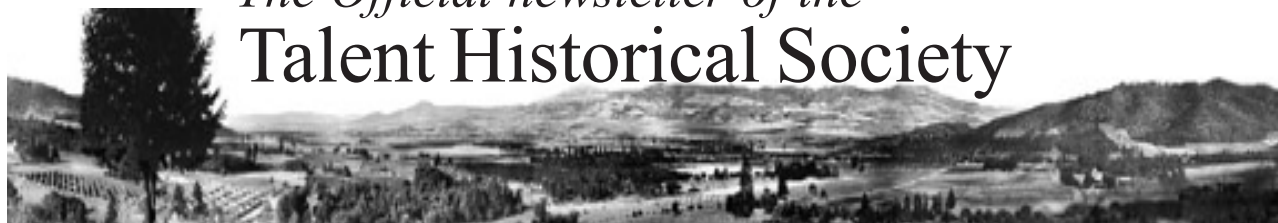


# The Historacle

*The Official newsletter of the*  
Talent Historical Society

Apr 2008



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

## Give History a Chance

You have probably gotten a letter from *Our Heritage PAC* with a petition and an explanation about the measure proposed for the November ballot. If so inclined, please sign the petition and gather as many signatures as you can (registered voters from within the proposed Heritage District only please) and, if possible, send in a donation to help with the printing and mailing costs involved.

It is our job to let you know why a Heritage District is a good idea. Talent Historical Society and all the other historical organizations in the Rogue Valley depend on the Heritage District for long-term survival and operational funds. The far-sighted women and men who created a funding source in the 1940s that gave rise to the impressive SOHS collection of artifacts, documents, photographs, and buildings would be outraged to see how the funding has been funneled for other purposes. Hundreds of donors who entrusted their family treasures to be preserved, studied, and displayed are also disappointed that the current commissioners of Jackson County have cut all funding formerly designated for heritage purposes. If we act now, we can prevent artifacts from

being deaccessioned or sent to Oregon Historical Society in Portland, or worse yet, historic structures to be sold on the auction block to the highest bidders. History belongs to all of us and should remain in public possession so that individuals can pursue their historical interests, so that tourist dollars can be spread to all of the Rogue Valley communities and to generate connections for the young and old alike to look to the past for inspiration and continuity.

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### *Our Heritage Matters*

#### Send tax- deductible contributions to:

Our Heritage PAC  
2 North Oakdale  
Medford, OR 97501

#### Make a Difference - call

541-773-3606

to volunteer for canvassing precincts, collecting signatures, making phone calls, help with mailings etc.  
email: [rbt@ourheritagepac.org](mailto:rbt@ourheritagepac.org)

# Octagonal House NOT Octagonal

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Who knew? Much to our delight and surprise, on March 14th when a team of researchers descended the cellar steps to examine the belly of the house on Wagner Creek Road that once belonged to Welborn Beeson, we stepped into a nearly magical zone of a hexagon instead of an octagon! For all these years it had been mislabeled as an eight-sided house. Now when our model for exhibit in the museum is built, it will be more true to the original. Jackson County Cultural Coalition granted THS \$1,000. to complete the model for exhibit in the museum. Builder Dick Simonson will construct the model from plans drawn by Larry Wikander and Liz Carter. Liz is the great granddaughter of Welborn Beeson and an historic preservationist. Larry, her husband, is an architect and restores homes in Eugene. The team who rediscovered the original beams and design from the intact cellar were covered with cobwebs and dust but well-pleased with themselves for bringing the truth to light. Watch for updates and progress on the model which should be completed in the fall.



# Research Request Rewarded

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The Wagner Creek Cemetery Association has been adding small engraved rocks to previously unmarked graves at the Stearns Cemetery outside of Talent. A few of the grave sites were in question and the Association President, Bud Gleim, asked a THS board member and volunteer, Carl Shauger, to do some research to verify if Mary L. “Dolly” Buck, wife of Joseph Buck was actually buried in the cemetery. As Carl looked for answers he was impressed with the rich resources in Jackson County in various libraries and historical societies and the helpful people who assisted him. From the Wagner Creek Cemetery records, the Rogue Valley Genealogical Library and, of course, the Talent Historical Society records, Carl found the following:

*“Two Weeks Bride Dead. — Mrs. Joseph Buck, who as Miss Mary L. “Dolly” Clark, a day less than a fortnight before had become the bride of an employee of the Schneider & Bristow mill on Anderson Creek, six miles above Talent, where she and her husband, her aged and invalid father and two sisters resided, was stricken with heart disease while walking along a road through the woods about a quarter of a mile from the home, Friday afternoon, and died there, the body being found by the grief stricken husband hours afterwards. Mrs. Buck had been accustomed to walk alone each day and nothing was thought of her going away from the house Friday afternoon at 2 o’clock. When her husband returned from his work at the mill in the evening it was the first knowledge he had of the wife’s disappearance and he immediately joined in the search for her and found her lifeless body beside the road a quarter of a mile from the house about seven o’clock. The deceased was 42 years and had been a sufferer from attacks of heart disease, which was the cause of her sudden and lonely death. Deputy Coroner W. M. Dodge was summoned from Ashland, but no inquest was deemed necessary, the cause of death being apparent. The funeral was held on Saturday and many friends gathered to pay their respects to the deceased and the sorrowing husband and relatives so suddenly stricken.” [Ashland Tidings Vol. 21 p.24 Monday 4 April 1910]*

A week later Carl also found, with the help of Chuck and Colleen Eccelston, volunteers at RVGS, the following from the *Mail Tribune* records.

