



The Historacle

The Official Newsletter of the
Talent Historical Society

Volume 21 Issue 3

September 2015

Oldest Church Building in Talent Changes Hands

By Robert L. Casebeer

Note: Much of the following article was taken from a brochure created by Grace Bible Church and some news articles, one written by Mae Lowe and the other by Alice Burnette, and the files at the Talent Historical Society.

Two years ago the little white church on Talent's Main Street changed hands. The former pastor, Elliot Lovelace, retired and moved to Arizona, and the congregation gave the church to the congregation of Grace Bible Church. In February 2013, the congregation of Grace Bible Church, which had formerly been meeting in a rented building, held their first service in this old historic church.

About 140 years ago, Horace Root dedicated part of his Talent property to the Wagner Creek Baptist Church. At that time, it was facing the Applegate Trail (later Pacific Highway and now Talent Avenue). It was originally built on a triangular piece of property, and when the building was first erected, it was the only Baptist church in the Rogue Valley and the second Baptist church in the state of Oregon, according to Mae Lowe, an early Talent historian. The oldest Baptist church is located near Sheridan, Oregon.

Horace Root was born in New York in 1817. He came to California in 1849, and moved to Wagner Creek in 1861. Root had an extensive ranch on Wagner Creek, a large portion of which was the original Jacob Wagner claim. Root sold much of his property to Aaron Patton Talent who then had Welborn Beeson plat the property. Beeson surveyed and laid out town lots for Talent thus providing the land base for the present city of Talent community. Root later moved to Ashland where he died.

On 14 February 1871, the deed to the property was given to the trustees of the Wagner Creek Baptist Church, at

which time construction on the building began. Locust trees were planted on both sides of the building. At the time of its construction, the building contained one room with a platform. The pulpit (apparently still being used) was built by Andrew J. Wilcox, a preacher and carpenter. Initially, there was a dividing wall through the middle of the church. The women in the community sat on the left side of that wall, and the men on the right side. At some point, the dividing wall was removed.

The church was heated by a wood stove, which did not heat the corners of the building, and light was provided by kerosene lamps held on brackets along the walls. Later, the lamps were hung from the high ceiling and when electricity arrived in the valley, electric lights were installed. In 1965, the original benches, pulpit and organ were still in use.

In 1885, the Medford Monitor reported that a most attractive audience had met in the Talent Baptist Church "to listen to the earnest eloquence of Rev. Brumer and the aged Mr. Beeson". (John Beeson was perhaps Oregon's first human rights advocate who wrote "A Plea For the Indians" following his flight from threats on his life here in the valley in 1855-56.) These two speakers were urging the citizens of the area "to use the best modes to secure peace and raise the moral elevation of all residents."

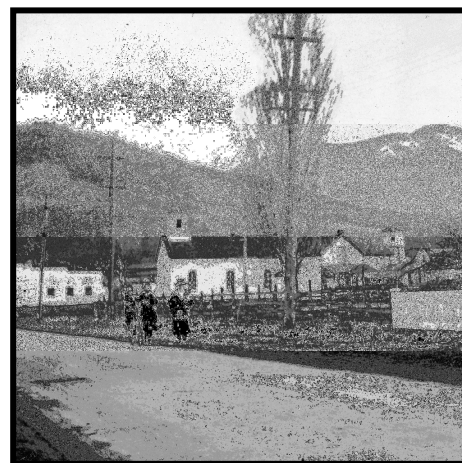
The preachers in this old church came and went over time, but the church was never without a preacher, as the Rev. A. J. Wilcox was always ready to serve until his death. At times the church overflowed with worshipers and many stood outside to listen. It was after the turn of the century that the

congregation began to dwindle. At the death of the Rev. Mr. Wilcox in 1907, the church was closed for several years, with sermons provided by a visiting pastor, some of which stayed a while and attempted to reorganize the church.

In the mid 1920's, Tomas Hill wanted to build a store on the church site, and the trustees agreed to deed him enough property to build a store. In exchange, Hill agreed to move the church to its present location on Talent's Main Street and provide a new roof for the church.

In the 1940's, the church was again standing vacant when members of the Friends Church were looking for a building in which to hold services for their newly organized congregation. They agreed to care for the building and keep it in repair in exchange for its use. They paneled the walls, covering the original wallpaper, lowered the ceilings, and added a room to the front of the building during their occupancy.

Continued on page 9



*Baptist Church on Pacific Highway
(now Talent Ave.) February 1916*

Talent Historical Society



The Talent Historical Society researches and preserves the history of the Talent area in Southern Oregon. We offer a collection of historical archives to help local residents and visitors become better acquainted with our area's rich history.

We operate a museum and meeting place located at:

105 North Market Street
Talent, Oregon

The museum is open Wednesday through Saturday from 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm

General Business Address:

P.O. Box 582
Talent, OR 97540

Phone Number: (541) 512-8838

Email: talenthistory@gmail.com

www.talenthistory.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/819998034709417/

The Historacle is published quarterly.

