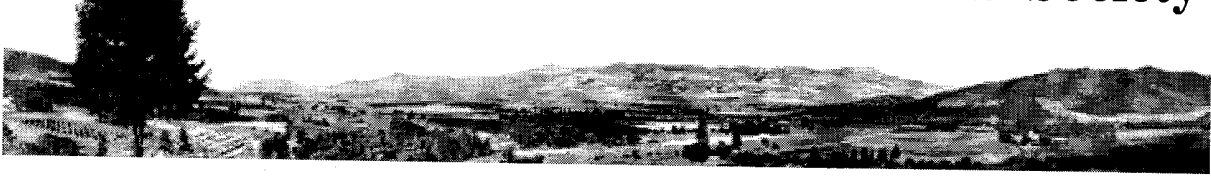


The Historical

Fall 2013

The Official Newsletter---Talent Historical Society



A Truncated History of One of Talent's Grocery Stores

White's Grocery, previously known as the Wolter's store was once located on the corner of Market Street and Wagner Avenue. It had two entrances: one directly to the cold storage unit called Valley Lockers, and one to the grocery store itself. The old Wolter's building was erected soon after the 1911 fire which destroyed much of the then bustling Talent business district. Apparently, Wolter (who had several economic irons in the proverbial fire) sold the building to White, who later sold the store to Duke and a fellow by the name of Clayton. They sold the store to Granville Britton. Britton later sold the store to Rick Allen.

After some time of operation, Allen sold the store to two men, and they listed the store for sale as Brother's Market, due to their Christian fellowship. The two ran the store for three to five years, but experienced financial difficulties, so the store went back to Rick Allen's ownership, and the two men returned to California. Allen eventually tore down the old store, used the space as a parking lot and then sold the store in 1996 to Ron Ridgway who named the grocery store Tarks Market.

Because the grocery was a locally owned, family store, the Ridgways decided to make every member of their family part of the operation, beginning with the name of the store: T (is for Tipton), A (is for Arron), R (is for Ron), K (is for Katlyn, and S (is for Sue). In late 2012 the Ridgways sold the store to Ray's Markets. Oddly enough that particular chain of groceries got its start as Ray's Market right here in Talent.

The Wolter's building which was rebuilt after the 1911 fire was a three walled structure, facing Wagner Avenue, and housed a bank. Its fourth wall was the wall of White's Grocery. That space was empty for quite some time, and was used for a basketball court. The post office moved into that old bank structure after having been in two other locations previously. It has now moved again to its present location near the railroad tracks on Wagner Avenue. Further construction to the west created block building with about a space of one foot between it and the post office. The post office erected a flag pole in front of the post office, and

blocked off the one foot space with a do so that their flag and its pole were protected from hostile juvenile activity.

When the post office moved from there, Rick Allen turned that space into additional freezer space, and changed the entry into the freezer unit to the east side of the post office space. The entry to the store was then placed on the northwest corner of the remodeled building immediately off the new parking lot. By removing the wall of the freezer space and all the piping involved, Rick made a much larger display space for groceries than had previously been possible. All of the former glass windows on Wagner Avenue to the old White grocery were blocked off with pumice block.

That block building was built to house a church remembered as an Assembly of God denomination. When Allen decided to build a new store located where the present Ray's Market is located, he leveled all the buildings on the block and turned the former building space into a parking lot.

Other changes in the general area of the present main grocery store in Talent are these:

On up the road toward the railroad tracks, there was a small house on Wagner Avenue, with more open space between it and an L shaped house located on John Street. These two buildings were also demolished when Rick Allen built his new grocery store.

Going down John Street to the alley that ran from Market Street to John Street, on the east side of John Street there was a small house, located next to Fred Cook's house. That house at the time was occupied by Clarabelle (?) Wilburn.

At one time there was a house located on the south corner of the alley and Market Street, then that house was occupied by "Ma" Skeeter, of the local logging Skeeter family. (Alice Burnett said that if the Skeeter family had not been actively logging, the town of Talent might have perished.)

When Rick decided to build a new grocery store, he placed the back of the building on John Street, used the old spaces as the parking lot for the new store, and let the alley lapse. The post office moved to the middle of Market Street, where the laundromat is located on the east side of Market Street.

In addition, the block building which once housed the church became vacant when the congregation decided to move. That space became storage space for the grocery store, and one front room was used for the grocery office. The front of the old church had been lighted by glass blocks, and the other small room in the old church space was rented out as a hair salon.

In the middle of the block there was a small house, 20 by 40 feet, facing Wagner Avenue, and it was also flattened and burned. For some time this block

remodeling was delayed because Allen did not own that small house. Eventually, he acquired the small building and added that space to his holdings.

