



The Historacle

The Official Newsletter of the
Talent Historical Society

Volume 22 Issue 3

September 2016

Ann Welborn Beeson - Talent Pioneer Woman

As I reviewed some past issues of *The Historacle*, I found article after article written about some of Talent's most prominent founding fathers. There was mention of Jacob Wagner, Albert and George Rockfellow and John and Welborn Beeson. But what about the pioneer women? They were certainly an important part of the community, but yet they are seldom, if ever, acknowledged.

One such woman was Ann Welborn Beeson. Much of what we know about Ann comes to us in the form of diary entries made by her son, Welborn. Welborn began keeping a diary in 1851 and continued the practice until 1893, and his diary entries from 150 years ago are posted daily on our Facebook page. So let's take a look at the life and times of a woman who travelled half way across the world to make her home in what today is the Talent community.

Ann Welborn was christened on November 11, 1805 in the hamlet of Woolsthorpe, Near Grantham, Lincolnshire, England. She was the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Welborn. Located 94 miles north of London in the East Midlands region of England, the town's claim to fame is that it was the birthplace of Sir Isaac Newton in 1642.

Ann married John Beeson at the age of 22 on October 9, 1827 in the parish of Woolsthorpe. A copy of the church registry for this event is on file at the Museum. In 1830, the couple emigrated to America on the ship Samuel Robertson through the port of New York and at first settled near Ithaca, New York. They moved to LaSalle County, Illinois in 1833. A daughter, Frances, died in infancy. On July 22, 1836 a son, Welborn Beeson, was born. The couple did not have any other children.

When Ann was 48, a decision was made to move west, and the family

embarked on a journey to the Oregon Territory. The Beesons joined a wagon train heading west on May 25, 1853 on the Platte River.

An account of the trip written by Alice Rockfellow, who was 4 years old while on the wagon train, talks about snow and flowers and "*recalled laughter when camps were set up, but being told to quiet down by guards who feared Indian attacks.*" One can only imagine the hardships that Ann endured in her journey across the country.

Starting out on the Oregon Trail, the travelers eventually veered off onto the California Trail which travelled west along the Humboldt River to where the Applegate Trail branched off to the northwest. The settlers made their way

down the steep, westerly slope of the Cascades emerging into the Rogue Valley where Emigrant Lake now sits. The trail continued along what is now Talent Avenue with the wagon train arriving in the Talent area on August 30, 1853.

The Beeson's filed a Donation Land Claim, #63, for 320.14 acres, half in Ann's name and half in her husband, John's name, on what is now Wagner Creek Road and the intersection of Beeson Lane. Ann's new life had begun and she faced the challenges of setting up a home in what was then a wilderness.

Ann's husband, John Beeson, was known as an abolitionist in Illinois and when he moved to the West, his focus changed from slavery to the rights of Native Americans. His views were very unpopular with his neighbors and on May 25, 1856 he was forced to flee the Rogue Valley for his life.

Welborn's diary entry for that day reads, "*Father started for the Williamette at 11 o'clock last night. There is nobody but Mother and I at home. I have the whole management of the farm resting on my shoulders. Nobody round here knows that Father is gone yet.*" So at the young age of 20, Welborn and his Mother were left to try and carve out a living on their 320 acres. This proved a difficult task and their finances were always an issue. John Beeson constantly asked them to send him money to finance his endeavors back east, which made the situation even more difficult. It is understandable that the mother and son would become exceptionally close as they battled for their survival together. Years later, in 1867, Welborn laments, "*when he (John Beeson) left 11 years*



Ann Welborn Beeson - Taken in 1864 at the Peter Britt Studio in Jacksonville, Oregon when she was 59 years old.

Continued on page 10

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 Saturday and Sunday and holiday Mondays from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

General Business Address:

P.O. Box 582
Talent, OR 97540

Phone Number: (541) 512-8838

Email: info@talenthistory.org

www.talenthistory.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/talenthistory/

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Belinda Klimek Vos

THS President's Message

I'm writing this the day after our August THS Board Meeting. We were doing some planning last night for our Harvest Festival activities and it was pointed out that "Gee, we sure could use a few more volunteers to help us!" We plan on having an entry in the parade, a booth at the Harvest Festival and the Museum will be open with a couple of special things happening there. If you've not already committed to one of the other groups participating in the Harvest Festival, how about donating a couple hours of your time for the Historical Society? If you can help, email us at info@talenthistory.org, or call the museum 541.512.8838 and leave a message with your contact information, someone will call you back!

We could use your great energy!!

Ron Medinger

Memberships since last Issue

New Members:

Otto King
Noni Eaton

Mark & Julie Jaffe

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DON'T MISS OUT!!

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

Harvest Festival

Talent’s annual Harvest Festival will be held on Saturday, October 1st and will include a Pancake Breakfast, hosted by the Talent Chamber of Commerce, and a 5k and 10K walk/run organized by the Southern Oregon Runners. The Grand Parade will begin at 10 AM down Main Street.