Editor/layout:
Belinda Klimek Vos

THS President's Message

There are no better people to work with than the board members of the Talent Historical Society. I can safely say, we have done more in this past year to boost the presence of the society than has been done in many years. It is my duty to report that we had a bit of a shake up at the last board meeting. Though I retained my membership on the board, I resigned my position as president. Margay Garrity and John Morrison also resigned. Ron Medinger has graciously taken my place and Bradley Flint has volunteered to be Vice President. Ron and Bradley are quality people, both with the ultimate goals of the society at heart, both with great ideas and motivation. So stay tuned – there is much more to come. We need members, we need ideas, we need hands and hearts to keep our unique and treasured history relevant. Thank you all for being involved and for supporting the preservation of our collective history.

- Jan Wright



Memberships

New Members:

Barbara Gould
Arden Prehn
Debi Rappaport

Melvin & Marilyn Bushnell
Robin & Amy Haptonstall

New Sponsors:

Mt. View Estates

Medicap Pharmacy

Renewals:

Mary A. Delsman
John Morrison

Jim Bradley & Patricia Remencuis
Wanda Perdue

Renewing Business Members:

Gary Rockfellow

Talent Urban Renewal Agency

Renewing Sponsors:

Margaret Hunkins

Memorium:

For Carl Perdue by Wanda Perdue

Something YOU can do to help!

If you do any shopping on Amazon.com, use the link below to enter the Amazon website. The price doesn't change, but the Historical Society receives a donation from each purchase. Any purchases you make will help support the Talent Historical Society and its projects. Thanks!!

<http://www.amazon.com/?%5Fencoding=UTF8&tag=talent-histosoc-20>

Is This Newsletter Worth Supporting?

We've gotten much positive feedback regarding our newsletter redesign. This edition we've increased it in size to 12 pages and added some new features! Of course it costs Talent Historical Society to produce the newsletters. Fortunately, due a generous donation by FunAgainGames in Ashland, the cost of actually printing the newsletter is not one of those costs. We do however pay for paper, labels and postage. The newsletter is written, edited and prepared for mailing all by dedicated volunteers.

If you would like your name, or your business' name, to be featured in each quarterly newsletter as a *Historacle* Sponsor, you can do that by donating \$50 or more specifically towards our newsletter production for 2016. It costs us approximately \$500 to produce the four issues of the *Historacle* each year. If we get ten sponsors, contributing \$50 each, we're covered for 2016. This contribution would be over and above your annual membership.

If this is something you think you can help with, please email me at:
talenthistory.membership@gmail.com

Thank you all,

Ron Medinger - Board President - Talent Historical Society

New Board Members to be Confirmed

Throughout the past year, three new members have joined our board of directors. Currently serving on interim appointments, they will be confirmed at THS's annual meeting to be held on Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2014. The meeting will proceed the Tuesday Evening at the Museum program for that night and will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the museum meeting space.

Each new member brings unique talents and skills to the board, and we are fortunate that these special individuals are now helping to make the Talent Historical Society prosper.

Below are short biographies of each new member.



Emmalisa Whalley was born in Portland, Oregon and lived there for 35 years. She moved to the Rogue Valley in 1979 and graduated from

Ashland High School. After returning to Portland for a time, two years ago she decided to once again move to southern Oregon in order to be closer to her Mother, and she settled in Talent. She would love to get the younger members of our town interested in Talent's history. Emmalisa is currently THS's treasurer.

Willow Nauth has lived in the Rogue Valley her whole life except for college and travel. She lived most of that time in Ashland, but has deep



Talent roots. Her family moved to Talent in the '40's to a property on Beeson Lane where they were dairy farmers. Willow's mother, Ruth, graduated from Talent High School in 1953 and then later

moved to Ashland. In 2006, the family purchased a multi-family home in Talent, just up the road from where her mom had grown up. Willow would like to see THS work toward improving its financial situation. A talented artist, she designed the Talent Tomato t-shirts.



Bradley Flint originally hails from Turlock, CA, but has made

the Rogue Valley his home for the past 16 years. He's lived in Talent for three years with his wife and four children. Bradley would like to see THS expand digitally even more. He has an extensive background in the computer industry and is our new network administrator.

We have also had three board members resign this year: Van Tribble, Margay Garrity and Ryan Pederson. We thank them for their service and appreciate all their work in the past.

Talent Tomato is a Tasty Treat

As a fundraiser on May 9th, historic Talent tomato plants were offered for sale to the public. After being "lost" for many years, seeds from plants grown by Talent farmer, Clarence Holdridge, were recovered and plants once again became available. Clarence had noted that a particular plant in his large tomato field was better than the rest of his Medford variety, and he named it the Talent tomato.

After selling out of our tomato plants, we encouraged growers to give us feedback on their results as the season progressed. The first ripe Talent tomato was reported on June 26th making it very early for a tomato to ripen in the Rogue Valley. The grower added it to his salad that night.

