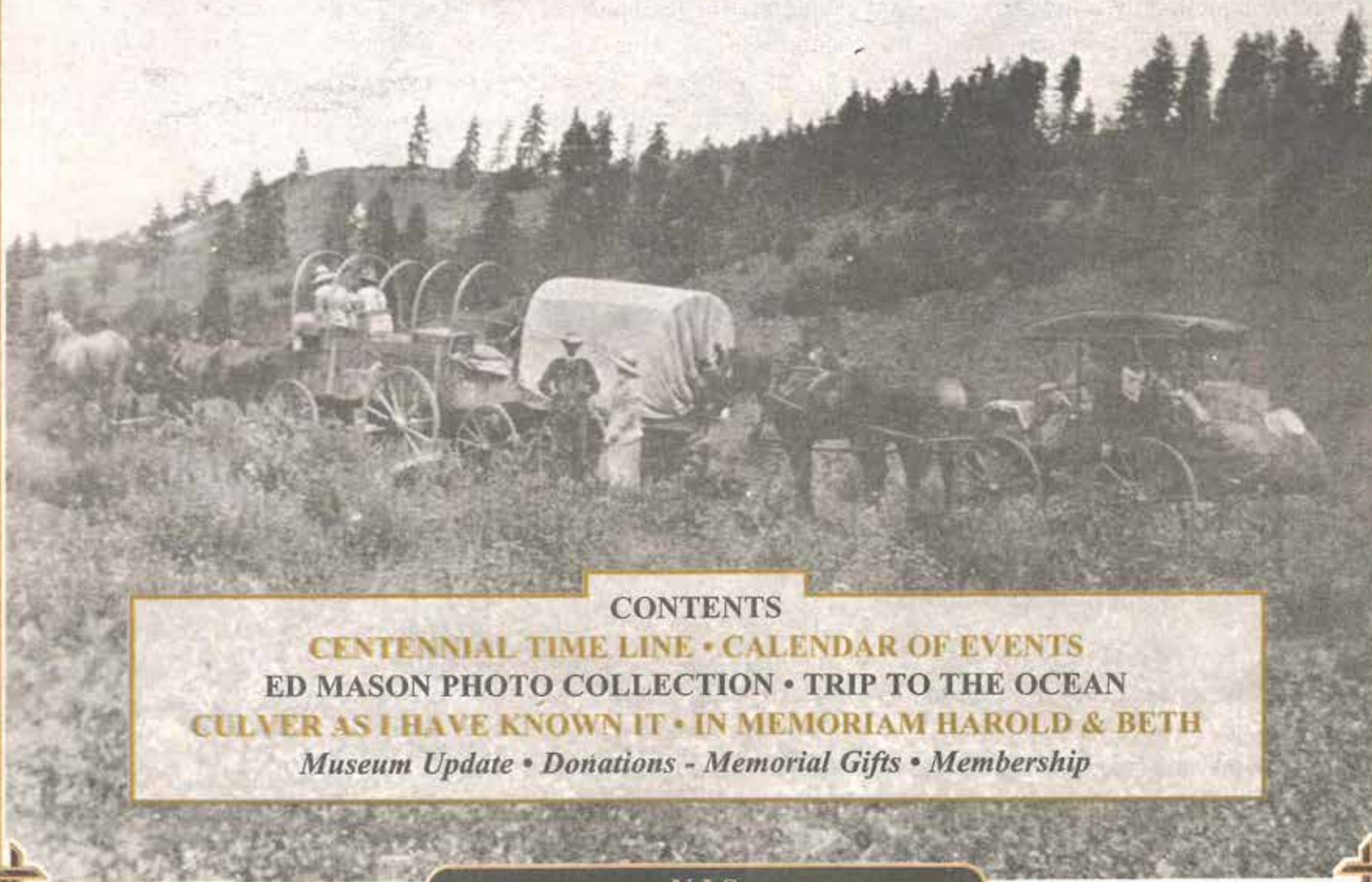


WINTER & SPRING 2014

# THE AGATE

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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N.I.S.

