

The Historacle

October 2008

The Official newsletter of the

Talent Historical Society



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Exhibit Opening October 18th

Please mark your calendar for the Oct. 18th opening of the pictograph wall exhibit at Talent Historical Society. The pictograph (painted by Tom Doty) will closely duplicate the only known Takelma painted message in the valley. The opening will include a blessing of the rock by Agnes Baker Pilgrim and a slide show by Roy Phillips. Agnes is a descendant of the Takelma people who painted the original pictographs. Roy, who lives in Bend, has studied Indian rock writings all over the country and has many slides to prove it. We are thankful to Meyer Memorial Trust who donated the money to complete this project and to Tom Doty and Matt Watson who helped put the exhibit together. Don't miss this chance to learn about ancient Native communications in Oregon. Program starts at 7:00 p.m. and refreshments will be served. Free to the public.

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Book About Talent!

Director, Jan Wright, has agreed to work with Arcadia Publishing to write a pictorial history of Talent. This publication is planned for the Centennial celebration of the City of Talent and will be on sale by next Harvest Festival in September of 2009.

Photographic collections from Bud Gleim, the Kerby family, Jerry Kime, Mike Cotta, and others are really going to make this a special book with lots of photos that haven't been previously published. If you have photographs you would like to include or you just want to make sure they are preserved in the museum, bring them in for scanning during museum hours. (Wed-Sat. 1-5) Hurry as there is a pretty strict deadline! You'll certainly want a copy of the finished product when it comes out.

Colver House Burning

It's gone. The historic Colver house was destroyed in a fire while neighbors watched the passing of a landmark structure that had witnessed white men and Indians, circus shows and funerals, scholars and dancers, preachers and home businesses. We are deeply sorry for the loss of the structure and truly concerned about the Greers who had to jump from the 2nd story to save their lives.

Not so long ago the building was on the brink of demolition. The owners had an offer from an Ashland woman who would pay for the property but wanted to tear the building down. Most of the historical societies in the county rallied around the cause of saving the house for its historic value. We were all elated when the Phoenix planning committee denied a permit to demolish the building. We were so joyous about "saving the building" that we failed to see the repercussions for the home owners and the community.

I realize now that when we joined others in the fight for saving a house we further isolated the home owners to face a bankrupt situation and didn't offer any support for them to hold on to and keep the house viable. Did the city form a committee or cooperate with the Phoenix Historical Society to back up their sentiments that the building was important to our heritage? Did we put our heads together to support an "outside the box" solution to restore the building or donate our time and energy into an alternative? The Southern Oregon Historical Society's ability to help was weakened by poor leadership and lack of county funding. Individuals had their own mortgages to pay and believed there was nothing they could do. The effort to save the house from demolition was a headliner for a few weeks and then forgotten.

The house was built by the pioneer community and in turn it was used for community purposes throughout the Colver's lifetime. When subsequent ownership effectively closed the house to Jackson County residents, the building fell apart. Had the building remained a part of the community, had the owners taken advantage of the tax breaks and the matching grants offered to restore and fix up the place, perhaps this could have been avoided. We all lost because we don't trust each other, we don't ask for help, we don't think of community generated solutions and we don't keep our cities in good financial order to work to maintain our heritage. We tried to honor the individual land owners privacy and at the same time wanted the old house to serve as a public reminder of the past, even though few of us had ever been inside.

What history lesson comes from this? To those lucky ones who own historic houses- let the public into your homes, let others know what you have, share it so we can recognize the importance of saving it for all of us. And those interested in history- talk to the home owners, become their friends, help them paint and fix up, take an interest and let your actions rebuild the community we have lost.

courtesy Oregon State Library



Sneak Preview



Eagle Mill along Jackson St. in N. Ashland. The mill (white building in the center of the image) is gone but the barn is still there. You can see it from highway 99 on your way into Ashland on the left hand side of the road. (courtesy of Kerby family)

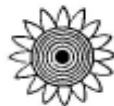
I couldn't resist showing you some of the many new photos we have generously received from families in Talent. Some of these might be included in the Talent book.



Probably Charles Gleim in his Talent baseball uniform.
(courtesy Bud Gleim)



1943 Talent football team (courtesy Bud Gleim)



Eye Witness Accounts of Camp Baker

“...the Civil War was drawing near, and the news of the firing on Fort Sumpter sent a thrill of anger through the hearts of all true patriots and the necessity of prompt action on the part of all true patriots required that this remote part of the great nation do its part in the defense of the Union. Although our frontiers were occupied by hostile Indians who were only held in subjection by the military forces stationed at the various frontier posts, the necessity of having all available troops sent to the front necessitated the raising of volunteers to replace the regulars now guarding us, that they might assist in putting down the rebellion. A call was immediately issued for the raising of a full regiment of Cavalry and Jackson County was required to furnish one company.

