With fifty years of member support the Southern Oregon Historical Society has been able to collect and preserve historical treasures such as these Beekman Derringers. Help us carry on this tradition of care. With your support, it will be possible to tell the ongoing story of southern Oregon, your story. Treasures Talk.

For more information, see the insert card or call (541) 773-6536.
"How Will We Know It Is Us?"

by Brad Linder, Executive Director

The Southern Oregon Historical Society collects and preserves objects relating to the scope and diversity of human experience in Jackson County and the southern Oregon region. Through its interpretative programs, collections, and publications, the Society strives to generate an appreciation of regional history for present and future generations.

Mission statement, adopted 1992

The Society collects all manner and size of objects ranging from a small brooch worn by Amalia Britt to a sixteen-room farmhouse lived in by three generations of the Hanley family. The Society has over 80,000 artifacts in its collections (not counting the tens of thousands of photographs, books, and documents in the library).

Donors continue to offer us their family treasures and the Society carefully evaluates their historic significance and acquires them if they are deemed relevant to southern Oregon and appropriate for the collections. Even though this process has become very selective, we still gratefully accept hundreds of items every year. With each acquisition comes the responsibility to care for and preserve that object in perpetuity—conserving that artifact for the benefit of future generations. This is a major responsibility that is clearly emphasized in our mission statement. Yet, preservation is easily deferred as deterioration is generally so slow that visible changes take years, or even decades to appear. More pressing immediate needs always seem to take precedence.

So why do we go through all these efforts? Because preservation makes common sense—be it the careful cleaning and conservation of a glass plate negative, or the full-blasted restoration of a historic structure. In some respects it is a simple activity that all of us engage in every day—hanging on to something because it is good to look at, because it works, because it links us to a past that we want to remember and then have the good sense to take care of. When we preserve we strengthen the partnership between the past, present, and future.

Southern Oregon Historical Society Editorial Guidelines

Feature articles average 2,500 to 3,000 (pre-edited) words. Standard articles range from 1,500 to 2,000 words. Other material, such as poetry, essays, reviews, and short fiction, range from 100 to 1,500 words. Electronic submissions are accepted on 3-1/4-inch disks and should be accompanied by a hard-copy printout. Citations in all sources and construct endnotes and outlines using the Chicago Manual of Style. The author is responsible for verification of cited facts. A selection of professional, commissioned photographs and/or line art should accompany submissions—black-and-white or color. The Southern Oregon Historical Society reserves the right to our Society images in place of submitted material. All material should be labeled with author’s name, mailing address, and telephone number. Manuscripts will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed envelope stamped with sufficient postage. Authors should provide a brief autobiographical note at the end of manuscript.

The Southern Oregon Historical Society reserves rights to full and final editing of all manuscripts, layout design, and one-time North American serial rights. Authors will be notified of acceptance of manuscripts within thirty days after receiving materials. In most cases, payment is upon publication. The Southern Oregon Historical Society takes great care with all submitted material, but is not responsible for damage or loss. Only photocopies of irreplaceable original historical documents should be submitted. Facts, views, and opinions expressed in signed submissions are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Southern Oregon Historical Society.

By Patricia Parish Kuhn

The late afternoon September sun glints off a carved oak door on Geneva Street, then spotlights a lone bicyclist rounding the corner of Minnesota Street dodging mammoth tree trunks along the sidewalk on his way home following the first day of school.

It could have been the first decade of the twentieth century instead of the last one here in the quiet east Medford neighborhood of historically significant American Bungalow, Craftsman, and Period Revival homes recently entered into the National Register of Historic Places.

The detailed and voluminous research compiled in 1993 by historian George Kramer, M.S., Historic Preservation Consultant for the Geneva-Minnesota property owners, reads like a “Who’s Who” of Oregon business, professional, and political leaders. Spanning almost a century, Kramer documents the history of Medford’s development, specifically this historically rich neighborhood and the families who resided here just east of Bear Creek, off East Main Street.

Photographs by Michael Leonard and Dana Hedrick
"The two streets share common developers and many of the houses, first built on speculation, were constructed by the same individuals from common or similar plans. They collectively represent one of southern Oregon's most intact early 20th century residential areas," the documentation states.

Some houses share the vision and design preferences of noted local architect, Frank Chamberlain Clark; most reflect the work of local contractor B.F. Fifer, resulting in a unified, unique, cohesive neighborhood within the greater city of Medford. The styles of the homes reflect the "planbook" designs, altered and reused with modifications during the first development phase.

Properties developed during the second phase within the district, most facing Minnesota Street, were said to represent a more sophisticated design approach. Many of these properties were designed by Medford architect Frank Chamberlain Clark.

Typically Clark preferred Colonial architecture utilizing Doric columns, arched-top windows with delicate muntin patterns, grand symmetrical entrancesways with large doors and flanking sidelights. Two original buildings, lost to fire or demolition, are the only variations from the original pattern, one being the modern office building fronting on East Main at Geneva.

The newly registered historic district continues to attract and retain those residents whose professions and leadership in the community and state parallel those who initially built the residences. This unseen characteristic is as responsible for the neighborhood's character, continuity and integrity as the preserved structures themselves.

Presently, as rural lands and orchards surrounding Medford, Ashland, and Jacksonville succumb to the demand for newly constructed houses, former southern Oregon residents, upon their return to the area, reiterate similar phrases: "I hardly recognize Medford. It's changing so." They need only return to the Geneva-Minnesota District for solace and they will find all is as it was. It's a haven for those who appreciate the preservation of the best of the past blended with the present.

Beginning in 1911, Medford underwent a population explosion due to the fast growing orchard industry, and what was once rich agricultural land adjacent to Bear Creek gave way to pressures for development.

An old wooden bridge across Bear Creek, the only connection then between the East Side and downtown, was replaced with "a modern concrete span" paving the way for east side expansion. An advertisement in the local paper in April, 1911, sponsored by a coalition of developers and real estate interests called the "East Side Improvement Association," lauded the area just east of Bear Creek in their campaign: "MEDFORD HAS FOUND HER STRIDE. Her phenomenal growth of the past two years will be eclipsed by that of the coming year. . . Yours is the opportunity to play a man's part NOW in the laying down of a skeleton plan about which shall be built the CITY BEAUTIFUL! The first strong line of that plan must be the marking out of a definite RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT as district [sic] [distinct] from the business district... into which may be attracted those who are essentially HOME BUILDERS—those for who HOME shall mean atmosphere and environment as well as mere housing . . . For such characterization as to the future RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT OF MEDFORD the BEAUTIFUL, we believe the EAST SIDE TO BE PREEMINENTLY fitted . . ."

The nearness of the neighborhood to the downtown businesses owned by many of the residents of the district enticed many to walk to work and return home for lunch.
Thus the Geneva-Minnesota neighborhood-to-be, formerly just open country, was defined as the first distinctly planned residential district. The enthusiasm and vision of the group not only materialized into two building phases, 1911-1914 and 1922-1924, but has prevailed. The affinity for this special neighborhood of thirty-five homes is ongoing.

House by house, Medford’s business and social history unfolds in a fascinating portrayal of early twentieth century family activities, business ventures, and political history. The nearness of the neighborhood to the downtown businesses owned by many of the residents of the district enticed many to walk to work and return home for lunch.

The many terraced lawns in the Geneva-Minnesota District, the result of deeply cut roads, offset the beauty of the area’s architecture. Pictured here is an example of American Bungalow style.

Many of the residents remained well into the 1960s, such as George Porter, Kenneth Dennman, and Roland Beach, among others. It would take a book to do justice to those who formed this early influential district of Medford at the beginning of the twentieth century. Their influence and community activities made Medford what it is today.

As the next century approaches, this tiny community within a larger one is confident and intact, unaffected by the extensive changes both within and without Medford City limits since its origin.

In the middle of the block an empty wooden porch swing on one two-and-a-half story Geneva residence evokes images of visits to a fairy tale grandmother. The orange cat posed like a golden sphinx on the front door mat dissuades any unbidden visitor from climbing the wide steps to the grand front porch. Great elm trees rise high above two-and-three story houses while also gently uprooting small sections of the sidewalk which parallel grassy parking strips along Geneva’s uniquely “cobbled” street.

The street itself claims the distinction of an entry in the National Register as “Geneva Street Roadbed.” The unusual surface was chosen by the developers of this Humphrey-Knight Addition in 1911 when a rare paving process was used by the Bise and Foss Paving Company, usually referred to as “Bickolithic” paving. The cast concrete panels about ten feet square are composed of a mixture of cement slurry and crushed rock called “Hassam.”