## President's Message

Although our Museum collection is currently in storage in Westside School, and we are actively working with other interested organizations to establish "Westside Community Center" (with the Museum anchoring the south wing), the JCHS is very busy "doing history" in other ways and on other fronts.

- Since inaugurating "History Pubs" at Great Earth Natural Foods in downtown Madras early in 2013, we've staged three of these very popular programs, on the history of climbing at Smith Rock, with Alan Watts; on the 1843 expedition of Capt. John Fremont through Central Oregon, with Loren Irving; and on silent movies on railroads and ranching. We have plans to present two more before summer, with Gary Clowers on local raptors, and Jerry Ramsey on "Ed Mason's Madras: Pioneer Photographs 1908-12."

- From the planning stage, we have been helping to organize the centennial of Jefferson County, 1914-2014, and JCHS Directors and members will be playing major roles in bringing the centennial program to communities around the county (see "Calendar of Historical Events" elsewhere in this issue).

- We hope you've already noticed, and enjoyed, the active displays of historical photos we've made available around Madras since 2013 on our two large-format digital photo frames, rotating between the Chamber of Commerce, the Jefferson County Library, the COCC Madras Campus, and the Senior Center.

- Under the leadership of JCHS Director Jim Carroll, we're taking stock and beginning to refurbish our pioneer buildings at the County Fairgrounds—the Homestead House, the One-Room School, and the Machine Shed housing antique farm equipment. Our plan is to make these priceless buildings and their contents available to the public—including school kids—on a regular basis.

- In 2012, we created the Historical Society Endowment as part of the Oregon Community Foundation's "Endowment Partners"

program, and through very generous and far-sighted gifts by local individuals and families, it has grown substantially. On the strength of this initial "quiet phase" campaign of giving, we are hoping to open a public campaign soon. Our aim with the Endowment is to provide the Historical Society with a stable

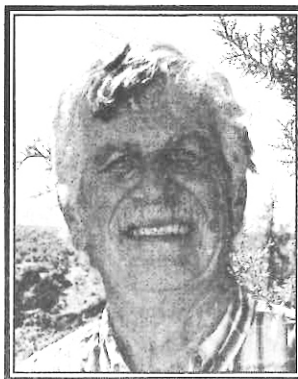
source of income to help meet our growing regular expenses—for the time being, we are returning the fund's quarterly yields back to the principal, thus making it grow faster.

- Under Courtney Lupton's capable direction, the "History Day" program at Jefferson County Middle School has flourished in both size and quality in recent years, with members of the Historical Society offering advice to JCMS participants, helping to judge the competitions, and giving each year a \$200 Grand Prize for the best History Day exhibit. The 2012 winner, Carly Breach, went on in 2013 to win the revived State History Day competition, and later traveled to Maryland for the national competition.

- Since the announcement last year that Jack Erickson's Air Museum and its unique collection of flying WWII military planes would be moving from Tillamook to Madras Airport, the Society has been sharing its records on the Madras Airbase 1943-5 with Mr. Erickson's representatives. As nearly all of the original wartime Airbase records were either destroyed or transferred and then lost, there are big gaps in the records we have, and contributions of information, photos etc. concerning MAB during the war years will help us restore a full picture of those years.

- And finally—don't miss this year's "Centennial" Annual Dinner, set for Saturday April 5, at the Senior Center—Social Hour at 5, Dinner (pulled pork and all the trimmings, with vegetarian options this year) at 6. The featured speaker will be local rancher and pilot Ron Ochs, with photos and stories about his remarkable life in and around aviation. \$40 per person, and reservations will be going fast—make yours now, if you haven't done so already!

— Jerry Ramsey, JCHS President



## Welcome to the New Agate!

**T**he Jefferson County Historical Society is proud to resume publication of its popular biannual journal of Jefferson County and Central Oregon history, THE AGATE. Founded in 2007-8 by JCHS Historian Beth Crow as an outgrowth of the Society's "Newsletter," THE AGATE was published until Beth's retirement in 2011, and featured in-depth, illustrated articles on local history topics ranging from the beginnings of the Opal Springs/Deschutes Valley Water system, the pioneer Madras photographer Ole Hedlund, and the history of Madras Airport, to the origins of the community of Gateway. It played an important role in the celebration of the Madras and Railroad centennials of 2010-11.