The Talent Historical Society will once again have an entry in the parade and will also have a booth. The Museum will be open from 10:30 am until 5:00 pm that day. Stop by our festival booth and enter a free raffle where we are giving away two t-shirts of your choice, a commemorative belt buckle, and a copy of Jan Wright’s book on Talent. Then, drop your ticket off at the Museum to enter. There, you’ll receive a bundle of notecards with historic photographs - all for free. The raffle drawing will be held at the Museum at 4:00 pm and you need not be present to win.

Beginning at 10:45 am there will be live entertainment and music on the City Hall Main Stage continuing until 4 pm. There will be locally grown produce, arts & crafts, local beers and wines, apple pressing in the Harvest Home area, favorite local food vendors, games and much more!!

So, come on down and join the fun as Talent celebrates this long running community event. And you might even go home with some great Talent souvenirs!!

YouTube Channel

We now have a YouTube channel! It may be accessed by going to www.youtube.com and entering Talent Historical Society in the search area. Then choose our site to see all the videos currently available. Click on subscribe, if you would like to receive notification of any new videos.

Here is our first video offering: Talent Historical Society's Tuesday Evening at the Museum for April 26, 2016. Remembrances of Clarence and Genevieve Holdridge, "A Talent Couple". Thank you to David Tokar for filming and providing the finished video.

We hope to add more videos in the future, so stay tuned. If you have video recording skills, we have several projects available. Please let us know if you can help.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
 ★ **Museum Hours:** ★
 ★ **Saturday and Sunday** ★
 ★ **1:00 pm to 5:00 pm** ★
 ★ **Holiday Mondays** ★
 ★ **1:00 pm to 5:00 pm** ★
 ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Heritage District Vote November 8th

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners have voted to initiate formation of a Rogue Valley Heritage District. The district must win voter approval during the November 8 general election.

If approved, the district would cover the county and would cost property owners 5 cents per \$1,000 in assessed property value - or \$10 per year for the owner of a house assessed at \$200,000. A Board of Directors will also be elected to oversee the District’s operation.

The permanent levy would provide funding to the Southern Oregon Historical Society as well as to the other 14 historical societies in the county.

The Talent Historical Society is expected to receive approximately \$13,000 on a yearly basis if the levy were to pass. The money could be used to support educational programs as well as pay for utilities, insurance and general operating expenses. The past few years have been very lean ones financially for our Historical Society. Currently, we survive solely on memberships and fundraisers, and just keeping the doors of the Museum open and maintaining the Society has been difficult at times. There is no paid staff, just volunteers

This additional source of stable, secure income would allow us to move forward with our plans for the future. We can only imagine the amazing projects that would be possible with this additional funding.

We urge you to vote in favor of this levy and to be a vocal supporter of this ballot measure to family and friends. It’s only with your help that we will be able to get this measure passed. Surely \$10 to \$20 dollars a year is worth protecting Talent’s rich history.

Tuesday Evening at the Museum

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

On June 28, Bob Casebeer gave an interesting talk on “ Why Oregon residents were so different than those who settled California.”

THS Historian Jan Wright led a wonderful field trip at Stearns Cemetery on Tuesday evening, July, 26th where she once again inspired us with tales of some of Talent’s past residents.

Master storyteller, Thomas Doty, entertained a nice crowd on August 23rd with a talk entitled “Stories From Home”.

On Sept. 27th, Ben Truwe will tell about the life of Pinto Colvig, who was born in Jacksonville and had a career as an actor, newspaper cartoonist and circus performer. He was the original Bozo the Clown.

Our Annual Meeting will be held on October 25th. Board President, Ron Medinger, will give a State of the Society Address.

The November 22nd program will be announced at a later date.

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

Please come and join us as we explore the rich history of Talent, Oregon. The meetings are free and open to the public and you need not be a member to attend.

Talent Poker Tour

Talent Historical Society will hold the first in a series of poker tournaments called the Talent Poker Tour on Saturday, October 29th at the Museum. The tournament will start at 2:00 p.m. and is estimated to run until approximately 6:00 p.m. The tournament is open to THS members only, with a membership level of Family or above.

The No-Limit Texas Hold'em tournament will feature a buy-in of \$40.00 with all entry money paid back out as cash prizes. Refreshments and snacks will be available for a modest cost. This is a no alcohol/no smoking event.

Contact info@talenthistory.org or call the museum at 541.512.8838 for additional information.

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.

The Talent High School Class of 1942

The school year began on September 15, 1941. Who could have imagined the world wide events that would transpire during this momentous period of time; this one school year. War was already raging in Europe and the United States was hanging back pondering what course to take. But high school continued and students still needed to be educated no matter what was happening in the rest of the world.

On December 7, 1941 the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and the United States entered World War II. According to a review of the freshman class, *"A freshman-sophomore skating party was planned, but had to be cancelled."* It was planned for December 8th. I don't imagine anyone was in the mood for a party.