The surface was then scored in a brick-like pattern creating the semi-cobblestone appearance of Geneva Street still in good form today, some eighty-five years later. Described in the Medford Sun edition of April 1, 1911:

... the process gives a surface as hard as iron, or harder; and is supposed to last as long as the Egyptian Pyramids. Horses will have a sure footing on this pavement as a result of criss-cross lines or checks. Vehicles will roll over it with ease, though it is not adapted to comfortable speeding as a roadway will result to passengers in horse-drawn vehicles or autos."

“The roadbed’s unique construction also contributed to this neighborhood’s incomparable landscaping design.

“Because of the fact that both Geneva Avenue [sic] and Minnesota Street were deep cut before being paved gives the lawns an excellent chance to be terraced and thus beauty is added not only to the lawns but as well to the bungalows built on the surrounding lots. A cement retaining wall, one-and-a-half feet high, will be put in at the sidewalk level and from that a four-foot terraced lawn will be built. B. F. Fifer has the contract for all the Humphrey Bungalows.”

All of the original retaining walls stand, with one exception, contributing to the ongoing uniqueness of the neighborhood. Today, towering catalpa trees (pods of which Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer smoked behind the barn), evoke a sense of continuity, of well-being, of a connection to other times.

A colorful bed of carefully tended red and orange nasturtiums cascades from the terraced lawn to the sidewalk. Across the street in the September warmth, green wicker porch furniture faces the quiet street in wait for the family’s return from its day’s activities.

Ellen Goodman, a nationally syndicated columnist for the Boston Globe, in a recent commentary reflected on the national trend of loss of community and its consequences. She noted how lack of community leads to anonymity and then to a lack of accountability and loss of civility: “As a nation we suffer more from a lack of cohesion than a lack of independence. If the center isn’t holding, it’s because there simply aren’t enough stakeholders.”

Families who choose to remain in or move to the Geneva-Minnesota district may be responding more to a need for cohesiveness, community, and civility than to any other factor. Thus, they are stakeholders in the truest sense as they carry the dream and vision of the neighborhood’s founding fathers into another century. Their center is definitely holding.

Patricia Parish Kuhn has lived in Medford since 1959. A frequent contributor to Southern Oregon Heritage, her articles and essays have appeared regularly in the Ashland Gazette and Southern Oregon Currents. She is currently publishing a book of poems.
Cemeteries provide a record of some of the rich pioneer history of southern Oregon. Some families are now remembered only by their grave markers, all details of their lives having faded into the past. Visiting cemeteries can increase knowledge of and interest in local history, as well as provide insight into the origins of names of area roads and geographical features. Even newcomers to Oregon can appreciate learning about the settlers who tilled fields, planted orchards, felled trees, and began our communities. In contrast to larger, more urban cemeteries, sites in outlying areas tend to look much like they did when they were first platted. While more modern cemeteries have the carefully maintained and manicured lawns and landscaping that many have come to expect from a final resting place, these smaller or lesser known graveyards have a natural grace enhanced by native vegetation and personal memorabilia. Large "specimen" trees, protected from ever-encroaching development, survive there, standing guard over rows of headstones.

The following is a guide to a handful of little-known cemeteries that will lure you out into the countryside and to the outskirts of town. It is by no means all-inclusive; the Research Library at the History Center would be happy to direct you toward others of interest. We encourage you to venture out and discover these poignant testimonials to our past.

ANTLOPE CEMETERY:
"Father and Mother at rest."

Nature is kept at bay at the Antelope Cemetery on Riley Road off Highway 140. Although there is no sign at this plot, a new wrought iron gate welcomes visitors. A pile of oak branches stacked like firewood and a rake leaning against the fence are evidence of ongoing care. Francis M. Thompson, 1834-1910, and his wife Lucinda, 1846-1922, homesteaders in the Climax area, are buried here beneath the oak trees. The headstone of Glen J. Brown, 1899-1931, speaks not only of the deceased, but of the loss to the family and of a very common and domestic view of heaven that emerged in the early 1800s: "A precious one from us is gone, a voice we love is still, a place is vacant in our home, which never can be filled. God in his wisdom has recalled the boon his love has given although his body slumbers here, his soul is safe in heaven." Monuments to pioneer families, the Kershaws, Whetstones, Liskowers, and Howlettes, join smaller gravestones such as the defiant Jesse Lou Miller, 1930. The Swingle family monument, adorned with a relief of sunflowers in an urn, states "Father and Mother at rest, pioneers of 1854."
ROWNSBORO CEMETERY:
The hearts of the afflicted.

Henry R. Brown, 1829-1891, the namesake for Brownsboro, is buried, along with his wife, Martha M. Brown, 1840-1913, in the Brownsboro Cemetery on Obenchain Road. The inscription on his stone relates, "Amiable and beloved father farewell, not on this perishing stone but in the book of time and in the hearts of thy afflicted friends is thy work recorded." Old Glory proudly flies above benches and colorful, synthetic flowers. Mabel R. Brown, the wife of Henry Brown's son George, was a young mother of twenty-three when she lost a baby, as the infant's marker dated 1907 attests: A Tum. Henry R. Brown, 1829-1891, wife, Martha M. Brown, 1840-1913, lie in the house of the Father in the house to dwell, beloved it was well. Directions: From Medford, take Hwy 62 to Hwy 140. Turn left on Riley Road. Travel approximately 1.2 miles. Cemetery is on the right.

CLIMAX GRAVES:
Questions From Antiquity.

The Climax Graves, up Antelope Creek Road off Highway 140 in an old mining area, are difficult to find. Over time, shrubs and trees have grown up, obscuring the headstones of men. Red Rock Canyon, the final resting place of thirteen soldiers, is shrouded in legend and mystery. Were they pursuing marauding Indians? How did the soldiers perish? The grave markers originally erected, if there were any, have long since crumbled back into the earth. An eight mile hike in dry, rattlesnake country begins at Cascade Gorge and ends at the burial site across the canyon from a high inaccessible cave that might have once held clues to Indians living in the area as well as to the fate of these soldiers. Directions: From Hwy. 140, take Antelope Creek Rd. Sign for old community of Climax is between milemarkers 17 and 18. Could not find graves. Red Rock Canyon Graves: Hike through ditches or take road from Cascade Gorge to the Rogue River. Across canyon from high inaccessible cave in the 1940s small flags were said to mark the site. Caution rattlesnake territory.

STEARS CEMETERY:
Roses, roses, periwinkle and grapevine.

Land for the Stears Cemetery, on Anderson Creek Road just past Allen Lane in Talent, was donated by David E. Stears, who, "...with the family crossed the plains from Illinois to Oregon by ox team in 1853. He was one of the first to locate on Wagner Creek and he donated this hilltop for public cemetery." The first burial was that of Judge Avery Stearns in 1857. Other pioneer families buried their kin on this dry, gentle slope adjacent to pear orchard - the headstone of John Bessin, 1803-1889, "a pioneer and man of peace," and a newer bench in memory of Anna Beason Carter pay homage to these early southern Oregon families. Volunteers from the Naval Reserve, the Talent Garden Club, and members of the Wagner Creek Cemetery Association, such as Eva Taylor and Lida Childers, began caring for and cleaning up the Stears Cemetery in 1975. This peaceful place, where the quiet of a summer day is occasionally broken by a crowing rooster, welcomes visitors and mourners to sit a while at the picnic table beneath the flag pole. Irises, roses, and periwinkle vines afford perennial blooms, while roses in a Victorian motif on the shared headstone of grandmother and granddaughter Sabrina Jane Thatcher, 1852-1935 and 1916-1937, bloom even in winter's drear. Flowers are thought to symbolize the impermanence of the flesh while grapevines, such as those on the headstone of Will A. Thatcher, 1875-1955, indicate the holy wine and the harvest of the ripe grapes. Cedar, madrones and cedars create a gentle breeze as the summer sun ripens the rosebushes on the bushes planted long ago in remembrance of the departed. Directions: From Wagner Creek Rd. in Talent, turn right on Anderson Creek Rd. Pass Allen Lane. Cemetery is on left on Anderson Creek Road.

PHOENIX PIONEER CEMETERY:
God can all our sorrow heal.