*“Eden Precinct Items. — Mrs. Joe Buck of Wagner Creek died Friday morning of heart failure. She had gone out about 100 yards from the house and there apparently had sat down. She was found a short time afterward by her husband. Funeral services Saturday at Wagner creek schoolhouse. Interment at Stearns cemetery at 1 o’clock.” [Mail Tribune Vol. 1 p. 35 Thursday, 7 April 1910]*

Further research revealed additional information about Joseph Buck’s first marriage to Sarah Boothby and their three daughters Ruth, Gladys, and Maude. The two wives Sarah and Mary Buck are buried at the Stearns cemetery side by side but their husband, Joseph, is not listed there.

# Levi Scott's Ties to Talent

Most Oregonians have heard the name of Levi Scott. He is known for trailblazing with the Applegates and others on the southern route into Oregon in 1846 (now known as the Applegate Trail). The town of Scottsburg, Scott Mountain in Douglas County, and Mt Scott in Crater Lake National Park are named after him. His service in the Territorial government and signer of Oregon's constitution in 1857 is well documented.

Few know of his challenging childhood and history before he came to Oregon. As a child, he was fatherless and bound out to strangers who worked him harder than they should. He became a widower in 1841 and left Iowa and all but two of his own motherless children in 1844. His children were farmed out to various relatives in Illinois and Iowa and most never saw their father again.

One of his daughters, Mary Jane, did not learn to read or write so she could not send him letters nor did she know where he was or if he was still alive. After a very full life of her own in Iowa, she ended up in Talent, OR in the 1880s as the wife of a Civil War veteran, Noah Allen. Once in Oregon she couldn't help but hear stories about her father.

She met with him before he died but did not have a happy reunion. Bitterness over her abandonment claimed her heart and denied him any affection. She died in Talent in 1908 and is buried in the Stearns Cemetery in an unmarked grave.

Read more in Vira Cordano's book *Levi Scott Oregon Trailblazer* where this photo of Mary Jane (Scott) Hutchinson Allen is found on page 259.



## Statistics UP!

Before the move into our current location it was unusual to see more than 20 people stop by the office in a month. Now we are averaging 90 and with our website hits of over 300 a month we are reaching many more people than before. Twenty four new members have joined in the last 6 months. If you would like to **volunteer** for the museum, please call 512-8838.

## Signature Tables At Tarks & Library

Watch for Heritage District petition signing tables set up at *Tarks* and at the library. We will try to get as many signatures there so that it will not be necessary to go door to door in Talent. If you have already signed and sent in your petition please don't sign it twice! Petition gathering is county-wide and will go on throughout the month of April. Thank you for your support and a big Thanks to Ron Ridgeway at *Tarks* and to Laurel at the library for permission to set up tables.

## Tools on Exhibit

A brand new exhibit at the museum includes antiques planes and tools owned and used by Brian Roberts' father, William Franklin Roberts. Mr. Roberts was an expert carpenter who came to Talent in 1940 and built homes, and cabinets for a number of years. Brian said his father and his partner Leo Jacobs could put up a house in a month and knew just which tool to use for any project. Come in and see them.

**Arlene Stricker**, one of our favorite THS members died on Valentine's day. Our impressions of Arlene were that she was enthused about history and preservation. She had offered to volunteer and help out at the museum but we failed to get her on the right project at the right time.

We have preserved her obituary in our archives and her memory in our hearts. Her name appears on the back of this newsletter as a renewing member. We extend our condolences to her family and friends from Talent Historical Society.

# What Are We Doing Here?

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When you go out to collect petition signatures for the Heritage District or talk to your friends about it, the Talent Historical Society thought you might need some background knowledge about the pursuits of the society. Listed below is a sampling of the activities THS has participated in during the last two years. On-going and planned projects are included to let you know that we are not holding still; we are moving forward with our mission to collect, preserve, and present history to the public.

## **Museum:**

On May 1, 2007, the Talent Historical Society signed a lease with the City of Talent for what was the “old county library building” at 105 North Market Street. This has allowed the Society to actually have display, storage, and office areas, and an expanded library & archives space. Moving allowed us to save some \$600. per year in storage fees and gave us the ability to collect larger items and develop exhibits. We held our Museum Open House during the Talent Harvest Festival in September.