Roy Parr was the Principal of the school and there were five teachers. One teacher, Dexter Russell, reportedly *"left at the call of 'Uncle Sam' and is at present in the physical education program of the Navy."* He was replaced by Mrs. Render.

In reading through the school annual for that year, there is little mention of the war. Only a few clues to acknowledge the troublesome times the students were facing. The description for the baseball team reads, *"Due to the saving of rubber and gasoline for National Defense, the Talent High baseball team had to pick up games wherever it could. The 'B' schools did not have a baseball league this year due to certain conditions. The team arranged games with Phoenix, Medford and Ashland."* The annual staff seemed to be doing its best to just go on with their lives and enjoy their high school years as best they could.

There were still plenty of activities, a lot in fact for the size of the school. Clubs included: Hi-Life, the school newspaper which published seven issues that year; Drill team; The Talent, which included the annual staff; Girls' League, G.A.A., Girls athletic Association which was cut short when noon hours were shortened to thirty-five minutes; and the

Lettermen's Club,

Dramatics included both a senior and junior play. There was quite a large band, orchestra as well as a chorus. Sports, boys only of course, included football, basketball and baseball.

There were 19 seniors that graduated that year: LaVelle Mason, Alvin Fenton, Ruth Kyniston, Antony Klimek, Willis Cole, Mary Lou Thanos, Russell Seaman, Barbara Terrill, Almena Dobbins, Lloyd Lacy, Pat Haney, Mark McKenzie, Virginia Garvin, Davis Young, Bob Marquess, Juanita Boardman, Bill Slack, Lorna Hayman and Lucile Young.

The school also included 25 Juniors, 22 Sophomores and 12 Freshman for a total student population of 78.

One of those graduating seniors, Lavelle Mason Hicks, is a current member of the Talent Historical Society. She stopped by the Museum on the day



LaVelle Mason - 1942

of our Talent Tomato sale and had a talk with Board President Ron Medinger. He was also able to snap a photo of her and her niece

while they browsed through a copy of the 1942 THS annual.

The annual looked to be quite an ambitious project. It consisted of 32 pages with a nice aqua colored cover. The forward states: *"To record the life of one year at Talent High School has been the aim of this volume of The Talent. We hope it will bring to you many pleasant memories of plays, sports, classmates, friends, clubs, and teachers."*

Area business were very supportive



LaVelle Mason Ricks and her niece Nancy Barrett Coghill May 7, 2016

and a total of 72 ads appear on the back six pages. The list of sponsors is quite impressive. Bowling alleys, dairies, lumber and feed stores, sawmills, jewelry stores and hardware stores from Talent, Ashland and Medford all bought ads enabling the students to publish the annual. Some Talent area ads included: Talent Feed Store, Bates Service Station, Talent Pool Hall and the Talent Irrigation District. Even the Talent P.T.A. bought an ad. Litwiller Funeral Home in Ashland, Oregon announced "We Never Close" and The What -Not 10 Cent Store sent *Congratulations and Best Wishes to Talent High Graduates*.

Graduation took place on May 7, 1942. One can only imagine what it must have been like for the students at Talent High School that year; their carefree high school days overshadowed by world events. Certainly most, if not all, of the boys would go on to see military service. My Uncle Tony (Antony Klimek) was one of those graduating that year, and as soon as he turned 18, he left for the Army. His three older brothers were already overseas and he soon joined them. What a time of uncertainty and fear, and yet the pages of their high school annual are full of good cheer and activities. Life went on, even as the world unraveled. My Uncle managed to make it back to Talent after being wounded in Germany and went on to have a good life. After the war ended, one can only hope that the rest of that graduating class would also pick up the pieces and go on with their lives.

SENIOR CLASS (Taken from the 1942 Yearbook)

The Class of '42 entered high school with an enrollment of twenty-six. The green freshmen were initiated in the fall by the "superior" sophomores. The initiation was three days long and on the evening of the third day it was ended by a party held in the gym. Some of the boys were active in sports and others participated in the operetta and other activities.

In our sophomore year there were twenty-three of us. We had lost five but had two new members. Our biggest activity of the year was the freshman initiation. We also sponsored two plays for assembly and a dance for the student body.

We completed our junior year with eighteen. We had lost seven but had gained two. We sponsored a prom and banquet for the senior class. The banquet was held in the school cafeteria and the prom was held in the gym. During the year we gave our junior play, "His Uncle's Niece."

Our senior class consists of nineteen. We have two new students, but have lost one. Our senior year was quite active. They boys participated in sports, and the girls in other activities. We attended the junior-senior prom and banquet, given by the juniors, and in return we gave them a picnic. We also sponsored an assembly program and our senior, "Spring Fever," which was a huge success.