This tale of one grocery building on one block of the City of Talent illustrates the complexity of doing historical research on local businesses...and there are probably some significant things still to be known.

American Wars Seem Occur Every 20 Years Or So!

No one seems to know why the American nation gets involved in a war about twenty years after the last one. Some sociologists claim one reason is that the American society was created by violence, and that trait has become part of our common culture. We have national cemeteries dedicated to war veterans; the closest one is out by Eagle Point.

Here in Talent, there are two monument markers set up by the residents of Talent recording wars in which local individuals fought and gave their lives. One is by the large Eastern oak tree near the Talent Elementary School which was set in place marking local veterans of World War I. The second records the names of men from Talent who gave their lives during World War II. It is located in front of the Talent Community Center.

That monument lists ten local men who gave their lives in defense of our nation. Here are the names:

Victor V. Anderson	Dean B. Ashcroft	Wayne V. Combest
Richard E. Frye	Arthur L. Lockwood	Clarence W. Mathes
Roderick Glen Muse	Alton G. Schaffer	Paul H. Schofield
Harold M. Thompson		

Wayne V. Combest died during the Bataan Death March on Luzon Island in the Phillipines in 1942.

However, the records at the Talent Historical Society do not reveal any further information about the other nine men—their military affiliation, their ages, marital status, birth dates, death dates, occupations, military service or rank. We here at the Society would like to increase our knowledge of these men. If any one reading this article can supply more information, our doors are open, our phone takes messages, and we are usually here at the museum 1 to 5 Wednesdays through Saturdays.

Short and Sweet Comments

“Polititicians and diapers have one thing in common. They should both be changed regularly and for the same reason.” Author unknown

Friends of the Talent Church of the Brethern Cemetery Publish Newsletter

For over a year now, the once nearly forgotten Church of the Brethren Cemetery here in Talent has slowly been shown some loving care. The local *Talent News & Review* wrote an article about the cemetery last November reminding local residents of its historic past. That article told of the formation of the "Friends" creation and of the attempts to focus community attention to the only cemetery located in the Cit of Talent.

Those who created the "Friends of the Church of the Brethren Cemetery" chose deliberately not to use the commonly used "Dunkard Cemetery," the name which many old-time Talent residents have used for years. The Brethren Church historically is a 400 year old German Baptist denomination founded by Alexander Mack in Schwartzenau, Germany, when he baptized 8 adults in the river in that Rhineland town. Because he believed that baptism should be by total immersion, the Brethern became known as Dunkards, ie.—those who baptized by dunking the whole believer's body into water.

The new group's president is Judith Minear Stanford of North Las Vegas, Nevada. She is a member of the local Minear family, five of whose members are buried in the small cemetery. The body of Luly Bell Minear is thought to have been the last person buried in the cemetery in the year 1959. The Friends have just published their second newsletter, which is mailed free of any charge to those interested in the organization.

After hearing Talent resident Carl Schauger discuss the neglected condition of the cemetery in 2011, the members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, VFW Post 353 in Ashland, have taken over the maintenance of the old cemetery as a community service. Volunteers from that organization join Carl (now the official coordinator of cemetery maintenance) on the 2nd Saturday of each month from 9 to noon to perform their maintenance services .

After application to the Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries, the Talent Church of the Brethern Cemetery has been registered officially as an Oregon Historic Cemetery.

Carl Schauger, who has spearheaded local interest in the cemetery, has created two huge notebooks (each four inches thick) about the fifty known burials in the cemetery. Copies of those notebooks have been placed in the Rogue Valley Genealogical Society Library and here at the Reference Library of the Talent Historical Society.

This past January local resident David Bish of the local company Plant Oregon came to plant three zelkova seratta trees along southwestern fence of the cemetery. Those plants will provide afternoon shade for the cemetery which has been devoid of shade for years.'

The new newsletter also focused seven pages of its March issue on the Isaac Rhodes family history, whose wife's headstone is in the cemetery. Other families whose members are buried there will be featured in future issues of the quarterly newsletter.

To become a member of the "Friends of the Talent Church of the Brethern Cemetery" contact Judith Stanford at saponaowls@gmail.com or write her at 2505 Willow Wren Drive, North Las Vegas, Nevada 89084. She can be contacted at 702-399-0642 during the winter or 541-535-6704 here in the Talent area during the summer.

Jacksonville Presbyterian Church Organized in 1857

Probably every person who has ever wandered the streets of historic Jacksonville has spent a little time looking at the Presbyterian church building. Members of that church organized themselves to conduct church services on November 22, 1857. The building itself was constructed 24 years later, finished in 1881. It is constructed of native sugarpine lumber which was hauled by wagon and horse teams some 125 miles from Roseburg, where the lumber was actually milled. The decorative stained glass windows were brought around Cape Horn in a sailing vessel from Italy.