On South Church Street, near West Sixth Street in Phoenix, is the Phoenix Pioneer Cemetery, maintained by the Phoenix Cemetery Association. Tall pines and madrones shade the resting place of pioneer families who gave their names to nearby roads: Holt, Colver, Payne, Bolz. Wind swirling in the trees muffles the roar of the Interstate's traffic. Religion plays an important role in the 1892 cemetery. Many graves contain comforting those left behind as the stone of James W. Collins, 1825-1887, attests: "Dearest father, thou hast left us here; thy loss we deeply feel but 'tis God that hast beseent us, he can all our sorrows heal." Parents whose children died often had the resources to leave a more grandiose marker for their offspring than would be left for themselves. The large, double headstone of Elizabeth F. Morrison, 1883, "age 4 years, 9 months, 12 days," and her brother Charles, 1883, "age 1 year, 5 months," is guarded by a madrone with a trunk thick enough that two people can barely touch hands around its girth. Crown motifs on headstones such as that of Albert L. Anderson, 1867-1890, and his wife Josephine, 1869-1890, signify glory and righteousness. A central square with a flagpole is heightened by flower boxes filled with impatiens donated by the Phoenix Garden Club in memory of fallen combat. The American Legion veterans' memorial plaque also serves to honor the memory of our veterans. Directions: From Hwy. 99 in Phoenix, take Church Street. The cemetery is on Church Street.

ARGADINE CEMETERY:
Passing through the house of the dead.

Inside the Ashland city limits, at the top of Sheridan Street, perches Hargadine Cemetery, which dates from the late 1800s and is still in use. Junipers and lilacs add fragrance to the air throughout the seasons. The quiet of this spot, now surrounded by homes, can be interrupted by the squawking of ducks and the yips of neighborhood dogs. While most grave markers here are marble, the memorial to "Mamma" Susan E. Cunningham, 1835-1902, is made of cast metal that has achieved a patina, creating a look similar to marole. The monument for the Farnhams has an architectural motif that symbolizes the passage of the soul through the house of the dead on its way to immortality. The quotations on either side of this gravestone reinforce this symbolism. From S.A. Farnham, 1838-1898, "She has entered through the gates of pearl into the city" (Rev. 22:14) and from A.F. Farnham, 1822-1876, "Come unto God, come to the Father in the house to dwell, beloved it was well." Directions: From North Main Street in Ashland, take Hargadine to top of hill.

Cemeteries such as these can tell us much about the social status, wealth, religious beliefs and organizations important to the first settlers, and how those values and rituals changed or remained the same over time. Visitors can ponder epitaphs and tombstones and wonder about the lives briefly recorded in marble. How did it feel to be a pioneer during a smallpox epidemic, sadly saying good-bye to children, grandparents and neighbors? What about couples married for sixty years, joined now in death in one plot with one headstone? Sometimes we can only imagine and interpret the visual information. Many people's histories, letters, diaries, ledgers, and effects, however, may be housed in local historical or genealogical societies.

As our culture moves further away from the family unit that cared for elders and elders' memories, our pioneer cemeteries risk being forgotten. In a society that values youth and mobility, in which children scatter far from their parents' homes, many gravestones have no one to remember the people interred there. The stories these silent markers tell belong to all of us, whether we are descendants of early settlers who traveled by ox team across the plains or newcomers towing U-huals from other states. We are all Americans, and this is our heritage. Cemeteries, windows to the past, are all around us. We have only to drive down a country road and take a look.
Widow's Weeds

Victorian Mourning in Early Jackson County

Although a rigid code of mourning etiquette appeared with the dawn of the nineteenth century, it was Queen Victoria of England who brought mourning into fashion. In 1850 she ordered black-bordered handkerchiefs to grieve for her mother. She also ordered that court mourning jewelry be of native Whitby Jet. With the death of her consort, Prince Albert, in 1861, she dressed in full mourning until her own death in 1901.

Mourning became more complex as the years passed. Childbirth, epidemics, poor medical care, and a lack of understanding regarding filth and disease brought death knocking on every family's door. Those doors were hung with black crepe to announce the passing of a family member. Women shook out their thick black crepe and dull silk dresses. Men added a twist of crepe to their hats, put on a black armband, and added black buttons to their shirts. The family began the long, costly and formal process of official mourning.

There were degrees of mourning that could be measured in fractions: full, half, second, and deepest mourning. Depending upon the decade, the time period for each stage varied. The color of one's clothing indicated to the world the level of grief, the relationship to the deceased, and how long one had been bereaved. Black was for deepest mourning, grey for the second stages, and violet for the third; shades and variations marked the subtle transitions of each stage. Companies sprang up to provide fabrics of the proper shade and quality. Cashmere, merino wool, silk, chiffon and tulle were all acceptable fabrics.

For the first three months of deepest mourning a widow kept her face veiled. The first veils were of heavy crepe and caused eye strain. When women rubbed the fabric, eyes would irritate the eye, often resulting in permanent damage. A veil made of a stiffened rag with crepe soon became acceptable. During this first stage women were encouraged to stay at home, venturing forth only as far as church. Any form of gaiety or pleasure would have been scandalous and disrespectful.

In speaking of a particularly well laden hat she was hawking, Mrs. Jackson, a New York proprietress of fine mourning goods, said, "It is certainly to reflect..."
that the words 'deep mourning' no longer involve the necessity of actually looking repulsive, as in times past, when the hideous bombazine with its stiff crepe folds were de rigueur."

Indeed, once a widow was out of deep mourning, her fashions could mirror the latest trends, and often became heavy laden with jet passementerie (braiding), jet beads, jet fringe, fine lace, and exotic hair ornaments. Even flowers could be worn, as long as they were white roses, jasmine, or violets. Foulage was to be removed and replaced with black velvet leaves. During the latter decades of the nineteenth century an outcry was raised against the expense and frivolity of the poofs, puffs, and adornments of these outfits. One objector outraged by the transition from gloomy and heavily shrouded widow's weeds into flashy fashionable costume called the new trend a "ghastly anomaly of wearing these garments as if they were festal rainment." Along with ornate gowns came shoes, gloves, parasols, fans, jewels, caps, and hats. Such mourning accessories, taken from the Society's collection, are featured on the mezzanine at the History Center.

Residents of Jacksonville and Ashland also followed the Victorian practice of sending out black-bordered funeral notices as an invitation to the services, usually held in the parlor of the family's home. The example on this page was culled to bring food to the family and sit in state with the mourning, her fashions could mirror the latest raiment."4

Black-edged calling cards as well as memorial cards black-bordered funeral notices as an invitation to from the hundreds of such notices in manuscript col­

lection number 100 in the Society's Research Library.

The funeral notice was also a signal for mourners to bring food to the family and sit in state with the body laid out in the parlor. A whole retinue of black-bordered funeral notices were written, and again asking that you arrive the liberty of enclosing an easel or frame, made especially for

John Russell & Company,
Los Angeles,
California.

DEAR FRIENDS: This custom of sending Memorial Cards to bring the dead to life, and at the same time to call the living, was a means established in this country, and as the business cannot be executed through the regular channels of trade, you are respectfully invited to inquire immediately upon you at this, or by your local monument dealer, or on your own account. One hundred and fifty memorial cards are printed in gold, with your choice of verse printed in the space below:

Price

1 Copy

25¢

5 Copies

50¢

100 Copies

$1.00

Our memorial cards are made in a variety of styles, and we will undertake to print any special style, together with your choice of verse. The engraved name of the deceased is printed in gold.

JOHN RUSSELL & CO.

Abbe Expences mounted easily, as illustrated by this run down of the costs of memorial cards:

Above: Expenses mounted easily, as illustrated by this run down of the costs of memorial cards.


From the statements of Martha and Mary Hanley in an October, 1965, Mail Tribune article, one can see how crucial proper mourning was for families. Their grandmother, Mrs. John Love, died in the small pox epidemic of 1869, a disease that devastated the town of Jacksonville. Despite being a prominent pioneer she went to her grave without respect for her position in the community. "The body was borne to the cemetery in a rough lumber wagon without a single follower so great was the fear [of contagion]." It is obvious that regardless of the passing years, the Hanley sisters regretted this lack of formality. A stroll among the monuments in the Jacksonville, I.O.O.F., and Ashland cemeteries can bring home just how important it was to display one's grief in fabulously carved tombstones. Symbols used on local stones represent a kinder, gentler heaven than that of puritanical England and colonial America. The Victorians preferred roses and lambs to the skull and crossbones favored by the English and Americans. Through-out area cemeteries one may find a rose with a broken stem (symbolizing a life taken too soon), urns depicting those that led a full life, and stone columns with capstones symbolizing the entrance of the departed into the gates of heaven. It was believed that one was not mourning for the loved one "gone on ahead," but for those poor souls left behind.