Recruiting offices were opened and the section of log barracks for their accommodation was commenced in the early fall of 1861. The site selected for the camp was in the woods about a mile southwest of the town of Gassburg, on Coleman Creek. In a short time the log barracks, stables for the horses, officers quarters and store houses were completed for as fast as volunteers were recruited they were set to work. As soon as the barracks were habitable the clearing of the ground for drilling purposes followed and it became a busy place.

Gassburg simply rushed into the proportions and activity of a small city, as all the material and subsistence required to maintain a full company of Cavalry with their horses and everything pertaining thereto was of necessity purchased here. The shoeing of all the horses and teams kept the blacksmiths and shops busy. Milt Smith had been joined the fall before or that spring by O. T. Brown, who just came across the plains from Wisconsin, and he was a good smith and tireless worker, though a small man. He and Smith took the contract to shoe the government stock and it kept them busy from daylight until dark, weekdays and Sundays. Meanwhile Brown took the ague, which was then the prevailing disease all along Bear Creek every summer and fall. Still, never stopping to rest except when he shook so hard he could not drive a shoe nail. Brown worked, until, by spring when the Cavalry left he was almost a physical wreck.

The raising of the Company of Cavalry in the Valley sadly depleted the number of young men in the community as well as to change the political complexion of the vote. Jackson County for a few years had become quite a strong Republican County, but after the departure of the volunteers, followed almost immediately by a large influx of Missouri bushwhackers, who had been chased out of Missouri, when Price's army was defeated and scattered the first year of the war, it was for many years Democratic.

Among the young men who enlisted in the first Cavalry from Gassburg that I now recall were the following: Hobert Taylor, Jas Hoxie, Jas Kimball, Robert Gray, Gus Lavenburg, Felix & Joseph Peppon and I think, John Van Dyke, several others whose names I have forgotten.”

(from Orson Stearns – *Reminiscences of Pioneer Days and Early Settlers of Phoenix and Vicinity*)

Dec 2nd - Dec 9th 1861 Monday...the cavalry company is going to establish winter quarters near to Gassburg. It will make quite brisk times in the town. ...

.... Wallace says Capt Harris' Company of Volunteers have arrived in Gassburg and are going to commence to build Quarters for Winter on Colemans creeck. Wallace talks some of volunteering.

... after dinner Wallace, Joe Logan and I rode to Gassburg and around by Camp Baker situated about one mile west of Gassburg on Coleman Creeck right in the midst of a young pine grove. Some fifty of the volunteers are at work building houses and stables. They build them out of logs. They work very slow. 2nd Lieut. Hopkins was in command. Sargent Cole was the most active officer in the camp. (Welborn Beeson Diary)

Hargadine Cemetery Tour

Jan Wright, THS director, will conduct a tour of the Hargadine Cemetery in Ashland on October the 25th. The Cemetery is at the top of Sheridan Street on the right hand side of the road. You are invited to attend the 2:00 p.m. tour through the North Mountain Park in Ashland. If you want to make a reservation call 488-6606. If you want to just show up, that is okay too. Jan will talk about the people buried there and the Ashland story. If enough interest is expressed, Jan is more than willing to do a Stearns Cemetery tour as well.

Board of Directors:

President:	Bob Casebeer
Vice Pres:	Bill Horton
Secretary:	Katherine Harris
Treasurer:	Ralph Hunkins
Directors:	Lynn Newbry Greg Goebelt
Alternate:	Helen Seiber
Emeritus:	Alice Burnette

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Museum Director : Jan Wright

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Katherine Harris
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Ann Ramage
Liz Carter
Larry Wikander
Dick Simonson
Pat Bentley
Bob Casebeer
Ralph Hunkins
Bill Horton
Greg Goebelt
Susanna Wood
Jessica Ruediger

Our Secretary, Katherine Harris became a widow last month. She is always there for us and we are so grateful for her ever-present focus and energy. Please join us in sympathy to her and her family. When David Harris died, Katherine graciously asked that instead of flowers to send a donation to Talent Historical Society. Thanks to those who gave in memory of David Harris.

Katherine and her daughter, Doris came to help ALL DAY at Harvest Festival just a week after the funeral. We can't say enough about Katherine and only hope to return some of the kindness and dedication that she so clearly shows to us.