On June 28, Gerlinde Smith commented on our Facebook page that,



"The taste result is in: smooth, meaty texture, old fashioned taste (a "real" tomato taste) and a very even color!"

All other reports were positive as well. The medium size fruit is borne on indeterminate plants which means the harvest should continue until frost.

We hope everyone who purchased plants from us had a good growing experience and that they will be back next year for some more Talent tomato plants. You'll only find them at the Talent Historical Society. We'll keep you posted as to the exact date of next year's sale.

Tuesday Evening at the Museum

The Talent Historical Society continues its series of presentations held on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

A nice crowd enjoyed Bob Casebeer's talk on "The Rogue River Indian Wars" on June 23rd., and the Stearns Cemetery tour on July 28 was very well attended. Keith Liddy's August 25th presentation on "A History of Fly Fishing the Rogue, with a special interest in Zane Grey" was also well received.

On September 22, the THS will host its Annual Meeting in conjunction with September's event, and we will be previewing our new Walking Tour Booklet as the evening's topic. Those attending will get a sneak peak of the booklet that will be available at Talent's Harvest Festival on Oct. 3.

Bob Casebeer will present a talk on the "1853 Preacher Train" on October 27. The program on November 24 has yet to be decided. Stay tuned for more details on these events.

On December 22, we will host a Holiday Open House with refreshments provided as that month's Tuesday Evening at the Museum.

All talks are held at our museum at 105 North Market Street, Talent, unless otherwise noted.

We hope you will come and join us as we discover Talent's rich history. The meetings are open to the public and you need not be a member to attend.

Great Turnout for July Stearns Cemetery Tour

On a warm summer evening, over 50 people gathered at the historic Stearns Cemetery on Anderson Creek Rd. west of Talent to hear THS board member, Jan Wright, give a walking tour of the grounds.

The cemetery was created in 1857 when Judge Avery P. Stearns was buried in his nephew, David Stearns, wheat field, and in the following years, the Stearns family allowed burials there as a courtesy to their neighbors. In 1886, following David Stearns death, the family donated the land for a public cemetery. Then in August of 1889, local school master W.J. Dean, along with Welborn Beeson and trustees John Abbott and Ern Purves, laid out the Stearns Cemetery on the hillside west of Talent. A new granite memorial stone, installed earlier this year, honors the Stearns family and their donation.

Volunteers and families provide upkeep as Stearns is not a perpetual care cemetery. It's operated by the non-profit Wagner Creek Cemetery Association. In 2011, the cemetery was officially proclaimed a "Historic Cemetery".

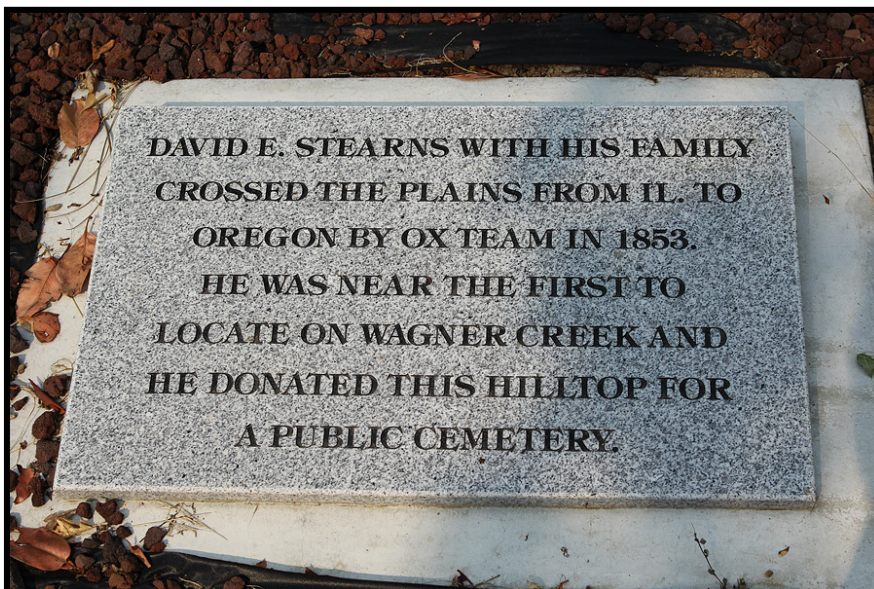
The three-acre cemetery includes the original Stearns area at the top of the hill as well as the former Independent Order of Odd Fellows Cemetery located at the bottom of the hill next to the road. It was deeded to the Association in 1980.

Many of Talent's well known pioneer families are buried there. The tour stopped at John Beeson's grave who Jan characterized as "a man ahead of his time." His views about the mistreatment of the local Native Americans caused him to be ostracized by the Wagner Valley Community. Because of fears for his safety, Beeson fled the valley leaving his son, Welborn, to take care of his wife and homestead. John Beeson's grave marker reads: Born in England, Sept. 15, 1803 - Died Apr. 21, 1889 - A Pioneer and Man of Peace.