What started as a sideline forivery men, furniture makers, and blacksmithe became a true profession in the 1830s. By 1870 undertakers had their first professional trade journal, The Casket.1 The undertaker came to the home and prepared the body for viewing and burial. After days of lying in state, a lengthy service was held at the residence and the cortege was to the cemetery. People lined the streets to tip their hats and pay respects. The body was buried with a simple prayer.
As the century began, undertakers were called "funeral directors" and business establishments were named "funeral parlors." It was believed this would make the place seem more like home. Death had moved out of the living room in order for the professionals to better provide for their clients. No one wanted to call the room a parlor anymore, for it reminded them too much of the funeral home.

By the 1920s mourning stationery was no longer used. Mourning clothes were starting to be criticized for their excessiveness, morbidity and expense. The duty of caring for the dead no longer fell to the family. The funeral director took control, separating people further from the process. With the advent of World War II it was considered selfish and self-pitying to openly mourn and grieve. So many were dying, and so much was lost. Mourning was not encouraged on a national level, because so much sorrow would not engender jingoism.

Today's rituals of mourning are far different from those practiced during the Victorian Era. Victorians did not hide from grief; in fact they embraced it, perhaps to our modern tastes a tad wholeheartedly. It was easy, however, during that time period to be compassionate, patient, and respectful of the bereaved. It was obvious who was in mourning, and obvious how long they had been about it. One thing the Victorians knew, in all their baroque grandiosity, was that the grieving process takes time, and lots of it.

ENDNOTES
2. Final Rests, Dealing with Death in the Victorian Era, exhibit text, Rogers Historical Museum, Rogers Arkansas, currently at the History Center in Mankato.
4. Ibid, p. 103.
5. Final Rests exhibit.
Special thanks to Mary Ames Stret, curator of collections, Amelia Chamberlain, program director, and Gesa Bronwchuylke, curator of exhibits for their research and assistance. M.S.

Not all could afford to be carried to the Jacksonville Cemetery in elegant glass hearses such as this one, led by black horses and a long train of mourners.

Hungry Ghosts
Chinese Mourning in Early Jacksonville

By 1870 there were 634 Chinese immigrants listed in the Jackson County census. One of their mourning rituals was the carving of ancestral tablets, such as the one pictured above.

Story and photos by Karen Gernant

The Oregon Sentinel, in 1867, wrote of a Chinese funeral: The body of the deceased was enclosed in a very handsome coffin, in which a number of offerings were thrown by his intimate friends, intended, perhaps, to pay the passage of the spirit across the dark river. The funeral procession was preceded by two Chinamen who stirred the road with small slips of paper, on which the name of the deceased was printed in Chinese characters. Then followed the corpse in a wagon, and immediately after came twelve female mourners, dressed in the highest [sic] of Chinese fashion, and apparently not overwhelmed with grief. Next came the members of the [Chinese Masonic] order, sixty-four in number, walking two and two, and distinguished by scarfs [sic] made of red and white muslin. On arriving at the grave, the men or twelve bunches of Chinese torches were stuck in the ground, and lighted. Then a collation of boiled pork, rice, and a chicken roasted with the head on, together with chop-sticks, a bottle of gin and drinking cups, was spread for the use of the spirit, if it should happen to rise hungry from the grave. A mat was spread directly in front of the collation, the friends of the deceased advanced, in couples, bowed their heads three times to the setting sun, and while in a kneeing posture they sprinkled a small quantity of liquor on the ground: Rising to their feet, they repeated the obeisance [sic] three times more and then retired. This ceremony was performed by all the males, each one, on retiring, leaving his scarf on a bush as a final offering. The same ritual was observed by the females, and then by the common China men, or those who did not appear to be Masons.

The coffin was then lowered into the grave, the dirt piled up, and a fire made at each corner on one of which a large quantity of Chinese paper and some green bouquets were burned. After burning the bedding, and
deceased was then surrounded by everything until his body was ready for shipment to China. There was no exhibition of grief, whatever, but the ceremonies were conducted with great silence and decorum, and showed that all our boasted civilization, the communications of the ‘Pagan’ with the Invisible were strangely like those of Christian people. It is striking that the writer uses the word ‘invisible,’ rather than the more Eurocentric ‘God,’ and striking as well that the writer implicitly accepts the view that different spiritual values are equally valid.

Regional variations marked mortuary practices in China and went through further changes here in southern Oregon. Common to all, however, were practices associated with the strong belief that the family comprised not just its living members, but also the deceased ancestors. Linked to this view was the belief that continuity existed between the mortal world and the world after death. Thus, the living and the dead continued to touch each other through mutually beneficial exchanges. The survivors burned a wide variety of paper goods for the deceased to use in the next life; these goods included miss something, clothing, furniture, money, bosses, servants, horses, and sedan-chairs, and today may include automobiles and appliances, such as television sets and refrigerators.

It was believed that the smoke of these paper possessions carried the essence of these goods to the next world, where the
the impact and culture of the Chinese in southern Oregon. Today, their descendants in China—along with the descendants of those who never left China—are likely to practice cremation. When Buddhists introduced this practice to China centuries ago, many Chinese objected to it, for Chinese filial piety dictated that one return one’s body to the ancestors in the same form that one’s parents had given it to one. Today, pressure for land dictates that cremation be utilized as much as possible. Funerary urns are generally placed in Buddhist temples or other, more public repositories.

Fletcher Linn, Gin Lin and Chinese Burial Ceremonies

A most curious friendship was born in December of 1887 when Fletcher Linn accompanied his father on a visit to the impressive hydraulic mines rooting for gold in the Applegate Valley. There Fletcher met the Chinese mining boss, Gin Lin, an old but friendly Chinaman who would eventually enough gold to deposit more than a million dollars in a Jacksonville bank.

Gin Lin was one of the thousands of Chinese fortune hunters who inundated the West during the 1849-60 gold and ‘70s. Unlike white settlers, these Asian immigrants had no intention of staying for very long, nor were they made welcome. After seeking their fortune, most returned to native China. Gin Lin’s use of hydraulic mining allowed him to excavate the slugs of dry stream bed in the Applegate Valley untouched by previous pan and pick miners. By digging a canal, he was able to harness the force of the Applegate River to do his mining for him. This friendship between Fletcher and Gin Lin introduced the young white man to many foreign Chinese customs. Fletcher, who was born in Jacksonville in 1866 and worked as a furniture manufacturer and industrial developer, spent much of his adult life working to preserve the history of southern Oregon. He described some of the Chinese customs he witnessed in his autobiography Reminiscences of Fletcher Linn. He was most impressed by the burial ceremonies, one of which he described at length.

"As the procession reached the cemetery for the ceremony, a beautifully roasted hog, nicely browned, would be placed amid the graves with proper ceremony, and there, their favorite dish, sprinkled on all the graves, together with liberal scattering of cigarettes. But the hog, as I remember, was taken with them after the ceremony, leaving only the tempting aroma with the dead.

"Was it a dignified and reverential ceremony, just as we pay respect to our departed on our decoration day?"

Eventually all Chinese remains in the Jacksonville Cemetery were evacuated and returned to their homeland. Gin Lin’s final fate, however, is unknown. But the Gin Lin Trail, at Fumet Flat Campground off Palmer Creek Road, allows modern visitors to explore this most desolate once-prosperous mining operation, just as Fletcher Linn did in 1887. 15/
Lake Creek School, circa 1888.
Southern Oregon Historical Society #4459

"I never felt more in the line of duty in any other calling than in teaching. I was always happy in the schoolroom. I realized that my constant aim was to develop character in my students." — Fletcher Royal, teacher, Jacksonville District No. 1

St. Mary’s Academy in Jacksonville, circa 1901. When the school opened in 1861, local women reportedly remarked that “culture, too, came to southern Oregon that day.”

"Wisdom is the olive that springeth from the heart, bloometh on the tongue and beareth fruit in the actions."
“With so many students, discipline had become a problem and so the school directors had especially wanted a man to take over. During the first week Mr. Frederick whipped ten youngsters with a leather harness tug. After that he never needed to resort to such measures during the five years he taught at Oak Grove.”

“Boys of the school rejoiced at the conversion of the heating system to oil because no longer would their misconduct require the hauling of four-foot cord wood to the school house basement to be used to fire the furnace.”