Displays currently exhibited are:

Indian artifacts from Southern Oregon: bowls, pestles, fish weights, grinding stones, heating stones, fist hammers etc. A cradle made by the Hendrick Goddard in 1884. Goddards were well known for their carpentry skills and constructed many of the older homes on Wagner Creek.

A display of large photographs of Talent and Talent activities covering several decades.

A Welborn Beeson display featuring entries from his diary concerning the local Native Americans.

Raggedy Ann & Andy display. John Gruelle the author of the Raggedy Ann & Andy books has local ties to Southern Oregon and briefly lived on Granite St. in Ashland.

Toy exhibit and local Quilt on display

## **Programs:**

Tom Doty & John Michael Greer storytelling and Taklema Language Program

Diana Coogle Chautauqua Program, *Reading Houses*, included discussion of the Beeson/ Foss Historic House on Wagner Creek Road.

*Ballet Folklorico* dancers, a Talent youth based dance group specializing in Mexican dances and costumes.

Jeni Foster Chautauqua Program had us all singing railroad songs from her musical program *Magic Carpet Made of Steel*

Jeff LaLande presented a Civil War discussion titled *Rebels in the Rogue River Valley? The Murky Course and Character of Southern Oregon's Civil War*.

Tom Nash - SOU professor gave a Chautauqua lecture *True Stories and Other Fictions in Northwest Oral History*.

Dennis Jenkins from the Natural and Cultural History Museum at U Of O drew a large crowd with his Chautauqua Program titled *Where the Buffalo and Camel Roamed* about his findings from Fort Rock archeological digs.

## **Research:**

Octagonal house research

Takelma Indians/Pictograph

Sesquicentennial dairy project with OSU Press

Family research for Haman Lewis (related to Creel family); Rockfellow family ; Beeson lineage

Photo collection - identifying places and people of Southern Oregon

Cooperative research with Urban Renewal, other historical societies and general public

On-going research collecting news clippings of Talent area happenings and obituaries and vital records

## (What are we doing here? continued)

### **Grants:**

Beeson Diary Grant—Oregon Heritage Commission  
Beeson family grant – Caroline and Dan Beeson  
Website Grant – OHC – over 300 hits a month  
Octagonal house grant -Jackson County Cultural Coalition  
Photo grant  
Walmart grant for computer and paint for new museum  
Umpqua Bank to help develop programs for students

### **Talent and Upper Bear Creek Archives & Library at the Museum:**

Welborn Beeson diary on microfilm 1851-1893 and transcriptions through 1883  
Jackson County resources such as marriage records, divorces, wills, probates etc.  
*Ashland Tidings* Extracts  
*Medford Mail Tribune* Extracts  
Cemetery records for Stearns, Dunkard and other county cemeteries  
Family files for Talent families  
Business files for Talent Businesses  
Maps  
Church histories  
Talent School year book collection  
Diaries of John Robison, W. J. Dean, Elizabeth Anderson & Nathaniel Myers  
3,000 historic photographs

### **Services:**

www.talent.history.org website with photos and index to Jackson County database  
Only microfilm reader/printer in Talent – bring in your film to the Society and get it printed at .25 cts a page.  
Scanner can copy your old photos and put on a disk for you \$7.00 per disk  
Oral history interviews with a new digital recorder  
Reference questions researched as time allows  
Venue for small gatherings with stage & lights for performances  
*Historacle* Quarterly newsletter to members and on-line to the world  
Outreach to schools

### **Collections:**

Lida Childers collection of books she authored and of family records  
Everett Taylor photos and artifacts  
Dewey Talent memorabilia  
Ruth Garmon – Robison/Stephens family photos and records  
G. Holdridge collection histories and postcards  
Casebeers clothing and textiles & Indian artifacts  
Paintings and Poetry of Lou Pollard  
Kime and Quackenbush photographs  
*Talent News Flashes* (5 decades) from Alice Burnette  
Goddard Cradle from June McKiernan  
Lynn Newbry Orchard artificats  
City of Talent documents  
On Loan from Brian Roberts - Planes and tools used to build homes in Talent

# Paid-Up 2008 Memberships

## **Renewing Members**

Kurt Bailey  
Paul & Nellie Creel  
Chuck & Colleen Eccleston  
Robert & Elizabeth Fulton  
Bud & Mary Louise Gleim  
Joe Hunknis family  
Ron & Stella Medinger  
John & Nancy Miller  
Lynn & Charlotte Newbry (Sponsors)  
LaVelle Ricks  
Karl & Helen Slack  
Arlene Stricker  
Patricia Tann  
Tarks Market (Business Sponsor)  
Bob Wilson

## **New Members**

Jim & Peggy Cook  
Michael Hall  
Jesse & Ron Hodgdon (Heritage Members)  
Nick Medinger  
Brian Roberts  
John & Lillian Rockfellow  
Gary Rockfellow

## **Talent Historical Society**

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