According to the historical minutes of the church, the generosity of two of the loyal elders, C. C. Beekman and William Hoffman, made its construction possible as these two men's "large contributions made the project possible." Additional funds were raised through a series of "Strawberry Festivals" held in June 1880. Contractor David Linn was awarded the contract for the basic construction of the church: frame, roof, belfry, basement with lecture room and paint. The total construction cost reached \$6000 due to the additional expense of the stained glass windows. Mr. Beekman traveled to San Francisco, and purchased a thousand pound bell. He chose a bell with a somewhat deeper than normal sound so that the bell when rung could be heard for eight miles. Beekman gave the bell to the church without reimbursement.

The church was dedicated on December 4, 1881 with the Reverend W. Hill of Salem conducting the ceremonies, assisted by Father Moses Williams who had organized the church in 1857. That was the same day that the Mrs. Carrie Beekman played the new organ (built by Estes & Company of Battleboro, Vermont—dated 1857) for the dedication ceremonies. Church historians believe that the Beekman family purchased the organ for the church as a donation.

In 2006, the membership built a new Presbyterian church in Jacksonville at 425 Middle Street. The church rents out the historical structure to the Luman Day Church which now holds services in the beautifully preserved older building.

Without Maps Most Folk Don't Know Where Anything Actually Is!

Note: The following story deals with the efforts of Roger Roberts efforts to preserve thousands of maps created by Jackson county land surveyors. The editor of the Historical took the opportunity to visit the storage site recently and was awed by the collection currently on display.

Roger Roberts, who has been a land surveyor in Jackson county for at least four decades, who also spent 14 years as the Jackson County surveyor, has managed to collect about 3500 detailed maps created over the years by a number of professional Jackson County land surveyors.

Nearly 600 maps of the this treasure trove were on display at the former Rogue Valley Genealogical Society library building at 95 Houston Road in Phoenix. Working with genealogical society member and former surveyor Chuck Eccleston, Roberts filed the rest of the maps into filing cabinets. However, the Genealogical Society has sold the building and the rare maps are now in storage at their current library location on Highway 99.

There is no question about the rarity and the value of the maps, especially from a historical perspective. Roberts is making every effort to preserved the maps for posterity because the detailed data on the maps is unavailable elsewhere. His ultimate aim is to get each map scanned and make a digital collection of the maps, but that task will take years to complete.

Many of the maps of the Medford area were made by C. S. Howard, a land surveyor and one of the first mayors of Medford. One map was done by Welborn Beeson who died in 1893. He originated the plat for the town of Talent, although apparently that map is not available in Roberts' collection. One 1874 map shows the route of the wagon road from the Emigrant Lake area east into Klamath county and beyond. Another map has notes on the very first highway built over Siskyou pass. There is a map of Camp White indicating the locations of regiments when World War II desert warfare soldiers were being trained here in the Rogue River valley. Several maps of mine locations are also in the collection; Some of the maps of local orchards show individual trees and the type of trees planted.

In short, for map lovers and those interested in local history, join Mr. Roberts and the Rogue Valley Genealogical Society in their efforts to house and display these rare documents.

Rare John Beeson Publication Now At Reference Library

Four years after John Beeson was driven out of the Rogue Valley fearing for his life, and after he wrote the book A Plea for the Indians, and while he was engaged in speaking on the national lecture circuit, he began publishing of a news letter called "The Calumet." Named after the an Indian name for the "pipe of peace" this newsletter was one more of John Beeson's attempts at advocacy for improved treatment nationally for Native American tribes.

The publication today is difficult to secure. Dr. Jennifer L. Jopp, Assistant Professor of History, at Willamette University, recently spent two days here at the Talent Historical Society Reference Library reviewing the documents we have regarding the Beeson family. She noted while mining our resources that we did not have a copy of "The Calumet." She had a photocopy of one held by the University of Oregon, and graciously sent us down a copy for our Beeson collection.

The document we have contains 37 pages of material compiled and edited by John Beeson in 1860. The copy is of Volume 1, and has a table of contents. That listing follows:

Editor's Introduction; Autobiography of the Editor; An Address to the Indian Tribes; Life and Times of Red Jacket, a Seneca Chief; Speech of Long Hair, a Grosventor Chief; Indian Civilization; Opinions Contrasted; Progress of the Indian Cause; Address of Hon. Eli K. Price, of Philadelphia; Letter from a poor Printer; Acknowledgements to Benefactors; Public Meeting in Faneuil Hall, Boston; Address of Wendell Phillips; Letter from Dr. Kirck, of the American Tract Publishing Committee; Cover---Poetry---Roger Williams and William Penn---An Appeal to Americans; Illustrations.---Portrait of Editor, Red Jacket, Map of the Territories.