An important intent of the tour was to highlight the lives of lesser known individuals who are also buried at the cemetery. Miners and laborers did seasonal work for area families and had no permanent houses. However, they were an important part of the community and had a great deal of value even into their later years. The community as a whole took care of them.

One such fellow was Jasper Force. Jasper lived to the ripe old age of 107. A newspaper article from Feb. 15, 1900 touting the centenarian, states that Force was born in Pennsylvania during the month of September, 1800. "At present Mr. Fource is hale and hearty, and although his face is somewhat withered and wrinkled, he does not appear to be





older than 70 years.” His grave marker is on the smaller size and off to the side a bit, but he was well known in the community. Jasper spent his final years on Emmett Beeson’s property where he “chopped wood, feeds stock and does everything that comes up to be done” according to an Ashland Tidings article written in March 1906. Beeson built him a small house on his farm. Jasper told the Tidings reporter, “that he had never owned a foot of ground in his life, and his time has passed as a laborer working for day’s pay. He is contented and cheerful and does not mourn his lack of

accumulations, having gone always on the theory that “sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”

Along with wonderful stories, Jan also showed photographs of the people she was discussing. She has several pioneer diaries in her possession and draws heavily on their entries to provide valuable information about day to day activities and interactions between neighbors. We heard of loves and losses, suicides, gunshot wounds, infidelity, and the consequence of

“sowing too many wild oats in one’s youth.”

Jan has the unique ability to make the past come alive and we are lucky to have such a knowledgeable and entertaining resource to help us understand better the lives of our community’s earliest settlers.



Talent Harvest Festival

On October 3rd, the annual Harvest Festival 2015 will take place in downtown Talent. The fun begins early with a Pancake Breakfast put on by the Chamber of Commerce. The run/walk event starts at 8:00 am with the Grand Parade down Main Street commencing at 10:00 am.

The Talent Historical Society will be participating and the museum will be open from 10:45 am until 4:00 pm. Our new “Walking Tour of Historic Talent” pamphlet will be available, so stop by for a visit.

Come join the fun as Talent celebrates the old fashioned way. A full day of events and music awaits you. Live entertainment and music on the City Hall Main stage starts following the Grand Parade and continues through the day until 4:00 pm. There will be locally grown produce, arts & crafts, local beers and wines, food vendors, activities for kids, games and much more. Hope to see you there!!

Bring your family, friends & neighbors & see what Talent has to offer!!

From Our Facebook Page

To read all the THS posts and information, "like" us on Facebook

Find us at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/819998034709417/>

Or go to www.facebook.com and type Talent Historical in the search bar at the top of the page. Then from the options shown, choose Talent Historical Society (Public Group)

In a daily post, we are following pioneer Welborn Beeson's diary entry from 150 years ago. (currently 1865)

Our Facebook page has steadily increased its number of followers, currently 197, and provides a forum for up-to-date information about THS events.

Daily postings of Welborn Beeson's diary entry from 150 years ago continues and lively discussions concerning his many activities provide a present-day take on what was happening in the Wagner Valley community so many years ago. Recently, we've learned about army worm, selling apples and his ongoing pining for neighbor Ester Ann Wagner.

In May, Welborn embarked on a particularly interesting trip which Jan Wright believes occurred when he was hired by the Carter family to help them move to California. We followed his activities as he gathered his supplies and got ready to depart Oregon, finally leaving on May 8, 1865 and travelling south over the Siskiyou Mountains on horseback. Welborn helped the Carter family by driving their wagon as they crossed the many streams and rivers by ferry, often paying quite a high toll. He encountered place names familiar to present day travelers as well, such as: Cottonwood Creek, Redding, Tehama, Colusa, Marysville and Oroville. Camping wherever they could, he encountered "dreadfull bad knats", poor

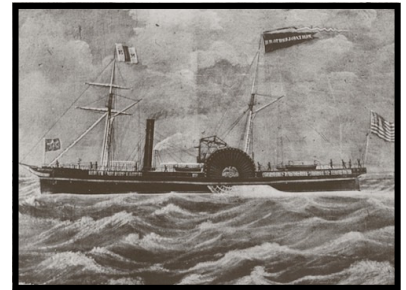
grass and hot weather. On May 22, 1865, Welborn bid the Carters adieu and continued to travel south. By May 27th, he had sold his horse, Barney, and traveled to Sacramento City by stage.

Welborn stayed in Sacramento City about a week, taking train trips to outlying areas to see the sights and generally visiting around the area.

June 6th finds him bound for the Sonoma Valley on the stage. In Napa City he comments, "The steamers travel up these bays or sloughs which are lined with Tulle and rushes and (in the distance it looks as if the steamer was steaming over the plain there being not timber near the water." The next morning he boards a river steamer himself and sets out down the Sacramento River exclaiming, "I took passage on the boat, a few hours sail down the bay and across by Moonlight brought me to the great City of San Francisco. Hack men and Hotel runners in abundance seeking who they may devour."