At the Museum

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

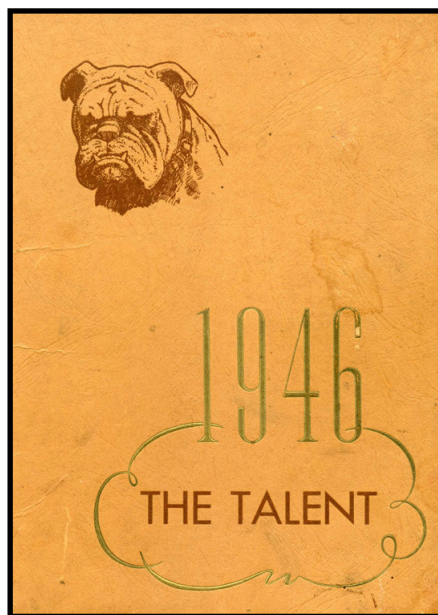
The Talent Historical Society has a fine collection of Talent High School annuals ranging from 1937 to 1960.

Some have been donated by past students, and in 2014, we received a donation of 16 annuals from Ron Baker that were from the Phoenix High School Library.

In January of this year, Board President, Ron Medinger, was able to obtain the 1944 THS annual on eBay. It was a wonderful find as that was a year that we were missing! We have one year, 1945, that we don't have. He is notified of any item put on eBay with Talent in the title, so we will keep looking.

Our first annual is from the 1936-37 school year. We do not know if an annual was published for the high school before that date. 1960 was the last year that Talent had a high school. Talent and Phoenix merged to form a new school district and the high school was moved to Phoenix. The former Talent High School then became the Junior High for the district.

If you or anyone you know has any old annuals that you would be willing to donate, please let us know. We treasure this collection of our past high school



and feel it is a valuable resource. We often have members of the community come in to take a stroll down memory lane and remember former classmates and fun times.

The annuals are housed in a bookcase beneath the north facing windows near the reading area. Stop by and take a look at some photos from "the good old days".

Talent High School Annuals at the Museum

1937	Talent High School
1938	The Lookout
1939	The Talent
1940	The Talent
1941	The Talent
1942	The Talent
1943	The Talent
1944	The Talent
1946	The Talent
1947	The Bulldog
1948	The Bulldog
1949	The Bulldog
1950	The Bulldog
1951	The Bulldog
1952	The Bulldog
1953	The Bulldog
1954	D'Anjou
1955	D'Anjou
1956	Challenger
1957	Challenger
1958	Challenger
1959	Challenger
1960	Challenger

From Our Facebook Page

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

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

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

In a daily post, we are following pioneer Welborn Beeson's diary entry from 150 years ago. (currently 1866)

Our Facebook page has moved!! Administrator, Ron Medinger explains that the old page was a "group" page and had limitations. The new page will enable us to do more things and will be an improvement. We now have a regular Facebook page that is set up for a larger audience. You do not need to "sign up" for this new page, all you have to do is "Like" it. No asking to join, just like it." So make sure you follow us to our new, improved page so you can continue to enjoy the latest THS news and diary postings!

For anyone who has been following Welborn Beeson's daily diary entries, what an emotional rollercoaster we have been on over the past few months. Many followers made comments as we read of the events unfolding in Welborn's life 150 years ago. We painfully read of the sad loss of his Mother and his difficulty in imagining his life without her (see article on page 1). But while her last days unfold, something wonderful happens as well; Welborn falls in love.

On June 25th, 1866, Welborn mentions, "I sent Logan on Hinkle with Jessie, to Col Brophy's to have Kate come up and do house work, and wait on Mother, for a while. she got here Just as I had dinner ready. So who was this Kate he mentions. Mary Catherine Brophy was the 17 year old

daughter of Colonel John Brophy, and the two had met the previous fall when the Brophy's had moved to the area. However, Welborn later explains that circumstances of his Mother's illness and rain had prevented him from going to see her.

As his Mother's condition worsens he writes on June 28, "... the neighbors are all so kind, and Kate is so good, I could not possibly get along with out her and Mother likes her so much. Mother told me to day that Kate was the best girl she had seen in Oregon."

By the next day, Welborn knows that his Mother's time is drawing near and some of the neighbors come to stay, including Esther Ann Wagner, the girl Welborn has pined for and been in love with for so many years. She had spurned him and refused his marriage proposal, but has come to help in his time of need. Jun 29th Friday. half past twelve oclock, A.M, "It is cool night so far. Esther is sleeping with Kate up stairs. I dont know what I ever saw about Esther that I could love so much as I once did. I dont see it now, any way. Kate is worth half a dozen of her."

As Ann Beeson lay dying, Welborn and Kate are together with her during her last moments. Ten oclock June 29th. "... after tea Mother was taken worse, and Kate and I nursed her for an

hour alone. at eight oclock I sent Logan for Mrs Robison, during that time Kate and I stood by. Mother kissed me once, and then passed easily away to rest. Logan is crying and taken it pretty hard. We are left alone indeed, but Kate has promised her sympathy as long as she lives, and I hope I may allways prove myself worthy of so good a girls frienship as she is."