“Much of the discipline problems arose from the lack of indoor sanitary facilities. When the girls would go to the “privy,” the boys would gather large stores of acorns and keep up a steady barrage so the girls couldn’t get out.”
The eighth grade graduating class of 1910 at Dewey School included the Vilas brothers, George and Ned. "On our visiting day, the teacher, Lottie Wiley, made us feel so welcome that there was no doubt as to our choice of schools," recalled George Vilas years later. "Having only twenty-five children in all eight grades was a novelty to us, and we loved our teacher. Miss Wiley rode her pony two miles in the mud to get to a barn from where she walked up the hill a quarter of a mile in the mud and rain to reach the schoolhouse." Soon their beloved Lottie left to further her education at the Ashland State Normal School and the Dewey School kids were saddled with a new teacher, Lucille Marshall, who had recently graduated from an Indiana college. "She couldn't have weighed over a hundred and three pounds soaking wet, but she was determined to make good in that first teaching job," recalled George. "She had trouble handling the bigger boys, including us."12

The kids had poked out knotholes in the floor and put a rope through the holes. During the day when things got a bit dull, the boys would pull on the rope. The teacher would think there were pigs under the schoolhouse and send the boys to drive the pigs away. The boys thought this was a great joke."13

The belief was expressed by many that schools were getting too fancy and that the toilet facilities provided in the Grove were more than adequate. However, after much heated discussion, inside plumbing was provided.15

ENDNOTES
1. Encyclopedia Britannica.
2. Nesheim, Margaret. '23 Year's Search For Community.' Gardin Printing Center, 1977.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
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9. Oak Grove.
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14. Oak Grove.
15. Ibid.
Big Butte’s Big Hearts Create Small Miracles

by Fred Flaxman

The Museum has been fashioned into a 1950s interpretive center and gallery. Ernest Smith’s office features artifacts of the period including his surveyor’s tools.

The former home of Ernest Smith gets a new life as the Bill Edmondson Memorial Room, dedicated to the logger/woodcarver whose realistic, detailed, multi-wood, bas-relief work was once displayed at the Smithsonian in Washington. They can now be seen in this room and in the railroad caboose museum, located next to Butte Falls’ picturesque town square.

“Edmondson carved the history of the community in wood, which is fitting for a lumber town,” Hailicka observes. He died a year before the museum opened that now bears his name.

Smith’s old home was renovated by Troy and Kathleen Marley, local subcontractors who continued as volunteers once the limited funds ran out, and who brought other volunteers to work on the project. The new museum was decorated by Halillica and sister Butte Falls resident Linda Matthews. The two searched the Rogue Valley’s antique shops and Goodwill stores for 1950s items that would be just right for the house. Additional items were contributed by Smith family members and area residents.

As Ernest Smith was one of the first mayor of Butte Falls, to abandon a capable photographer.

Ernest’s wife, Lucy, originally an easy to reconstruct on the idea to bring back the ambiance of a 1950s, “It was the perfect size for the room and had an inkwell, too,” She was also excited about the dining room table and chairs, which were found in different locations but work very well together, and the sewing machine in Lucy’s sewing room, which was originally from Butte Falls, although Matthews and Hailicka found the sewing machine in Lucy’s sewing room, which was originally from Butte Falls, although Matthews and Hailicka located it in Medford.

BBHS member Gloria Karches worked with Chaine Owing of Americorp and the children of the community to restore the Smith house’s gardens, which were important part of the Smiths’ life. Now these same school kids can tour the museum “to learn their history and their place in it,” Halillica points out.

The Big Butte Historical Society was founded in 1990 by a group of Butte Falls residents who were interested in preserving the history of their area. Joyce Halillica has been one of its driving forces. She was involved in the capture of the 1890s caboose. It was her idea to purchase Casey’s Depot Restaurant, which she first saw sitting on cinder blocks in the back of a lot on Highway 62 in Medford. It was also her idea to buy the Smith house when she saw the “For Sale” sign go up.

“Our history is our future,” Halillica says. “In order for us to go forward, we have to look at our past and where we’ve come from.” The Bill Edmondson Memorial Museum is a wonderful opportunity to do just that. [The Bill Edmondson Memorial Museum is open from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday and Friday and from 10 a.m. to 4.p.m. on Saturday.]

Fred Flaxman is an award-winning columnist, television and radio executive and producer; as well as the editor of Southern Oregon, the quarterly magazine of Southern Oregon State College.

Left: Joyce Halillica, chairperson and driving force of the BBHS, is proof that people still can make a difference in shaping a community.

Bottom: Bill Edmondson carved the history of Butte Falls in his wood; his carvings are now on display at the museum dedicated in his name.
journeyed upriver to this place, as their ancestors had. The prayers of the people to the Salmon Chief had been heard. The people could usually count on a plentiful catch here—but more to rest his aching shoulder. His gaze rested on the western sky, where he could see just the faintest hint of rain clouds gathering above the trickling of the river's low flow. The young man had been working steadily for several hours, as dusk approached, the young man paused once or was it only the rain spirits or was it only the rain spirits

As dusk approached, the young man paused once or was it only the rain spirits or was it only the rain spirits

As he worked, he prayed to the Salmon Chief that "Tap-tap. Tap-tap. Tap-tap-tap." or was it only the rain spirits unless they are associated with a written or oral tradition that helps explain the meaning behind various symbols and expressions left on stone. Both petroglyphs and pictographs have been found in southern Oregon, though no studies have yet been conducted of the single pictograph site.

The Twomile Creek Petroglyph site is located at the confluence of Twomile Creek and the Rogue River, about six miles up the Rogue from the town of Agness, in the Gold Beach Ranger District. The site is situated in the lower section of the steep Rogue River canyon, along the western margin of the rugged Siskiyou Mountain Range. Here, petroglyphs are found on large sandstone boulders on a gravel bar extending nearly five hundred feet along the bank. Prior to the construction of dams upriver, the site was inundated with floodwaters annually. Today, most of the glyph-bearing boulders spend at least a small part of the year underwater.

The rock art at Twomile Creek was originally recorded in 1975. Further examinations were conducted in 1977, when seven boulders were removed to the the Curry County Museum in Gold Beach, and again in 1983, when Louise and Malcolm Loring documented the site for their book on the rock art of Oregon. In 1994 the site is a large boulder situated near the center of the gravel bar extending nearly five hundred feet along the bank.

A shallow pit slowly took form as the hammer-stone pecked away at the rock. It had been important to select a boulder right at the water's edge, so that when the rains came—if the rains came—the design on the rock would be submerged and could carry the prayers of the people to the Salmon Chief. As dusk approached, the young man paused once more to rest his aching shoulder. He gave rested on the western sky, where he could see just the faintest hint of rain clouds gathering ... or was it only the rain spirits playing tricks on him? He turned to put the finishing touches on the carving. "Tap-tap. Tap-tap-tap."

Rock art can be divided into two major categories: petroglyphs and pictographs. Petroglyphs are artistic expressions pecked or etched into stone. Pictographs are expressions painted onto stone. Both petroglyphs and pictographs have been found in southern Oregon, though no studies have yet been conducted of the single pictograph site. The Twomile Creek Petroglyph site is located at the confluence of Twomile Creek and the Rogue River, about six miles up the Rogue from the town of Agness, in the Gold Beach Ranger District.

The site is situated in the lower section of the steep Rogue River canyon, along the western margin of the rugged Siskiyou Mountain Range. Here, petroglyphs are found on large sandstone boulders on a gravel bar extending nearly five hundred feet along the bank. Prior to the construction of dams upriver, the site was inundated with floodwaters annually. Today, most of the glyph-bearing boulders spend at least a small part of the year underwater.

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Perhaps one of the most intriguing features of the Twomile Creek Petroglyph site is a large boulder situated near the center of the site. Heavily covered with cupules and zigzags, the actual contours

Cupules were situated below the tide line, carrying songs and prayers recited in the creation of the glyphs to the "Salmon People."

Siskiyou National Forest conducted an intensive study of the site, recording fifty-nine boulders with nearly one-thousand glyphs. This study was directed by rock art specialist Dan Leen, Janet Joyer, and twenty U.S. Forest Service "Petroglyph in Time" volunteers.

The study of rock art, however, does present some problems. It is difficult for archaeologists to interpret what the glyphs mean, unless they are associated with a written or oral tradition that helps explain the meaning behind various symbols and expressions left behind on ancient cliff and rocks.

The 1994 analysis of the Twomile Creek petroglyphs proceeded cautiously. Some boulders were covered with gravel from recent river activity; others were covered with moss. After carefully exposing all petroglyphs, and cleaning the surfaces of the boulders, each glyph was painted with a solution of aluminum oxide and water to enhance photography. Aluminum oxide is superior to chalk and other temporary petroglyph enhancing agents because it reflects light well, helps distinguish grooves and other features of petroglyphs and, most important, is easily removed with water. Rubbings were also made of the more unusual petroglyphs, using colored wax on cotton cloth. Each glyph was measured and, finally, mapped using satellite mapping technology. After all documentation was completed, the boulders, using water and natural bristle brushes.