And so begins Welborn's next adventure in the big city of San Francisco. He stayed at the very noisy "What Cheer" hotel, went to a dentist, with decidedly painful results, and saw many popular plays. Fire alarms rang nearly every day and he seems a bit out of his element. On June 17, he boarded

the paddle steamer, *Brother Jonathon*, for a sea voyage north. (A mere five weeks later on July 30, 1865, this same vessel sank off the coast of Crescent City after hitting a rock. Of the 244 passengers and crew, only 19 survived.)



Presumably to save money, he bunked down in steerage along with cattle, horses, oxen, a grizzly bear and a seal. Not surprisingly, the smell was horrific and he spent the next few days being terribly seasick and vowing that he "shall never try steerage passage again, never." The steamer passed Crescent City on June 9th and two days later entered the Columbia River and stopped in Astoria. Welborn arrived in Portland, Oregon the next day and said, "I am glad I am once more in old Oregon. It is so much better than California."

He then got on a stage and traveled south stopping in Salem to visit with friends and by July 2, 1865 he had made it to Jacksonville and then finally on to home where he proclaims "oh how much better I like this vally to any place I have seen."

What a wonderful opportunity to follow along on his journey

Montgomery Street, San Francisco, looking north from the Eureka Theater near the intersection with California Street, 1865. Along this thoroughfare stood most of the great financial institutions of the Golden State, which provided capital for investment in countless enterprises throughout the American West. *California Historical Society*



got a question? email it to us today

ASK JAN



Many followers of our Facebook page have asked interesting questions while we've been reading Welborn Beeson's diary entries, especially about the history of Talent and the area. Jan Wright - Former Executive Director of the Talent Historical Society has agreed to answer some questions for us. So if you have a question, email it to askthsjan@gmail.com and every week she will answer three questions from the requests she gets. Her answers will be posted every Sunday evening on our Facebook page for you to see. The questions don't have to be about Welborn's diary or even the Beeson's specifically. They can be about anything you are curious about concerning the history of Talent.

Question from July 5: Relative to the diary entry for July 4th, where Welborn refers to getting dressed in his uniform to wear while marching that day, George Rakes asks, "Do you know what uniform he was wearing? Was it a Union military type uniform or one from an Oregon militia?"

Jan's Answer: It was an Oregon militia uniform as seen in the accompanying photo, which shows, left to right, Abel Helman, Ivan Applegate and Welborn Beeson.



Question from July 26: Stella Medinger asks, "How old was Esther Ann in July of 1865?" (Welborn often laments of being "lovesick" for her in his diary.)

Jan's Answer: Ester Ann Wagner (b 18 Mar 1850) was very young - only 15 in 1865 when Welborn Beeson (then 29) was most interested in her. He started asking her to dances and social events when she was 13.

It was quite common for girls to marry in their teens to men that were 10 or more years older than themselves. Girls had their pick -as they were in scarce supply and most married before they had a chance to play the field.

One study I did of the 1860 census in the Talent/Phoenix area proved that of the number of single bachelors there were only about 5 unmarried girls to choose from. Girls were advised to find husbands who were financially stable-making it less possible for young men to be as eligible as more established men in the area.

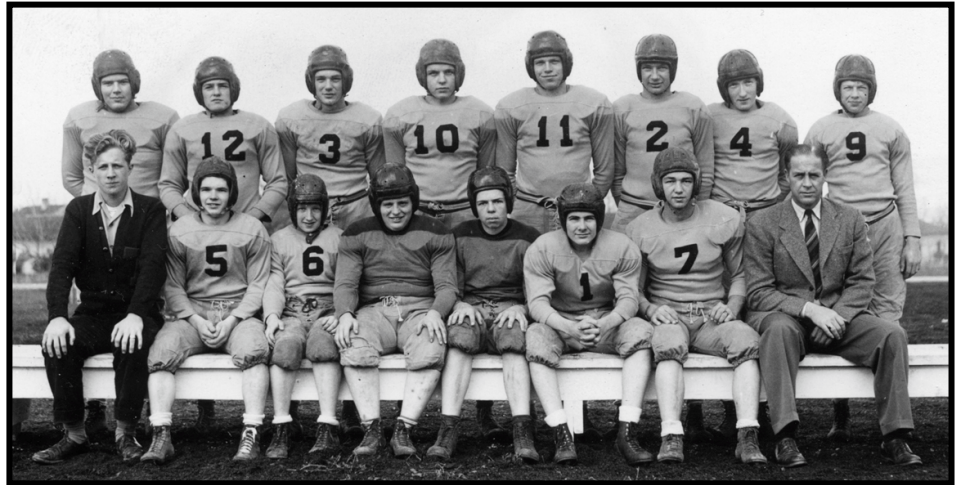
Here is a photo found with the Beeson family photos - I believe it is of Esther Ann Wagner.