By the next day, Welborn is professing his love for Kate and asks her to marry him. June 30th, Saturday. "I went up early and choose a beutiful spot for My Mothers Grave, the boys are digging it. I came back home no one hear but our own folks and Kate she is doing the house work. I wish she was one of us. I asked her to day if she could love me well enough to marry me she said she did not know, but thought she could. She is to give me an answer soon. I hope she will say yes. I love her better than I ever did Esther. In fact I know now I never did love Esther at all but that I thought I did, because, she let on that she thought so much of me. If Kate will accept me two greatest events of my life will happen this year. My Mother's death and my engagement to the prettiest girl I ever saw with out exceptions, Mary, C. Brophy but may be she will refuse If she does I shall leave this country for a while. I cannot stay." He continues a bit later, "Oh! Dearest,



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Kate! she has answered me yes, and I am happy in the thought of her loving me well enough to be my own bride." Kate then writes, "(Wilber I love you Dearly and I hope that nothing but Death will ever part us my hand trembles so that I cant write but I am yours truly Mary C. Brophy) Yes Dearest and after we will turn to this page and It will remind us of this night which combines to us, so much." Later that day as he is professing his love for Kate, "Esther Ann has Just come to look over our shoulders while writing the foregoing but soon became disgusted and left and went into the other room." It should be noted that Welborn and Kate have just agreed to be married after only a few days together and she doesn't even seem to know his actual name!!!

The next day Welborn takes Kate and her Mother home, stays for a few days and laments that he is still uncertain of her love for him. By July 7th he trades his horse, Lionheart, for a gray mare and a buggy and some serious courting is about to begin. Esther continues to be very jealous and sends him a pie. July 8th Sunday. "... I am now going to get ready and go down to see Katie. I wonder if she has thought as much about me as I have of her. I do want to see her so bad. Esther sent a pie up to me yesterday she is trying her best to win my love from Kate but that is impossible for I love Kate better than any one I ever saw. I have

just got home from taking Kate home. this morn I went and got her we came home and staid awhile, eat the pie Esther had baked for me." Welborn and Kate then go for a long buggy ride full of adventure and he says, "I enjoyed myself more in the last half hour of our ride than in all my life time. Kate repeated her promise to me to be true and that she was wholely mine, and loved me truly She seems afraid the Colnl will object to our union. If he does, I shall propose an elopement, which will give romance to the reality of life."

On July 9th, Esther comes to gather currants and she and Welborn talk, "Esther, had a great deal to tell me, I believe the girl loves me now truly, but It is to late. She is entirly out of my heart, and my own Kate fills her place. Esther says she will drown herself if I should marry any other, but I guess she will get over that, bravely, she was talking as we picked courants for three hours I know Kate would have felt a little jealous if she had seen Esther talking to me so long, but she need not for my heart is entirely hers for ever. I offered it to Esther and It laid bear at the shrine of her mercy for four year's and she scorned my love. and It returned more pure for trial It had to go through, and now I have fully given my love to Kate. I hope Esther Ann will find some one to love and be good to her as I


would have been is the worst wish I have for her. How my hand trembles Kate I wish you were here."

Esther continued to try and convince Welborn to reconsider, but he remained steadfast in his love for Kate. He became concerned, however, that Esther would try and turn Kate against him. And the neighbors start to weigh in with their opinions as well. Welborn writes, "Kate if you only knew how every body is trying to plague me about you, you would laugh. they have now got all kinds of storys about you and me, going to sleep with our heads together one night when we were sitting up and about every thing that could be thought of."

Many of the concerns revolve around the fact that the Brophy's were staunch Catholics and supporters of the Confederacy, while Welborn was very pro Union. He worries, "Oh Dearest Kate, I wonder if you will love me, when you know how strong a Union man I am. I want you to be Union too. I wish your folks all was, but every body has a right to be as they are."

Welborn's concerns were well founded. On July 12th, he asked Coronel Brophy for Kate's hand in marriage and was denied. "I asked the Coln just as we were passing Constants for Kate. He told me he liked me as a Man, but thought he was not acquainted long enough and made several

Continued on page 8



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Continued from page 7

objections. He says Kate is a strong Catholic, and was afraid that might be a cause of difference between us. He refused to give consent at present." The path of true love does not seem to be running smoothly.

Over the next few days, the neighbors continue to harass Welborn about his intentions toward Kate Brophy and they implore him to reconsider and instead marry Esther Ann Wagner. He remains steadfast, however, and professes his love for her in his long and detailed diary entries.

We also learn that the Brophy family is moving to California soon, further complicating matters. Then on July 17, 1866, Colonel Brophy comes to see Welborn to talk about the situation. Welborn writes, "Brophy came up and took dinner. He came to close the final business he said about the question I asked him, He said I might have Katie If I would take good care of her He insists on the ceremony being performed by Blachet the Catholic Priest. I do not like that much but I will sacrifice almost any thing for the sake of her I love so well."