All members of the JCHS will receive issues of THE AGATE as part of their membership in the Society; copies will also be donated to libraries, schools, and other cultural institutions in the area.

Editor of the new AGATE is Jane Ahern, Madras freelance writer and former children's librarian of the Jefferson County Library. With a new, larger newspaper-style format, THE AGATE will be able to present more articles and photos in a much more readable layout. It will be published in late March and September; the September 2014 issue will, as an experiment, go out to subscribers of the Madras *Pioneer*, as well as to JCHS members.

In our coverage of local history, we take a wide, inclusive view of what counts as "history"—from pioneer homesteading and railroad days, to recent developments in our area. We welcome your comments and suggestions and ideas about topics for future articles. If you're interested in writing for THE AGATE, please let us know!



### Jefferson County Historical Society Officers, Directors

**President:** Jarold Ramsey • 541-475-5390  
**V. President:** Steve Rankin • 541-475-6716  
**Secretary:** Wanda Buslach • 541-475-6210  
**Treasurer:** Elaine Henderson • 541-475-2306  
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 Evaline Patt • 541-553-5605  
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 Dr. Tom Manning • 541-475-6241  
 Betty Fretheim • 541-475-0583  
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 Jennie Smith • 541-475-1159  
 David Campbell • 541-475-1159  
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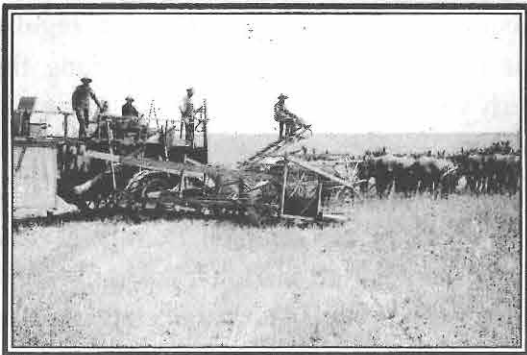
The mission of the Society is to research, gather and preserve the history of Jefferson County and Central Oregon for public education through the display of artifacts and archives.

**Editor:** Jane Ahern  
**Publisher:** Jarold Ramsey

# TIMELINE:

1914  
TO  
2014

## 100 Years of Jefferson County



**1914**

Jefferson County created (out of Crook County) by initiative and county vote. A lot of development had already occurred in the region including, but by no means limited to: the establishment of the city of Madras, the *Madras Pioneer*, the Madras Chamber of Commerce, and Madras High School; the founding of the “new” Culver along the expected railroad route; and the coming of the railroad to Madras, Metolius, Culver, Opal City, and Gateway.

**1915-16**

Temporary county seat in Culver

**1916**

By county-wide vote, county seat relocated to Madras

North Unit Irrigation District organized

**1924**

Great Madras fire

**1937**

Contract with Bureau of Reclamation to build North Unit Project

**1939**

Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce begun

**1940s**

North Unit canal work into Jefferson County—much of it done by Conscientious Objectors and Mennonite non-combatants

**1946**

Official opening of North Unit: water released on old Rodman place east of Culver



**1946-50**

Occupation of North Unit's 60,000 irrigated acres by farmers from W. Idaho, E. Oregon, and elsewhere — “boom” crops Ladino clover, blue grass, potatoes . . .



**1960**

After a contentious struggle, PGE and local advocates of construction of Pelton Dam on the Deschutes River prevail, and the dam is opened.

**1961**

Natural gas pipeline through the county completed

New Jefferson County Courthouse built

**1964**

Opening of Round Butte Dam;  
inundation of The Cove

Devastating flooding throughout county;  
Newly built Kah-Nee-ta  
Village destroyed

**1967**

Mt. View Hospital opening

**1972**

Kah-nee-tah Lodge opens

**1973**

Development of Crooked River  
Ranch begins

**1976**

Mary Norton becomes first woman  
elected to the Jefferson County Court

**1978**

Opening of Jefferson County Historical  
Museum

**1979**

Jefferson County Historical Society  
formed; merges with Museum in 1994.