The most common design element at Twomile Creek, by far, is the cupule; approximately nine-hundred have been documented so far. Cupules are small, round depressions pecked into the surface of a rock. They are typically about one centimeter deep and average two to three centimeters in diameter. Some of the cupules are connected by small grooves or other design elements. Most occur on the tops of boulders, but some are on the sides, suggesting that some of the boulders have tipped from their original positions. It is likely that additional unrecorded petroglyphs exist on the undersides of some of the boulders.

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of the boulder are suggestive of female genitalia. A natural crevice about two meters long runs the length of the rock, and a large depression has been pecked into the crevice along the upper end of the rock. Such features have been identified at other rock art sites in the West, and are referred to as “yoni” rocks thought to be representative of human fertility.

Twomile Creek is situated in the traditional territory of the Shasta Costa band of the Tututni Indians, an Athabaskan group thought to have arrived in the area about 1500 years ago, displacing the previous human inhabitants of the region. The Tututnis were hunter-gatherers who relied on fishing as a major means of subsistence. The Rogue River supported heavy runs of salmon, which were caught by means of hook-and-line, dip-net, spear, basket trap, and weir. Twomile Rapid, located about one kilometer downstream from the mouth of the petroglyph site, particularly noted in the ethnographic literature as an excellent fishery for lamprey eels during their spawning season in April and May. Wolverton Orton, an informant for ethnographer John Harrington, stated that, “When the eels were being caught up at the place upstream of Chasta Costa [Twomile Rapid], they would say, ‘The blood of eels is flowing,’ meaning the Rogue River had turned into eel blood when they were cleaning eels. Unfortunately, the early ethnographic record of the Tututnis makes no reference to rock art of any kind. The rapid removal of the native residents immediately after the Indian Wars precluded much study of native lifeways. We do have some information about rock art elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest and in Northern California, and through comparison we can make some interpretations concerning the meaning of the petroglyphs recorded at Twomile Creek. Cupule sites have been found at many locations throughout the western United States. They are thought to have originated in the Great Basin around seven thousand to five thousand years ago. They are plentiful in the Great Basin, and are believed to be associated with hunting game or fertility magic. Cupules are also common on the Northwest coast, but in that area their use is generally representational. For example, they occur in a pair to form eyes, or in a row to form a backbone. Rarely do cupules occur alone. In the Northwest they are most often attributed to weather control. They are almost always situated between high and low water along rivers, or within the intertidal zone along the coast, so that they are periodically inundated with water. This allowed the songs and prayers recited during the creation of the glyphs to be carried to the “salmon people” who lived on the bottom of the river in human form and had to be enticed to take on their fish form and sacrifice themselves to the people for food.

In northern California, several Indian tribes often used rocks with cupules as a means of controlling weather. These were called “rain rocks” by the Klamath, Shasta, Karok, Hupa, and Tolowa. Pits and grooves were pecked into them to bring rain, or to make rain cease. Because of the high sand bars at the mouth of the coastal rivers, it was important that heavy rains fell during late summer to allow salmon to enter the rivers and swim upstream to important fisheries. Coquille Thompson, a native Tolowa interviewed by anthropologist Melville Jacobs, stated that a small rock on the beach near the Smith River was a kind of medicine rock. “When the tide is up, the ocean hits it. When a child is born, some make it rain, some will make good weather. If one wants to make good weather, one picks up a beach rock and hammering, saying a formula, and then he throws the hammer rock into the ocean, and then you get it.” According to Leaf Hillman, tribal preservation officer for the Klamath Tribe of northern California, rain rocks are still used today for weather control, specifically to bring rain during especially bad forest fire seasons.

Capules are also found to have a fertility function in some cultures. Among the Pomo Indians in central California, capules were pecked into boulders known as “baby rocks” by women wishing to conceive.

Zigzag designs are more difficult to interpret. One interpretation, though, is worth noting here. Basketry technology was highly developed among the Indians of our area, and represents one of the few surviving expressions of their art. Variations of the zigzag design were the most common basket design features, and among some groups represented lightning, which was associated with summer rains and female fertility.

Cupules and yoni formations are symbols of female fertility found in rock art throughout the world. They are especially prevalent along the Pacific Coast. At the Clo-one site on Vancouver Island, large natural fissures in boulders were utilized to represent female genitalia in a way similar to that seen on one of the boulders at Twomile Creek. At the Wedding Rocks site on the Olympic Peninsula there are seventeen vulviforms forming the heads, bodies, and limbs of two human figures. Yoni rocks are common in northern California in Karuk and Shasta territory. At the Katamin site, which is considered by the Karuk to be the center of the universe, an outcrop of bedrock that extends up a steep slope from the bottom of the Klamath River is covered with cupules. At another site is a crevice in a large rock that extends up a steep slope from the bottom of the Klamath River is covered with cupules. At another site is a crevice in a large rock

One interpretation of the zigzag designs suggests they represented lightning, symbolizing summer rain and female fertility.

Photo: Coquille-Siuslaw National Forest

The largest and most complex of southern Oregon’s rock art sites is Twomile Creek, located along the lower Rogue.

Photo: Coquille-Siuslaw National Forest
Siskiyou National Forest plans to focus efforts toward public interpretation of the site and to apply more aggressive site protection strategies involving community stewardship, and law enforcement where necessary, to ensure the preservation of the Twomile Creek Petroglyph site.

In August 1994, a team of archaeologists and volunteers sponsored by the USDA Forest Service “Passport in Time” program spent a week headquartered in a rustic field camp near Twomile Creek. During the days, they recorded ancient rock art, toured other prehistoric sites in the area, and even discovered a previously unknown petroglyph site upriver. In the evenings, they listened to experts speak on the cultural and natural history of the area, visited the local history museum, and conducted night photography of the petroglyphs.

The “Passport in Time” program provides opportunities for individuals and families to work with professional archaeologists and historians on historic preservation projects. Archaeological digs, restoration of old buildings, and oral history interviewing are just a few of the activities offered. At the Twomile site, volunteers from across the nation were able to map, photograph, measure, draw and make rubbings of ancient, symbolic rock art. They were able to share in new discoveries and try to understand a small piece of the human story in southern Oregon.

Sites such as Twomile allow all of us to understand the native peoples of our region in a unique way. These sites offer insights into how they viewed their place in the universe and the ways they sought control over the unpredictable aspects of their lives—age-old issues with which humanity has struggled for time immemorial.

Meanwhile, as one wanders among these rocks on a late summer afternoon, the echoes of that ancient time can still be heard above the soft rippling of the water. “Tap-tap. Tap-tap. Tap-tap-tap.”

Janet Joyer has been an archaeologist for the Siskiyou National Forest for eleven years. Last summer, she concluded research at a Rogue Indian War site.

For Further Reading

- Loring, J. Minkoff, and Louise Loring. Photographs and Petroglyphs of the Oregon Country, Part II: Southern Oregon. Monograph XXII, Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles, 1983. This is a compendium of nearly 150 rock art sites known in southern Oregon, from Coos to Multnomah counties.
- For more information on how you can participate in the “Passport in Time” program, write to PIT Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 33135, Tucson, AZ 85751-3315 or call 1-800-281-9176.

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Upon its completion by the Snook and Traver contracting firm in 1911, the first Ashland High School (AHS) building was a “radical departure” from typical high school design. Twin towers on the central building gave lofty graceful curves to the first local institution dedicated solely to secondary education. Administrative offices occupied either side of the front entrance and a 60x90 foot assembly hall was located at the center of the edifice. The assembly hall held desks in rows and could accommodate up to four hundred students.

Not only was the building design innovative, but the course of study was too. In addition to history, the newest curriculum in domestic science was held on the upper floor with sewing machines and cooking facilities. Manual training labs occupied the basement, replete with work benches and power tools. The basement shared its space with a combined gymnasium/theater. One student, impressed by the building’s modern plumbing, wrote in the 1911 Rogue Annual, “Bubbling fountains are everywhere used for drinking purposes and in all respects the sanitary features throughout the building comply with the latest scientific discoveries.”

Another modern invention, an electric clock system, was installed in 1911 at a cost of $646. So impressive was this system that an editor made mention of it in the second Rogue Annual, printed in 1912. “Four swinging doors give access to the assembly hall. Between them and directly opposite the main entrance is the ‘master’ clock which regulates all the other clocks (of which there are twenty-one) in each room.”

The grandfather clock, whose pendulum regulated the bell system for the high school, was later uncovered in the “dungeon” (a central storage basement) by alumni and AHS office manager Mrs. Cathy Silver. Although it was covered in black paint and disemboweled of many vital parts, she recognized it as the historic time piece that stood sentinel in the old school building.

