author of Life's Journey, summarized his interest in the past this way: “*What indeed do we not owe to the influence of the departed? They are not dead. Thousands of them live for us, they still speak to us out of every century, and from far down the ages, till we have reached the furthest bounds of history. Somehow they seem all round us.*”

The overwhelming success of the History channel on television should indicate that history, especially local history, can be both fascinating and informative. However, the current culture wants its history to be visual and dramatic. Reading history, or attending lectures on historical matters, which is how historical information has customarily been transmitted, often is neither visual nor dramatic. To attract the next generation of Americans those of us who treasure and are entrusted with that most elusive of history, local history, must figure out how as one theater critic said, “Catch them by the ears, like rabbits!” And since history really is made of stories, we who preserve the past had better become really good story tellers.

Bob Casebeer, President, Talent Historical Society Board

DATES TO REMEMBER

August 10, 2010 Talent Historical Society Board Meeting 4:00 p. m. Held at the museum at 105 N. Market Street. The public is always welcome. If you are interested in the details of our day to day operation, the Board is apprised of the daily activities of the volunteers who operate the Society.

September 9, 2010 Jackson County Heritage Association Meeting 10:00 a. m. This month the Association meets at the Woodville Museum in Rogue River. All thirteen historical societies and museums meet monthly to share successes and problems. The public is welcome at these meetings. This association of county museums is the only organization of its kind in the State of Oregon.

September 11, 2010 Talent Harvest Festival and Centennial Celebration Most of the day in the City center. This includes a parade, the display of the beautifully crafted Centennial Quilt, booths, music, food, etc.

October 9, 2010 City of Phoenix Centennial Celebration Most of the day. Phoenix City Center.

November 2, 2010 Centennial Day, Talent City Center. Time to be announced. On this day, the historical time capsule will be buried. The mayor will highlight the celebration with some well chosen words and usher in the City's second century.

Two Ways to Share Talent's Centennial With Others

Several items have been created to memorialize the City's one hundred years of existence. Two of those items are described below.

Those whose personal choices in wearing apparel are casual will soon be able to purchase a Talent Centennial T shirt bearing a replica of a newly created coat of arms depicting the historical activities of the Talent area, featuring Wagner Butte, the Community Building, Talent area orchards, and a covered wagon, all depicting past and present activities of Jackson County's second oldest settlement.

The second item is a newly designed belt buckle bearing the same design with a brief historical comment about the Talent area on the back of the buckle. The design was created by local creative artist Ron Hodgdon especially for the Talent Centennial.

Every effort has been made to make these items affordable as well as both durable and attractive. When they go on sale, these centennial items will be available at Tark's Market, the Talent Historical Society, and at the Harvest Festival.

The following individuals have recently provided display items , financial donations, or museum equipment, and we thank you:

Pat Bentley	Bob Casebeer	Robert & Carol Delsman
Katherine Harris	Ralph Hunkins	Carol Kehrig
Anita Nevison		

What We Currently Are Looking For:

1. Some members to fill at least two vacant board positions.
2. A Volunteer coordinator
3. Items and pictures to circa 1910 to build exhibits to celebrate the City of Talent's Centennial.
4. One or more artists to create and paint a mural on the exterior of the museum.
5. Digital Camera with tripod or tripod ready

Talent Historical Society Website

On our website, under the heading HOW YOU CAN HELP, you can find a link to Amazon.com. If you are planning to shop for a gift for a loved one or for your own amusement or edification, log on to the link provided and shop Amazon as you normally would. The Talent Historical Society will then receive a percentage of your purchase as a donation from Amazon. Go to www.talenthistory.org for more information.

Special Thanks Extended

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The Society is deeply appreciative of the help given by Jim Bradley and Doris Pickering as we cured a copying problem and secured one new copier and a new ink jet printer to replace our old copier which gave up the ghost about a month ago.

New and Renewing Members this last Quarter are listed below:

Individual Membership

Kurt Bailey	Sally Shockley	Carol Kehrig	Robert & Belinda Vos
David Hodson	Pat Bentley	Roanne Clapp	Carol Muir
Judy Drais	Anita Nevison	Claire Sommer	Michael & Judy Hall
Ron Weinhold	Bob Wilson	LaVelle Ricks	Connie & Gregory Miller

Family Membership

Karl Slack	John & Nancy Miller	Ron & Jackie Wagner
Ron & Beverly Lamb	Rick & Yolanda Nagel	

Business Sponsorship

Star Properties	South Valley Bank	Jim's Better Buys
Tark's Market	Marla Cates	James W. Maize Jr.

The Historacle is published quarterly by the Talent Historical Society, located at 105 N. Market Talent, Oregon. Phone: 541-512-8838. Hours: 1 to 5 Wednesday through Saturday. Our mailing address is: P. O. Box 582, Talent, Oregon 97540. Website address: www.talenthistory.org
The Society operates as a 503(c3) organization, totally by volunteers. We maintain archives about the Upper Bear Creek Valley, conduct historical research, feature a reference library, and host a museum. We welcome old and new members. Annual Dues: Individual \$20; Family \$30; Business Sponsorship \$50.



The original Talent Depot was moved here from Medford. This Depot was removed in 1948. The Talent Depot, as it exists today, is a replica.