**1981-5**

Rise and collapse of "Rajneeshpuram"  
occupation of old Muddy Ranch

**1990**

Opening of new Jefferson County  
Library



**1992**

Juniper Hills Park dedicated  
Opening of Madras/Jefferson County  
Senior Center

**1994**

County Judge position abolished.  
Juvenile justice to be under jurisdiction  
of the circuit court; former county judge  
to be a full-time county commissioner  
and administrator.

**1996**

All three county commissioners seats  
become part-time, paid positions.

**2000**

Library Association makes successful bid  
to form a special taxation district;  
Jefferson County Library no longer  
funded by county government.

**2001**

Sheriff's office transfers first 25 inmates  
to its new jail near the industrial park

**2002**

Soccer fields dedicated at Juniper Hills  
Park, attended by Senator Wyden and  
local dignitaries

**2004-7**

Local turmoil over land use, re:  
"Measure 37" and "Measure 49"

**2006**

Madras soldier Tom Tucker  
killed in Iraq



**2007**

Madras native Jacoby Ellsbury  
stars in World Series for Red Sox

Opening of Deer Ridge  
Correctional Facility

**2008**

County residents vote to make county  
commission positions non-partisan,  
starting with 2010 election

Madras Aquatic Center Opens

**2010**

Celebration of centennial,  
of Madras and Culver

**2012**

Central Oregon Community College  
Madras Campus opens

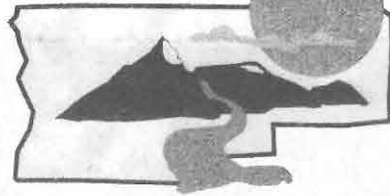
**2014**

Jefferson County celebrates centennial

THE AGATE

CENTENNIAL

1914-2014



Experience county history at these community events this year!

## 2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**April 5:** JCHS "Annual Dinner"  
At Madras Senior Center. Featured  
speaker, Ron Ochs

**End of May (TBA):** "History  
Day" at Jefferson County Middle  
School competition and exhibition

**Late September (TBA):**  
JCHS Annual Meeting  
And Ice Cream Social

**"One Hundred Years of Jefferson County"** to properly celebrate our diverse and far-flung county's centennial, the JCHS is collaborating with officials and volunteers from across the county to bring centennial exhibits, photos, historical skits and activities to our communities, as follows (check Madras Pioneer for details):

**Ashwood:** May 10 (Mother's Day weekend)  
**Camp Sherman:** May 24 (Memorial Day weekend)  
**Warm Springs (Museum at Warm Springs):**  
June 28 (Pi-Ume-Sha)  
**City of Madras:** July 4

**Gateway:** July 4 (afternoon)  
**Crooked River Ranch:** July 5  
**Jefferson County Fair (Madras):** July 23-6  
**City of Culver:** August 15 (Crawdad Festival)  
**City of Metolius:** Sept. 13 (Spike and Rail)

EXHIBITS • AUDIO/VISUAL DISPLAYS • PERFORMANCES • MORE!

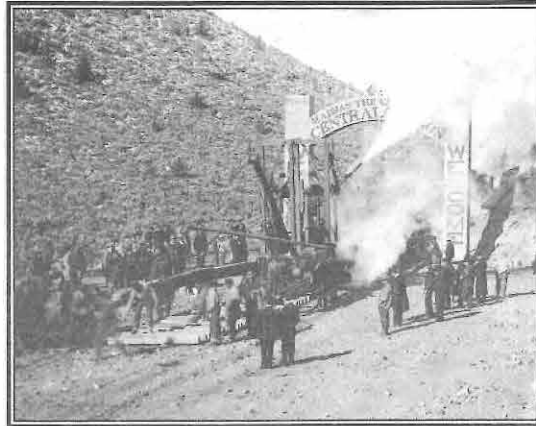
# Ed Mason photo collection given to JCHS

The family of the late Jack Watts, one of the founders of the Historical Society and its treasurer for many years, has given the JCHS a priceless collection of glass photographic negatives taken around 1910 by pioneer Madras photographer and leading citizen Ed Mason (1885-1960).