Silver convinced Smitty Smith, the principal at the time, to have the clock refurbished. The oak grandfather clock has regained its position of dignity and now steadily keeps time in the AHS main office.

Classes opened in the new structure in November of 1911 with ten faculty, including the superintendent and the principal, who each taught a subject. Approximately two hundred students were enrolled, among them thirty eighth-graders, or “subfreshmen,” as they were then called. These youngsters were displaced from the overcrowded East Side School (located at the present day Safeway store). The eighth grade was temporarily housed in the Chautauqua School (present day Butler Playground in Lithia Park) before finding a better home in the new building. Things are not so different today with the sixth grade classes dispersed in several elementary schools; the middle school is too crowded to house them.

What began as a symmetrical Spanish, Mission-style edifice with ivy covered walls has evolved into a routinely square institutional building. The building has had more lift, slips and tacks than a Hollywood celebrity. Three renovations, each separated by four years, dramatically changed the appearance of the building.

Remodeling and Reminiscing

by Michelle Zundel

Above: This Mission-Style building completed in 1911 housed Ashland High School, the first school dedicated solely to secondary education in southern Oregon. Its history forgotten by most, it is now the high school’s Mountain Avenue Theater.

Lower Left: This grandfather clock was once the heart of the bell system. Discovered in a basement after years of neglect, it was restored and now marks the hours in the main office.

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What began as a symmetrical Spanish, Mission-style edifice with ivy covered walls has evolved into a routinely square institutional building. The building has had more lift, slips and tacks than a Hollywood celebrity. Three renovations, each separated by four years, dramatically changed the appearance of the building.
Ashland High School students, circa 1911. The school was remarked upon for its many innovations, including the newest curriculum in Domestic Science complete with sewing machine and cooking facilities.

A second change occurred in 1961 when, despite vehement protest by the community, the ivy was removed from the walls of the building. Aesthetics lost to the reality that ivy destroys buildings and provides habitat for vermin. Finally, in 1965, the high school got a new address. Prior to that year, the high school building faced Iowa Street, which ran through the center of campus. In 1965, the Mormon Church, directly across the street from the school’s main entrance, was purchased to provide additional classroom space. It is now known as the English Building. Shortly thereafter, the city halted traffic on Iowa Street between Mountain and Main streets and the school received a Mountain Avenue address. Custodians have cleaned and maintained the building as it has evolved throughout the years. Gathered for a break in the faculty room this summer, they shared their repertoire of tales about the building, which included more than one ghost story .... Footsteps echoed on the second floor early in the morning, the custodian unlocking the doors heard it and raced upstairs to investigate. The footsteps did not grow gradually; no doors slammed and no one passed him. The sound simply disappeared ....

Two custodians reportedly saw the same apparition on different occasions. One of them tells the story this way: When entering the girls’ bathroom near midnight, the custodian saw a seated girl, clad in a poofy-skirt and sweater, crying on the floor of the bathroom. His polite manner caused him to excuse himself and apologize to the young lady for the interruption. Once outside the restroom door, he realized the hour and the peculiar circumstance. He returned to investigate but the specter had vanished. The rest of the custodial staff hardly agreed that while working in the building late at night, or early in the morning, they sensed that some former students may have chosen to stay on campus long after their graduation. Who knows what will happen to the spirit inhabitants of the Theater building once it is demolished. The hub of social activity for the last eighty-five years of Ashland High School history, however, will be replaced with a new performing arts complex. This bulwark of secondary education has seen considerable action during its tenure. It has housed countless theater productions, basketball games, and classes. Students once stood on the roof, claiming the building for Japan. Others defaced the building with graffiti, and at one time in the 1980s students adorned the chimney with an eight-foot, papier-mâché phallus.

The original architects and students would, however, have difficulty finding the smooth lines of their old alma mater today. The structure is a mishmash of renovations in which old coexists with new. A bilevel cafeteria has replaced the old gymnasium and a performing arts center. This bulwark has replaced the old gymnasium and a performing arts complex. This bulwark has housed countless theater productions, basketball games, and classes. Students once stood on the roof, claiming the building for Japan. Others defaced the building with graffiti, and at one time in the 1980s students adorned the chimney with an eight-foot, papier-mâché phallus.

The theater grew, but not enough. Actors have so little back-stage room that they employ rooms on the top floor to dress. Experts warn the school district that in the event of an earthquake, the building would quickly crumble.

The prospect of a new building is only possible because the Ashland community has supported its educational institutions throughout every decade, taxing itself to build the new school in 1911 and almost every ten years after that. In March, 1996, the community agreed to tax itself once again to relieve overcrowding at the middle school, to remove unsafe buildings and to bring greater technology to AHS. Great promise lingers in the air as plans are made for the Performing Arts Center.

A committee of students, parents, community members, teachers and administrators met last spring to brainstorm about all the possible uses and needs that must be met by the new complex. This group may visit other modern theaters in the state to learn from builders’ triumphs and follies. BOOR/A Architects of Portland hopes that the committee will complete its work by the end of 1996, at which time they will draft the first set of plans. Heinz Rudolph, the principal architect, envisions a hub of community life, not just bridging two distinct parts of campus, the Quad and the athletic facilities, but spanning boundaries between school and community. Preliminary imaginations see a performing arts complex including a commons area with food services similar to a student union, ten classrooms, a larger theater, music rooms and centralized student services. In its final form, the creators hope to design an energy efficient space that is user friendly for the entire community.

is that it will serve our student population as well as the community in a very positive way. We want it to be part of the 21st century reform movement. We know that schools are not entities unto themselves; what we have, we need to share with the community.

When the yearbook is published, following completion of the new complex, perhaps students will use similar language to that used in the 1912 Rogue Annual. "It is said that the progress of a town is represented in the development of its schools. We feel that the present building and equipment is one of the best of its kind."

The high school was state-of-the-art eighty-five years ago and will recapture that status when completed in the next few years. This building, which has been the focus of adolescent life, will undergo yet another scene change. What is a school building after all, but a location in which students create themselves intellectually, socially, and emotionally. The energy of adolescence is palpable as they share stories, slams lockers, whisperadamente, study academic subjects and learn other life lessons. The Ashland High School Performing Arts Center will provide a better backdrop for that creative process, with stronger technology than ever before.

Michelle Zundel is the Assistant Vice Principal of Ashland High School.

ENDNOTES
1. Rogue Annual, 1911, p. 7.
2. Rogue Annual, 1912, p. 27.
4. Rogue Annual, 1912, p. 27.
The Time Passes on Pell Corner

by Josh Paddison

When Emil Peil bought the humble blacksmith shop on the corner of the Ashland plaza in 1893, the fanciful contraptions he would end up selling from those premises only a few decades later would have seemed unbelievable. In fact Peil, a Swedish immigrant who had arrived penniless in the United States twenty years earlier, would parlay that small blacksmith shop into the leading farm implement, buggy and automobile store in southern Oregon.

Born on October 6, 1857, in Sweden, Peil came to the United States at age fifteen. Like thousands of other pioneers he drifted west, finding work where he could. In Michigan he studied as a blacksmith's apprentice. He spent time as a tool sharpener and miner throughout the West and Alaska. After arriving in Oregon in 1883, he helped erect the first building in Medford and ranched cattle in Astolpe for three years.

Once Peil settled in his Ashland blacksmith shop in 1893, it would serve as his professional home until his death. His store would in time become synonymous with the entire corner: Ashland resident Alma Stennert remembered calling the intersection “Pell Cornor.”

In 1897 Peil expanded into a nearby building, opening the first prominent farm implement store in the Rogue Valley. After the road name changed, his address went from 4 Ashland Plaza to 4 North Main Street.

Improvements in technology helped Peil’s store prosper. The new farm implements and tillers he sold could simplify labor and even multiply a farmer’s harvest. Consequently, Peil’s wares became increasingly more important to Rogue Valley farmers. In fact, Peil eventually got out of the blacksmith business completely in order to focus on more technologically advanced and sought after products. By 1911, the sign outside Peil’s blacksmith shop read “Pell Bain Wagons, Buggies, Implements, Gardening Tools, (and Farmer’s Hardware).” He offered a full line of repairs and extras, as well as carriages, buggies, Bain and Studebaker wagons and eventually Studebaker automobiles. Once again, Peil prospered through America’s increasing technology, as his was the first and only shop in Ashland to sell Studebakers. Unlike many poor immigrants who sought wealth in America but found mostly hardship and struggle, Peil’s rags-to-riches story seems to have come straight out of a Horatio Alger novel. As his shop grew in prominence, so did his wealth and standing within the community. His 1910 marriage to well-known Alice Applegate only helped to increase his local status—she was, after all, the first white girl born in Klamath County and a member of the famous Applegate family, early settlers in southern Oregon. Emil and Alice must have been quite a dashing pair, she busy with her volunteer work and he with his burgeoning family business.