School Days

Schools are an important part of any community and the Talent area is no exception. Often one of the first buildings erected, schools provide a consistency and a gathering place where lifetime relations are often formed.

In this issue, we feature the Talent High School class of 1945-46. Their annual, *The Talent*, showcased 16 graduating seniors: Richard Hartley, Gloria Hervey, Fred Wienecke, Lucille Marquess, Jerry Klimek, Delores Chapman, Jim Hayman, Merrilee Thoreson, Dale Dobins, Bonnie Taylor, Gordon Schulz, Bette Wooten, Donald Kendall, Dorothy Hays, Jean Hoffman and Junior Goddard.

The industrious annual staff solicited 126 ads to pay for the publication. Seventy were from Medford businesses, 43 were from Ashland and 13 came from Talent. Local sponsors included: Norris Cash Grocery, Talent Feed Store, Talent Irrigation District, New Talent Garage, S & D Texaco, Valley Locker, Gilbreath Service, Skeeter's, Jack Collens, Judd's Auto Court, Jack and Charle's, Talent Market and Confectionary and Jackson Hot Springs.



The school football team that year included 15 players as well as manager, Marvin Hart and coach, Mr. Parr.

According to *The Talent*: "The Talent Bulldogs again achieved by hard fighting and tactful playing, the Southern Oregon Championship. This

victory makes the twenty-sixth consecutive win over a period of three years and the third consecutive championship. The boys worked hard to make a good showing on their new lighted field."



The highlight of the year was the annual carnival held on October 16, 1945. It was deemed "unusually successful. Lucille Marquess, a senior, reigned over the affair as queen. John Eads, well-known magician, gave a performance of baffling stunts, and the games were conducted by members of the student body. From a financial standpoint, it left the student body well off, besides providing an evening of entertainment for the townspeople and students."

Standing: Betty Montgomery, Leola Lindstrom, Marnell Hill, Bonnie Tayler, Queen Lucille Marquess, Doris Millage, Carolyn Brannan, Joan Davis, Betty Robertson. Sitting: Earline Roberts, Frances Sullivan.

Despite this being in the midst of WWII, the girls were all attired in long, flowing white dresses and look lovely.

In the intervening years, the church building was sold and changed hands before becoming the home of Talent Bible Chapel. In 1965, the Rev. Luther Perdue of the Missionary Baptists began preaching in the old church, and attracted a growing membership. That group added to the front of the building, using the added space for Sunday school rooms. They extended the roof line in front of the steeple, retaining the style of the building. Plans were made to stucco the exterior of the building at this time as the original siding was deteriorating.

Now Grace Bible Church has become the current congregation to cherish the old church building. For readers interested in the present congregation, contact www.gracebiblechurch.net.



Donations needed for Yard Sale

A yard sale will be held on Saturday, Sept. 19 as a fundraiser for the Talent Historical Society. The sale will be held at the Historic Town Hall (formerly the Community Center) at 208 E. Main St., Talent. Hours will be from 8:00 am until 1:00 pm. Donations are being sought and can be dropped off at the museum on Sept. 16, 17 and 18 from 2:30 - 5:30 pm. Arrangements can also be made to pick up your donated items. Nothing is too big or small!

We are also offering the opportunity for people to rent a 10' x 10' space for \$10.00. Table rentals are available for \$2.00. If you wish, we will also take care of any unsold items that remain.

For more information and to arrange for pick up of items, contact Elanah at (541) 535-4700.

Please help us to raise much needed funds by either donating or coming to this event.

Just a Reminder

THS Annual Meeting
Tuesday, Sept. 22
@ 6:30 pm
At the Museum

DON'T MISS OUT!!

Would you like timely email reminders about upcoming events at the Talent Historical Society? If so, contact us at: talenthistory.membership@gmail.com or call and leave a message at (541) 512-8838. Or just drop by the museum and leave us your information. We'll send notices out including all the information about upcoming events.

At the Museum

In each issue, we showcase an interesting artifact or exhibit housed at our museum. Stop by and take a look!



We have added a new display to the museum featuring a copy of the April 3, 1936, Grants Pass *Courier* newspaper. It was their Golden Anniversary edition and included seven sections and 105 pages.

Sections showcased a regular news section followed by six special sections: Indian Wars, Mining Stories, Pioneer Stories, Grants Pass Civic Development, Political History and *Courier* History. It is a rare document as it is seldom that any newspaper, especially from a small town in that era, prints a 105 page paper.

The Voorhies family had a long history of being in publishing and the grandfather, father and the 1935 publisher of this newspaper were all Voorhies. The current Eden Winery near Phoenix was also a Voorhies family site.

We hope you'll stop by and take a look at this unique publication.

People & Places

Early settlers often became namesakes for roads, creeks, mountains etc. As we go about our daily lives, we take these names for granted, not really knowing the people behind the names. Here we present a history of one of those names.