Mason came to Madras as a teenager with his family in 1903, and after working in B.N. Larkin's harness and saddle shop for some years, became an undertaker, and also served for many years as Jefferson County Coroner. During World War Two he served as a fireman at the Madras Army Airbase, and he and his wife Kathryn operated "The Mason House" for boarders on 5<sup>th</sup> St. (Main) just south from town-center.



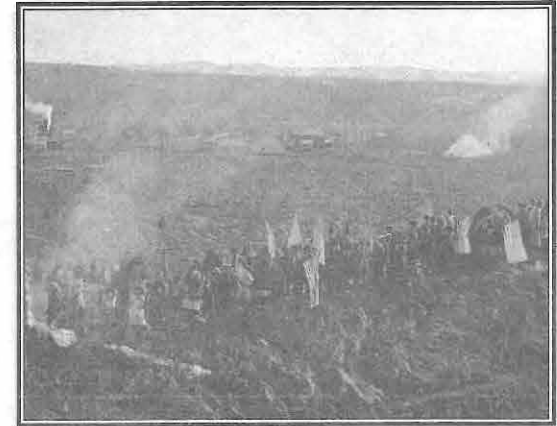
Working with Blue Moon Camera in Portland, with foundation support from Trust Management, the Historical Society has gotten the old negatives scanned and digitalized, giving us graphic images of street scenes, people, and celebrations in Madras a century ago. Like his exact contemporary in Madras,



Ole Hedlund, Mason photographed the arrival of the Oregon Trunk railway on Feb. 15, 1911. But where Hedlund's famous photographs mainly cover the official events of "Railroad Day", showing dignitaries posed in front of the "Welcome Arch" in Willow Creek Canyon and so on, Mason's coverage is more informal, showing the Willow Creek site a few hours before the dignitaries arrived in their official Oregon

Trunk train, with railroad crews feverishly laying the last few yards of track—and also depicting crowds straggling up from Madras to the Welcome Arch site.

Another one of his photos (taken around 1912) is probably one-of-a-kind, showing a girls' basketball game in progress, between a Madras High School



team, and a team of Native American girls from Warm Springs, being played outdoors! The collection also includes photos of church groups (Mason was one of the founders of the Madras Methodist Church), homesteading families, dry farming, and a wonderful sequence of panoramic mountain shots taken at high elevations around the Three Sisters.

Ed Mason's photographs add an entirely new dimension to our photographic understanding of early



Madras and Central Oregon, and the Historical Society is deeply grateful to Jack and Marilyn Watts and their family for entrusting them to us. A sampling will be posted on our website, and in the near future we hope to present a "digital exhibition" of them at one of our "History Pubs."

# “A Trip to the Ocean by Wagon in 1913”

— Jarold Ramsey



July 2, 1913, on Warm Springs River upstream from Kah-Nee-Tah. Left: W.H., Clara, and Beatrice Ramsey; above them Lillian Watts; back center: Luther Wilson; right: Jim and Edna Watts; middle front: Gus Ramsey and Ross Watts.

On July 1, 1913, W.H. Ramsey (63; my grandfather) left his homestead on the western edge of Agency Plains with 13 family members in three horse-drawn wagons, bound for Siletz Bay, near present-day Lincoln City.

The party included “Billy” (as he was called), his second wife Clara (44), and their two youngest children— Augustus (my father, 8) and Beatrice (6). Also along for the journey were Billy’s oldest daughter Lillian Ramsey Watts (39) and her husband Jim (40), with their children Carl (13), Ross (9), Edna (7), and Jimmie (2). Another grown daughter, Annie Ramsey Wilson (28), her husband Luther

Wilson (34), and their oldest daughter Inez (9) rounded out the group.