Seeking Board Members

If you have an interest in history, skills to offer, and desire to contribute to the community, please consider becoming a board member on the Talent Historical Society board. Leave a lasting impression on Talent by participating during the Centennial year and keep history alive by volunteering at the museum on various projects. We need your expertise, energy, and time and in particular, a new treasurer is needed. Meetings are once a month on Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. Call 512-8838 or 535-4394 if you would like to discuss being on the board.

International History Items

Oldest Gold in the Americas found near Lake Titicaca .

University of Arizona archaeologists have discovered the oldest gold artifact in the Americas, a 4,000 year-old necklace. It predates the oldest previously known gold object by 600 years. The village where the necklace was found was inhabited from 3300 BC to 1500 BC. The necklace was fashioned by taking gold nuggets from a nearby mine, and pounding them flat. The flattened sheets were rolled around a tube. Nine such beads were strung on a necklace and interspersed with small turquoise-colored stones.



Jaw Fragment Knocks Europe's Prehistory for a Loop

Madrid: A small piece of jawbone unearthed in a cave in Spain is the oldest known fossil of a human ancestor found in Europe and suggests that people lived on the continent much earlier than previously believed. The fossil, found last year, along with stone tools and animal bones is up to 1.3 million years old. That would be 500,000 years older than remains from a 1997 find that prompted the naming of a new species Homo Antecessor, or Pioneer Man, possibly a common ancestor to Neanderthals and modern humans. This new find bears similarities to much older fossils dug up since 1983 in the Caucasus in the Republic of Georgia that were dated as being up to 1.8 million years old.

Paisley, Oregon, Fossil Find is Oldest in North America

Newly discovered human coprolites (fossil feces) were found in a cave deposit in Paisley, the oldest evidence of humans in North America. New evidence shows humans lived in North America more than 14,000 years ago. This evidence is 1200 years older than any previous evidence for humans in North America. The Oregon find is "a smoking gun" for the pre-Clovis colonization of the Americas. The coprolites were found in a cave in the Summer Lake Basin. The Paisley Caves are eight in number and are wave-cut shelters on the shoreline of Lake Chewaucan whose levels rose and fell with changes in the precipitation in the region. In addition to the coprolites, the anthropologists found manufactured threads of sinew and plant fibers, hides, basketry, cordage, rope, wooden pegs, animal bones and a couple of projectile point fragments.

Chilean Site Matches Age of Oregon Cave

Remains of meals that included seaweed are helping confirm the date of a settlement in southern Chile that may offer the earliest evidence of humans in the Americas. Researchers date the seaweed found a Monte Verde to more than 14,000 years ago. Taken with the find near Paisley, Oregon, the finds move back evidence of people in the Americas by a millennium or more. Other food remains found on the site include vegetables, nuts, shellfish, an extinct species of llama and an elephant-like animal called a gomphothere. These were found in the hearths of the homes of from 20 to 30 people who lived at the site.

Spiritualism on Wagner Creek

Many of our founding fathers and mothers in Talent were spiritualists. Our first mayor, William Breese, was an avid practitioner.

Spiritualism affirms that humans are dual beings, having a physical and a spiritual component. When the body dies, the spirit lives on in



another existence. It made sense to spiritualists that through the right “medium” those spirits could be contacted by the living. Many times, spiritualism was associated with bereavement as was evident the case of Mary Todd Lincoln who held seances in the White House to reconnect with her dead sons, Willie and

Eddie. It gained in popularity when it was revealed that Queen Victoria was also a practicing Spiritualist.

Though there were disbelievers, many “circles” were held up and down Wagner Creek from the 1860s (up until the 1920s) as illustrated in the quote (below) from Welborn Beeson’s diary.

26 Oct 1860 ... “I went up to Robisons John & Rob went with me to Holtons, we formed a circle around the table to try to have the spirits make some manifestations. John, Rob, Orson & Newele Mr. Holton and myself. Mrs. Holton said the spirits would not let her put her hands on the table, we set about an hour but did not see any manifestations, except the earnestness of Mrs. & Mr. Holton, to convince me but what it is all a humbug. They seem however in full faith that they are influenced by spirits we are to meet again tomorrow night”

Memberships this Quarter

Renewing Members

Judie Bunch
Lillian & Christine Fullerton
Dwayne & Kathy Guthrie
Barbara Haade
Paul & Nellie Creel

New Members

Pamela Grove
Victoria King
Sue Sanders
Duane & Dorothea Wheeler
Steven Banks

Thank you!

All memberships fees (except the above)
for 2009 are **now due !**

Visit the website at www.talenthistory.org for membership forms.

Seeking stories about the *Great Depression*
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