Before there was a Talent, there was a Wagner Creek Community. So who was Wagner and why was a whole community named after him?

As Euro-Americans initially settled in the southern portion of the Rogue River Valley, they were almost all focused along the year-round streams. Fed by the snows of the Siskiyou Mountains to the south, Wagner Creek was a logical location for an early settlement. In the spring of 1852, Jacob Wagner (1820-1900) filed a 160 acre Donation Land Claim along the banks of the creek that would soon bear his name.

Although Wagner was still mining in northern California, he soon decided to settle in the area making him the first to build and remain permanently there. In 1853, he and others built a log stockade around his log cabin that became known as "Fort Wagner". The fort was intended as protection for settlers during the Indian Wars of 1853-1856, and women and children were instructed to all run into Wagner's house if trouble should erupt. The fort was described as having 12-foot walls with observation stations at the corners,

and provided a safe haven for settlers in the southern end of the Bear Creek Valley.

At some point after Wagner's arrival, the creek and the mountain to the southwest were both named after him. The community that flourished along Wagner Creek also bore his name. In 1857, Welborn Beeson noted the area had a population of 42 including ten males over 25 and six females over 25, living in seven household units.

Jacob Wagner was a bachelor when he came to settle on Wagner Creek. In 1860, he traveled back to Iowa to marry 19 year-old Ellen Hendrix and bring her to Oregon. Jacob was more a business man than farmer, and in 1861, the couple moved to Ashland, Oregon, where he invested in the flour mills and other enterprises.

The town of Talent was originally intended to be know as "Wagner Creek" but the Postmaster General designated it as Talent in deference to A.P. Talent who had a thriving store at that location. However, the main business street is known as Wagner St.

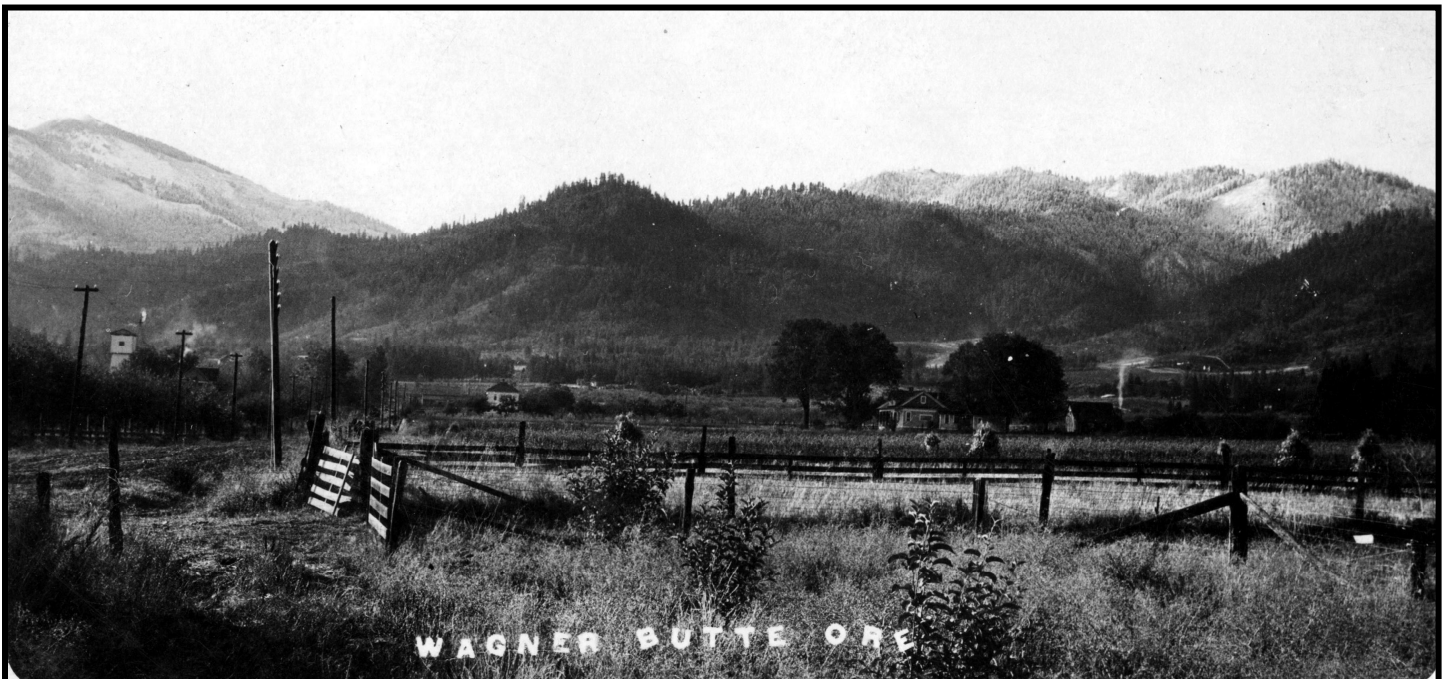
Today, as we travel along Wagner



Jacob Wagner, wife, Ellen, and Family

Creek Road and look up to the majestic mountain in the distance or perhaps stop along the banks of upper Wagner Creek to enjoy a picnic, we can tip our hats to the pioneer, Jacob Wagner, who first settled this land.