But, two days later Kate's Father changes his mind and decides he won't allow the marriage. Welborn is devastated and on July 22, 1866, he spends his 30th birthday despondent as no one "wishes him happiness." Welborn goes to the Brophy's the next day and is told that he must submit to certain religious conditions if he is to marry Kate. Torn between his love and his principals, he laments, "I am discouraged, and disheartened. I feel a sincere love for Kate Brophy, and I think she has a love for me, but alas the Religious faith is brought up to break the union of two loving hearts, with out I subdue my manly pride and take an Oath to allow my children, if ever blest with any, to be subject to the teaching and superstitious gourdianship of a Priest, I can not have her. My heart impels me to submit and again my spirit tells me not to."

Obviously troubled, Welborn writes on July 24th, 1866 that he will leave if they don't marry and then doesn't write in his diary again until July 28th. Whew, what a courtship!

He changes his mind about leaving, but continues to anguish between his wanting to marry Kate and having to give in to the religious demands. On July 31 he goes to the Brophy's and decides that he and Kate will be married the following Monday, but has grave doubts as to the marriage actually happening. He then writes a very long diary entry venting his torn views and ending by saying, "I must fill out this page, but my candle is almost out and I forgot to buy any to night and have not got any more in the house so I have to write fast to get done before it is out. I wonder if this page will ever be of interest, to any living person." If only he knew!!

Over the next week, the neighbors continue to harass him about marrying Kate. Welborn plays it very cool and tells no one that he has already set his wedding date with Kate. Instead, he goes out and about and pretends that he is just fine. He goes as far as to take someone else to the Lodge and pretend he is interested in her. The intrigue continues as he continues to secretly write that he is hoping to fool them all when he makes Kate his wife.

After all the drama of the preceding few weeks the actual wedding day is surprisingly calm. Welborn writes, Aug 6th Monday and my Wedding day: "... This morning I was up and went to the Colns found he was just getting ready to start to Jacksonville Kate was all ready there.....we turned out the team and He rode with me in the buggy. found Katie and everything went off pleasant we got out the license and Father Blanchet performed the ceremony at the Residence of Dr. T.T. Cabiness. I liked the ceremony very much, and was very favorably impressed with Blanchet the Priest. I can hardly bring myself to say Father, because I believe he is not as old as I am." Welborn then does some business in town, they have some supper and then begin the ride home. ".....started for home, arived at half past eight, introduced Mrs Beeson to Wallace & Bob & Logan. Martha and the children had all gone to bed, and now I have been writing this and am going to bed. Kate already having lain down. I feel afraid the boys will be here to Chivarie us about the time I get to bed but I hope they will let us alone the first night."

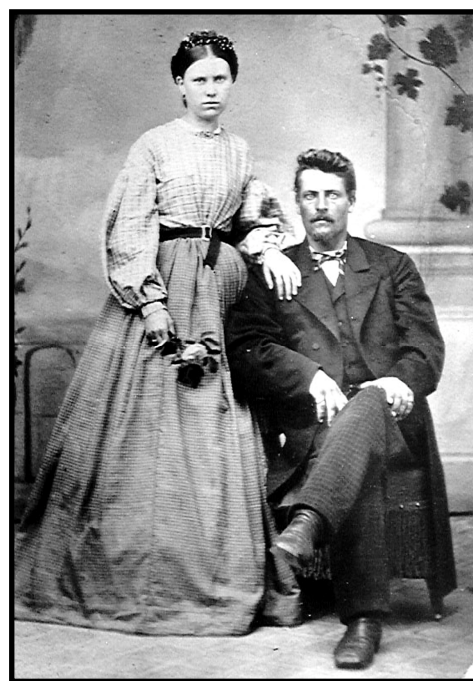
As the newlyweds settle into

married life, Welborn seems happy and content; staying in bed late and neglecting his work a bit. He writes, "oh how pleasantly life is passing now. If I could be assured of passing all my life thus happy I would want to live always."


Not long after their marriage, Welborn and Kate had the photograph below taken at the Britt Studio in Jacksonville.

The excerpts from Welborn Beeson's diary that I have included will hopefully tell Welborn and Kate's love story, but to really appreciate his honesty and willingness to expose his emotions, you need to read them in their entirety. My account does not do it justice. For those of you not on our Facebook page, the full transcripts are available for reading at the Museum. There, you can settle into a comfortable chair and go back in time to a sweet and thoughtful love story.

As I've read of Welborn's life, I can't help but think what a wonderful book it would make. It has all the elements needed for a historical novel; danger crossing the plains in a covered wagon, John Beeson being run out of town, the painful loss of a parent and at long last love!!! Or maybe a movie. And who should play the title roles; a handsome Welborn Beeson, a sweet Kate Brophy and a fickle Esther Ann who led Welborn on for too long and lost him in the end. Will the community accept Welborn's new bride, and will Welborn and Kate live happily ever after? I guess we'll just have to keep reading.



Welborn & Kate Beeson - August 23, 1866



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.