In an era when automobiles were the ultimate status symbol, Pell both sold them and owned one. He was one of the first five Ashland residents to own a car; his was a chain-drive Studebaker that made such a racket that neighbors would rush to calm their horses as soon as they heard him coming up the road. With Alice, along with her duties as an elementary schoolteacher, spent several years chauffeuring customers all over southern Oregon.

His shop was known for reliable and friendly service. A write-up in the local newspaper reported that Peil’s “humble store was a shrine where men of all classes came for sympathy and advice.” Even when Peil, at age 81, fell sick, he refused to close the shop even one day while he was still alive. “What would the farmers do for their implements and repairs if I should close my store?” he asked. He insisted on giving day-to-day instructions regarding the minute details of the business until the very day of his death.

His death came on January 7, 1938, forty-five years after first opening the shop. The premises were sold and the ancient building was torn down. Al Lohman and John Yapple, two local businessmen, opened the Parkview Department Store on the spot in 1950. It lasted until the late 1970s when Kay Daniels, a women’s clothing store, took over the building.

Today, “Pell Corner’s” address has changed to 5 N. Main Street and is divided between Gateway Real Estate and Small Change children’s clothing store. Beautiful Lithia Park is now across the street, as is the Ashland City Hall. There is no longer a need for blacksmith shops, or Studebaker wagons for that matter, but one gets the feeling that Emil Peil, if he were alive today, would have changed with the times and be as prosperous today as he was ninety years ago.

Josh Paddison is an Editorial Assistant for Southern Oregon Heritage. He is a recent graduate of the University of Oregon School of Journalism.
Far From Paradise: Colver Brothers’ Lament

When Hiram Colver decided to follow his brother Samuel’s footsteps and relocate his family to southern Oregon in 1857, he must have had a realistic idea of what to expect. After all, he and his brother had left their family home in Ohio in their early teens and had traveled extensively during the following fifteen years, including time spent at Plymouth College in Indiana and with the Texas army. Samuel and wife Huldah spoke proudly of southern Oregon where they had more than twelve hundred acres of land on the spot that would eventually become the town of Phoenix.

So Hiram came. Samuel allocated him a 360-acre lot and the brothers donated land to other settlers, effectively founding the town of Phoenix around them. The center of town was the Colver house, an enormous 2,500 square foot building that served as Samuel and Huldah’s home, as well as a social hub of Phoenix, a refuge for the needy. The house, which still stands along Highway 99, served as school, dance hall, church and playground.

Samuel and Hiram spent the rest of their days in Oregon with some success and prosperity. Life, however, was rougher than either anticipated in the beginning. The following letter written by Hiram and also signed by Samuel was sent to their parents shortly before the brothers settled on their southern Oregon acreage. It illustrates the brothers’ frustration with a western frontier that was far from paradise. Despite Samuel and Hiram’s less than enthusiastic descriptions, their parents did move to Oregon a few years later.

The letter, from SORS MSF 269, has been transcribed in its original format. Preserving the unusual grammar and word usage gives us a chance to act as amateur historians reconstructing the past.

Above: Samuel Colver, with his brother Hiram, painted a black and white picture of outdoors Oregon for their parents in Illinois. They also hinted that a little money for cattle wouldn’t hurt.

Below: Samuel Colver’s house, now abandoned on Highway 99, was once the center of community life in Phoenix.
JACKSONVILLE CHRISTMAS SENSE OF PLACE

CELEBRATING POP-UP TRAGEDY TRIUMPH

TREASURIES

Jacksonville Christmas Cookies and Mount Hebron Spearpoints

MR. TIDWELL GOES TO WASHINGTON

In June several local students participating in National History Day were sent to Washington, D.C. to compete in the nationals. North Medford High School student Kevin Tidwell was awarded Outstanding Senior Essay for his paper, “A Movement of Hope,” regarding the Ghost Dance movement.

“The triumph and tragedy in history” is the theme of this year’s National History Day. Students, grades 6 through 12, interested in history may prepare a paper, performance, table-top exhibit, or media presentation.

Those interested in this year’s History Day should call Dawn Curler, Southern District Coordinator for Oregon’s National History Day, at 773-6336.

CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE

“Language of the Land,” a new traveling exhibit highlighting American geography through literature, will be on display at the History Center from January 4 to April 13. The exhibit uses the words of various “roving authors” such as John Steinbeck, Mark Twain and Jack Kerouac to describe regions of the United States. These authors’ quotations are accompanied by maps, photographs, engravings, billboards, highway signs and other elements evocative of each particular region. Impressions of southern Oregon written by authors such as Jack London and Zane Grey will also be featured.

The exhibit is sponsored by the Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Fund and the Library of Congress.

CHRISTMAS IN JACKSONVILLE

Come celebrate Christmas in Jacksonville with the Southern Oregon Historical Society. The C.C. Beckman House will be hosting Victorian Christmas tours on December 14, 15, 21 and 22. The house will be decorated for the holidays and guests can partake of free Christmas cookies baked in the Beckman family stove. The tours are from 1 to 4 p.m., and are free to all.

At the Children’s Museum, several Christmas-related activities will be occurring throughout December. A Christmas tree will be up for the entire month, and kids can make ornaments to take home. Mrs. Claus — Santa’s wife — will drop in from time to time to tell stories. And special craft days are happening on the three Saturdays before Christmas — card printing on the 7th, stencil making on the 14th, and paper making on the 21st.

LESSONS FROM MOUNT HEBRON

Twenty-five college and high school students got a chance for a lesson in hands-on archaeology this summer at the Mt. Hebron Field School. The school, located in Siskiyou County, California, offered students the opportunity to participate in an authentic archaeological excavation of Paleoindian artifacts dating from at least 9,000 years ago.

The Mt. Hebron Field School was led by Ted Grobel, an archaeologist for the Southern Oregon State College. “It was a chance for students to get their first experience excavating, surveying and participating in archaeology,” he said. Over the course of the four weeks, the students found stemmed obsidian spearpoints, stone tools, bone fragments and util-arts (harnesses that allowed spears to be thrown straighter and further).

DORLAND RETURNS

The artwork of local artist Dorland Robinson now decks the halls of the Jacksonville Museum. A wide variety of her art will be featured, including works done in oils, chalk, watercolors and charcoal sketches.

Born in 1891, Dorland Robinson began her art career at age five. She was under the tutelage of famed Jacksonville photographer and artist Peter Bier by age 12. She later studied art in Oakland and Philadelphia.

Dorland’s work will be on display until October, 1997.
A Traveling for Handkerchiefs

Our president for the next four years has been chosen. We can begin the slow recovery from the barrage of election year propaganda. If handkerchiefs such as these were available to us, we could mop our brows and relax, hoping that our country is in good hands. These campaign handkerchiefs, from the Society’s collections, are from the 1888 and 1896 election years and may have been used to wave from the floor of the national conventions, or perhaps worn like today’s T-shirts and caps as a sign of support.

Right: A handkerchief from the 1896 Republican campaign of William McKinley and Garret A. Hobart. McKinley, supported by Colburn, who advocated returning to the gold standard, bears the "Sound Money" campaign. Unlike his opponent, who campaigned throughout the country, McKinley spent much of his time at his Camp, Ohio home, waging a more traditional "Front Porch" campaign.

Left: Another nose-blower from the 1888 Republican campaign of Benjamin Harrison and Levi P. Morton. Harrison, the grandson of William Henry Harrison, is featured in one corner. His grandfather's 1840 Whig campaign handkerchief is reproduced in the center. William Henry's nickname was "Tippecanoe," named after his victory over the Shawnee Indians in 1811 at the Battle of Tippecanoe.

Right: In the 1888 Republican campaign Benjamin Harrison supported higher tariffs to protect American industry from foreign competition. Harrison defeated Cleveland. The latter refused to actively campaign because he felt it was beneath the dignity of the presidency. Acc. # 68.4

Left: In 1888 Cleveland & Allan Thrumman (Democrat Party). Cleveland ran for the Presidency three times. In 1884 he won; in 1888 he lost. Sometimes it doesn’t matter how much you spend on handkerchiefs; and in 1892 he won.
The History Stores, where your holiday dreams come true.

History Center
106 N. Central Ave., Medford
9-5 Mon. - Fri. 12-5 Sat.

Jacksonville Museum
206 N. Fifth St., Jacksonville
12-5 Wed. - Sun