(Ed. Some information was taken from "Images of America - Talent" by Jan Wright which may be purchased at the THS museum.)



The Talent Historical Society Membership Application

The Talent Historical Society was founded in 1994 as a non-profit organization dedicated to collecting, preserving and interpreting the history of the Talent area in Southern Oregon. By becoming a member of the Society, you provide valuable support of the Society's ongoing work.

To become a member, please select a membership level, complete the form below, and return the completed form along with your membership payment. All memberships, regardless of level, are greatly appreciated.

Name _____ Date _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Member Type: ☐ New ☐ Renewing

Membership Level: ☐ Student - \$10 ☐ Individual - \$20
 ☐ Family - \$30 ☐ Business - \$50
 ☐ Sponsors - \$100 or more

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Dues include our quarterly newsletter: *The Historacle*

☐ Check to receive *The Historacle* electronically, sent by email in lieu of paper.

Please make checks payable to: Talent Historical Society

Send completed form along with payment to: Talent Historical Society
 P.O. Box 582
 Talent, OR 97540

Thank you!

Talent Historical Society Board of Directors:

Ron Medinger	President - Membership Chair
Bradley Flint	Vice-President - Network Administrator
Bob Casebeer	Secretary
Emmalisa Whalley	Treasurer
Willow Nauth	Board Member
Jan Wright	Board Member

The Monthly Talent Historical Society Board Meeting is held on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the museum building at 105 North Market Street, Talent, Oregon

All interested persons are invited to attend.



Talent Historical Society
P.O. Box 582
Talent, OR 97540

Upcoming Events

Sept. 8	THS Board Meeting	6:00 pm	At the Museum
Sept. 19	Yard Sale Fundraiser	8 am - 1 pm	Historic Town Hall
Sept. 22	Tuesday Evening at the Museum & Annual Meeting	6:30 - 8:00 pm	Preview of our new Walking Tour Booklet
Oct. 3	Talent Harvest Festival	10:30 am - 4 pm	At the Museum
Oct. 13	THS Board Meeting	6:00 pm	At the Museum
Oct. 27	Tuesday Evening at the Museum	6:30 - 8:00 pm	Bob Casebeer presents a talk on the "1853 Preacher Train"
Nov. 10	THS Board Meeting	6:00 pm	At the Museum
Nov. 14	Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser	8 am - 1 pm	Historic Town Hall
Nov. 24	Tuesday Evening at the Museum	6:30 - 8:00 pm	Speaker and topic TBA
Dec. 8	THS Board Meeting	6:00 pm	At the Museum
Dec. 22	Tuesday Evening at the Museum	6:30 - 8:00 pm	Holiday Open House



He and She have an Announcement to Make

He: "Hey! How's it goin'?"

She: "Fine. So did you tell them?"

He: "Not yet. Do you think I should?"

She: "Well....yeah! We want them to save the date, don't we?"

He: "Yeah, but you know... not everything is set up yet."

She: "Listen, we know it will be on November 14th. We know it will run from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. And we know that it will be at Talent's Historic Town Hall. Right?"

He: "True, we know that much. Do you think everybody knows where Talent's Historic Town Hall is? I'm not sure everybody is used to the new name yet."

She: "They'll figure out it's the new name for the old Community Center, where the City Council meetings are held! Talentians are a smart bunch!"

He: "That's for sure. Okay, so there we go.....right?"

She: "Except for the fact that we haven't told them what we're talking about."

He: "Well...there's that."

She: "Talent Historical Society is proud to announce its first Pancake Breakfast to be held in Talent's Historic Town Hall on November 14th, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Tickets will be available at the Historical Society's Museum at 105 North Market Street during regular museum hours, Wednesday through Saturday from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. or from Historical Society Board members and Historical Society Volunteers."

He: "We don't have tickets on sale just yet because we're still working out some of the finer details of our event, but we'll let you all know as soon as they are available. You can tell any Historical Society member you want to buy some when they become available so you don't get left out."

She: "We've even worked out a way for you to support this event if you are a Historical Society supporter, but live out of town, even out of state!"

He: "Or if you don't like pancakes."

She: "Who doesn't like pancakes?"

He: "Umm.....Anti-pancakites?"

She: (Groan) "You've really got to stop watching so many Seinfeld re-runs."

He: "Sorry."

Join us for the first Talent Historical Society Pancake Breakfast on November 14th at Talent's Historic Town Hall. Watch for more information as it becomes available on our Facebook page, (type "Talent Historical Society" in Facebook's search function), on our website www.talenthistory.org, in upcoming emails sent to THS Members and on posters around town. Looking forward to seeing you there!