Regarding the diary entry for July 9, 1866, which reads in part, *"Esther had a great deal to te.. me, I believe the girl loves me now truly, but it is to late. She is entirly out of my heart, and my own Kate fills her place. Esther says she will drown herself if I should marry any other, but I guess she will get over that,"* George Rakes asks, "Who did Esther end up marrying?"

Jan's Answer: Esther Wagner and her family moved to Salem, Oregon. Later in life, Kate and Welborn took the train to Salem and visited with the Wagner family including Esther who married a man named John J. Neal in 1868. I have tried to track down relatives of Esther to see if they have old photo albums or letters but without success. I would love it if someone could take on that task it would be great. Esther died in 1934 in Marion Co., OR

Regarding the same diary entry, Belinda Klimek Vos asks, "Where did the Brophy's live? Welborn mentions that he hasn't had time to go visit Kate since last Fall, but it appears she is just a buggy ride away. I don't remember hearing about her before. Why would he then ask for her to come up and help with his Mother if he had just met her that once before? Seems curious!!!"

Jan's Answer: Belinda, It was customary for young girls like Kate to hire themselves out as helpers in different households. She would have helped at harvest times to cook for the harvesters, do washing, and apparently helped do housework while the sick got well enough to do it themselves. Family stories say that the Brophy family came to the Rogue Valley in 1865 and lived on the Emerson E. Gore place near Phoenix - south of what is now Medford. After Welborn and Kate got married, John Brophy and family returned to California where he died on Christmas Day 1866 from pneumonia. I do not have a photograph of John Brophy or his wife Mary Rebecca Rawlings. After both of Kate's parents were gone, most of the Brophy children came to live with Welborn and Kate. It was not an easy time and Welborn grew to resent all the mouths he had to feed. But that is another story and I do not want to spoil the one we are all reading together now.

Relative to the diary entry from July 10th, which reads in part *"old Mrs Root was helping Mrs Wagner to quilt and she had a great deal to say about, Kate being a Caholic etc. etc. I wish she would mind her own business, and then all would be well."* Paula McClain Mixson asks, "Also, what else is known about 'old Mrs. Root'?"

Jan's Answer: Mr. and Mrs. Root were the ones responsible for the Baptist church being built in Talent. They donated the land and contributed to the church (which still stands today though it is in a different spot than when it was first built) It makes sense (in a weird way) that the Roots would be less than enthused about Kate being a Catholic.



This house was once the only known hexagonal building in southern Oregon. It was built in 1863 when Welborn Beeson and his mother, Ann, lived on the property. Julius Foss bought it in 1890 and re-modeled it, forever obscuring the original shape. A model of the hexagonal house is on display at the Talent Historical Society Museum.

From *"Images of America - Talent"* by Jan Wright of the Talent Historical Society, page 42. This book may be ordered through our online store or purchased directly at the Museum. Price is \$21.99. This must have book documents Talent's early history through images and text and is published by Arcadia Publishing as part of its Images of America series.

Continued from page 1

ago, no one was with me to talk to and comfort me but Just Dearest Mother and I. We two were all in all to each other."

John Beeson finally returned to the Wagner Valley on January 26, 1865 - 8 years, 8 months and 1 day after he had left, but the family dynamics continued to be strained due to his long absence.

At one point in September of 1865, Welborn left on a trip and Ann took over writing his diary entries for a few days. She writes, *"This is the commencement of my Fifty Ninth fall. How many more shall I see. not many I hope."* She seems discouraged and weary after her many years of struggling on the farm.

By the spring of 1866, Ann's health began to fade and she became unable to perform her household duties. She took to her bed, and her devoted son was left to cope as best he could.

May 6th, 1866, Sunday, Welborn writes: *"Mother rested more quietly and is much better to day but very weak. Mrs Robison called. Uncle Jake Wagner & Ellen and Nettie & Marsh called to see Mother I have been waiting on Mother and choring around the house. It has been beautiful dayThis evening is very lone som Dear Mother is not up with us to sit by twilight as she so like's to do. Wallace Logan and I. Mother in bed. Father has been gone so many years that he does not seem to be one of the family. he does not seem to take an interest with us, as I wish he would. He has gone now away some where, I suppose to Holtons, to obtain spiritual communications. He has been writing all day, to some of the Senators in Washington"*

May 9th, 1866: *"... still Mother no better I do nothing but wait upon her. neighbors come in to help, and see her, all kind and good. beautiful weather. I sleep but little at night."*

May 12th Saturday: *"another fine day. Mother is a little better I think.Mrs Williams, Mrs Ackly, and Mother Anderson's and several ladies have called to see her.Mrs Robison is very kind to Mother She comes down to help her every night and morning. Father has been plowing."*

June 24th, 1866: *"... It is raining out side Mother is dozzing a littleEsther Ann and Eliza Gifford called to see Mother after noon.Mother is so much weaker and worse than she was last Sunday that I fear she will not recover and then oh what shall I do with out Mother."*