John Beeson proposed to publish "The Calumet" monthly at the cost of ten cents an issue, or \$1.20 a year. Beeson, prior to beginning his monthly magazine, had written his Plea for the Indians, with Facts and Features of the Late War in Oregon, and had printed 3000 copies for sale and distribution. Beeson apparently still owed his printer for printing the books.

Museum Has Gold Mining History Data

Members and other readers of this newsletter may be interested to know that the Museum has a considerable collection of mining data both in map form and in text material about mining and mining claims in Southwestern Oregon. Some data is also available from a bit farther afield, too.

One of the key maps is the Foster & Gunnell Mining Map of Southern Oregon, dated March 1904 which shows all of the claims in Josephine and Jackson

County active at that time. The Gold Diggers 3rd Edition contains 64 pages of detailed maps covering the United States from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast.

The museum's Reference Library has additional information about mining activity in Southwestern Oregon. If one is interested in gold mining, check out any of these items:

Southern Oregon Mining Index. 1899 to 1932. by Ben Truwe (hundreds of pages, notebook is four inches thick.

Mining in Southwestern Oregon: A Historical Context Statement. U. S. F. S. by George Kramer 122 pp.

Assorted Items Regarding Mining Activity in Southwestern Oregon Between 1921 and 1931 (From the Mining Journal) 24 pp.

Bohemia Mining District (Douglas and Lane Counties) 99 pp.

Waldo Mining District (Josephine County) 36 pp.

Southern Oregon Mining Articles (22 articles) 64 pp.

Mineral Industry of Oregon. 1903 Dept. of Chemistry, U. of O. 89 pp.

Massacred for Gold: The Chinese in Hell's Canyon. By R. Gregory Nokes. 208 pp.

Ralph Hunkins' Contributions to the Historical Society Were Significant

Ralph Hunkins, a long term member of the Board of Directors of the Talent Historical Society, passed away on June 12, 2013. Interestingly enough, his son, Joseph Hunkins, was one of the founding members of the Talent Historical Society, and in a way Ralph took his son's place after Ralph and his wife Margaret moved to Talent. He became the treasurer of the Society for a number of terms.

Ralph was born on June 27, 1928 in Deadwood, South Dakota, and grew up in Lead, South Dakota. After an active high school life, he graduated from the University of Nebraska, following the footsteps of his parents. He became a high school teacher at Kearney, Nebraska, where he coached the debate team and directed class plays.

Drafted into the army during the Korean War, Ralph was sent to Germany. Utilizing the GI Bill after his discharge from the army, Ralph sought a master's degree in international politics at the University of California, and subsequently studied at the University of Paris in France.

After his studies at the Sorbonne, he returned to the Washington, D. C. working in the International Studies section of the Department of State. It was then that he met Margaret Glick, a social worker in Arlington, Virginia. In April 1957, Ralph and Margaret married, and that marriage lasted until Ralph's death some 56 years later. Their first child, Joseph, was born in Washington, D. C.; their second child, Martha, was born in Bloomington, Indiana, after Ralph moved there to secure his doctorate in education from Indiana University.

In 1964, the family moved to Plattsburgh, New York, where as a professor of education at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh, Ralph spent a productive 27 years, retiring in 1991, and was active in a wide variety of community organizations. In 1999 Ralph and Margaret moved to Talent, where

Joseph, his wife Kathy, and two of their grandchildren live. Their daughter Martha, married to Carmen Gentile, lives in Arcata, California.

Ralph became a member of the Talent Historical Society, and he and his wife Margaret were members of the Rogue Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

Many of the current members of the Talent Historical Society and its Board of Directors join the family in cherishing the memories of a distinguished professor and community leader. We all miss Ralph Hanel Hunkins.

The Welborn Beeson Diary Is One of Talent's Real Treasures

Welborn Beeson started a diary on his 16th birthday in 1851. When his family started for Oregon in 1853, ultimately joining what has been called the "Preacher Train," that particular portion of the diary is the only one that has been published. Bert Webber's book is titled Oregon & Applegate Trail: Diary of Welborn Beeson in 1853.

Welborn continued his diary until his death in 1893, and wrote over 1,400,000 words. It is the most complete record of events in the Talent/Jackson County area yet unearthed. Able transcribers working with Jan Wright, former director of this museum, have transcribed into print format all of the years of Welborn's diary except for 1893 which is still being transcribed.

Copies of the original diaries (which the family gave to the University of Oregon) are in the Talent Historical Society Reference Library as are the transcriptions plus explanatory added detail for several of the diary years. Several academic researchers have poured over the Society's diary transcripts since we have made the diaries available for the first time here in the Rogue River valley.

Presently, indexes for the diary are being compiled. Years 1851 through 1854 have been completed. There are two indexes for each year: a Names Index and an Activity and Events Index.

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