It is heartwarming to note how many of the Beeson's neighbors came to visit and take care of Ann during her illness. There was always someone there to help out as her condition worsened. What a wonderful tribute to the Wagner Creek Community that rallied around one of their own to make her passing easier. Her husband did not help with her care as her son acknowledges in his June 28, 1866 diary entry, *"...Father is plowing corn. He seems to have given the care of Mother entirely to me and I am glad for I can care for her better than he ever did. the neighbors are all so kind,"*

Ann Welborn Beeson died on the evening of June 29, 1866 with her devoted son by her side. Several neighbors gathered to stay with her bereaved son throughout the night and into the next day. Neighbors Mr. Goddard and Will Patterson were enlisted to build her coffin and that morning Welborn says, *"I went up early and choose a beautiful spot for My Mothers Grave, the boys are digging it."* Ann is buried in Stearns Cemetery on Anderson Creek Road just up from Wagner Creek Road, only a short distance from where the Beesons lived.

July 1st, 1866, Sunday, *"The neighbors come in from all parts to attend Mother's funeral, about one hundred came. at ten oclock the*

procession started. we burried her and came home. a number of young folks stoped to keep me company." Given the population of the area at the time, it is a true acknowledgement of her standing in the community that so many attended her funeral.

What do we really know about this woman? The bare facts; when she was born, married and the date she first came to what is now Talent. But what about Ann as a person? Did she still have her English accent? Probably. Did she think about her birthplace so far, far away? I imagine so. What we do know for sure is that her son, Welborn, adored her. She was his stability, his emotional rock and the most important person in his world. To be so loved by ones' child is a lasting tribute for any Mother and in my mind attests to who she was as a person. We can only hope that despite the anguish of a difficult marriage and constant financial troubles, that she was able to enjoy some of her time spent on Wagner Creek living with her faithful son.

For those of us that follow the daily posting of Welborn Beeson's diary on our Facebook page, Ann's demise became personal. For several months, each day we read Welborn's diary telling about his Mother's worsening health. We noted his anguish as she grew weaker and we knew her end was nearing. On the night and following day after her death, the outpouring of sentiment and sadness at her passing was echoed again and again in the comments of those reading the post announcing her death.

I went to Stearns Cemetery on June 29, 2016 and placed some flowers on Ann's grave. Although the grounds were rough and browning in the crowded graveyard, it was quiet and warm with a cooling breeze blowing beneath the trees. As I gazed at her tombstone, I marveled at the amazing journey this woman had taken in her life; from being born in a small town in England so many years ago to somehow ending up on this knoll overlooking the Wagner Creek Valley. And yet, she is still remembered today. Wouldn't she be shocked and amazed at the outpouring of grief at her passing - in 2016!

What an interesting world we live in where the past and present collide allowing us to know and mourn the passing of a woman, a Talent Pioneer Woman, who left this earth 150 years ago. Gone but not forgotten. R.I.P Ann Welborn Beeson.



*Ann Welborn Beeson's grave marker in Stearns Cemetery, Talent
June 29, 2016, 150 years after her death.*

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:	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renewing
Membership Level:	<input type="checkbox"/> Junior (12-18) - \$10 <input type="checkbox"/> Individual - \$20 <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Individual - \$200 <input type="checkbox"/> Business - \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> Family - \$30 <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Family - \$300 <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/Family Sponsorship - \$100 or more <input type="checkbox"/> Business Sponsorship - \$100 or more Donation in addition to membership: \$ _____
Amount Enclosed:	\$ _____
Dues include our quarterly newsletter: <i>The Historacle</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Check to receive <i>The Historacle</i> electronically, sent by email in lieu of paper. (This saves us printing and postage costs.)	
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
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Emmalisa Whalley	Secretary
John Harrison	Treasurer
Anthony Abshire	Talent City Council Liaison
Belinda Vos	Newsletter Editor
Willow Nauth	Art/Design Chair
Jan Wright	Historian
Mark Smith-Poelz	Merchandise Manager
Bob Casebeer	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. 13	THS Board Meeting	6:00 pm	At the Museum	
	Sept. 27	Tuesday Evening at the Museum	6:30 - 8:00 pm	Ben Truwe on "Pinto Colvig"	
	Oct. 1	Talent Harvest Festival	10:30 - 5:00 pm	At the Museum and at our Booth	
	Oct. 11	THS Board Meeting	6:00 pm	At the Museum	
	Oct. 25	Tuesday Evening at the Museum	6:30 - 8:00 pm	Annual Meeting - Yearly report	
	Oct. 29	Talent Poker Tour	2:00 - ~6:00 pm	At the Museum	
	Nov. 8	THS Board Meeting	6:00 pm	At the Museum	
	Nov. 8	Heritage District Vote		Final day to turn in your ballot	
	Nov. 22	Tuesday Evening at the Museum	6:30 - 8:00 pm	Program TBA	



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>

Just a reminder that you can check the top, right hand corner of the address label on this issue of the *Historacle* to see when it's time for you to renew! The date will tell you when your membership expires.