Both the Watts and Wilson families had followed the elder Ramseys out to Central Oregon from Chariton County, Missouri, to take up homesteads. The Wattses arrived in 1905 and the Wilsons around 1912. Family tradition has it that Grandpa Billy wanted to celebrate their emigration to the Promised Land by taking the whole crew off to see the Pacific Ocean, as if the family’s collective western destiny wouldn’t be fulfilled until they had stepped into the ocean, like Lewis and Clark!

Actually, such cross-country “recre-

ational” expeditions by Jefferson County families were not unknown in those early, pre-RV days. For example, the *Madras Pioneer* reported on July 31, 1913 that the proprietor of the Lamonta Hotel, M.T. Cowan, and his wife and two married daughters had returned from a month-long journey by “team and wagon” to visit relatives in Eugene, Springfield, and Silverton. They went over on the old Santiam wagon road and came back on the McKenzie route, which Mr. Cowan noted “was the better road.”

The Ramsey-Watts-Wilson “trip to the Coast” became a mostly forgotten part of our family folklore—until a few years ago when the late Jack Watts loaned me a transcribed copy of an informal journal of the trip kept by his grandmother Lillian Watts. Then, in 2013, one of Annie Wilson’s grandsons, Ted Hawken of Pueblo, Colorado, sent me a packet of



Location unknown, probably north of Simnasho, skirting the Mutton Mountains to the west. The “caravan” is shown in full traveling mode—note “covered wagon” hoops on lead wagon, and bags of gear piled on the Wilsons’ carriage (rear).

photos taken (apparently) by Annie of scenes from the excursion. Taken together, the journal, the photos, and family tradition add up to an unusually detailed, “multi-media” account of one local family’s memorable cross-country trip a century ago.

Not that there aren’t minor mysteries and unanswered questions remaining in the assembled materials. For one thing, neither Ramsey family lore nor Lillian Watts’ journal records the fact that the Luther Wilson family was also part of the entourage, traveling (as seen in the photos) in its own light wagon or carriage with a top! The Ramseys and Wattses were conveyed in a big covered wagon (not unlike the “Prairie Schooners” that came to Oregon from Missouri more than a half-century before) and a smaller wagon hitched on behind. Why Lillian Watts’ journal makes no reference to the fact that her sister Annie and *her* family were along for the ride from beginning to end is unknown. Most likely Lillian focused her record on just her immediate family; she doesn’t refer to her father or stepmother, either. As the Wilson family moved back to Missouri a few years later, they apparently took their part in the story with them, until the photos arrived in 2013.



**Taken from Summit House on Mt. Hood July 4, 1913. In the original photo, the outlines of the mountain can be seen in the center background. “Summit House” was a local landmark dating back to the 1890s—a ramshackle barn-like structure located on a large meadow (“Summit Meadow” along the old Barlow Road a few miles south and around the mountain from Government Camp). It was built by Horace Campbell and operated for a time as a lodge, but was abandoned by 1913.**

And the photos raise other questions. If there were only three adult men on the trip—W.H. Ramsey, Jim Watts, Luther Wilson—who are the additional men in several of the group photos, on the Warm Springs River and in the snow on Mt. Hood? Were they just passersby? And

seems to missing in one or two of the group shots that show her, suggests that he may have taken an occasional turn with his aunt’s camera.

There’s no use regretting that Lillian Watts’ notes on the Ramsey-Watts-Wilson wagon odyssey break off at Sweet Home, several days of rough travel over the Santiam Wagon Road before they reached home, or that she doesn’t offer more personal details about their adventures going and coming. What she records day by day is fascinating and revealing as a journal of family travel across the Cascades and western Oregon before highways, modern cars, and AAA, before RV’s and motels and convenience stores. The main outlines of the trip can be followed on a good map of Oregon (better yet would be a map from that time), but some of the communities and landmarks she mentions—“Summit



**Above Summit House at the snowline as it was in July 1913—but “climbing Mt. Hood” is in jest. W.H. Ramsey on left; Jim Watts on right; probably Luther Wilson in center, holding the rifle. Fourth figure is not identified.**

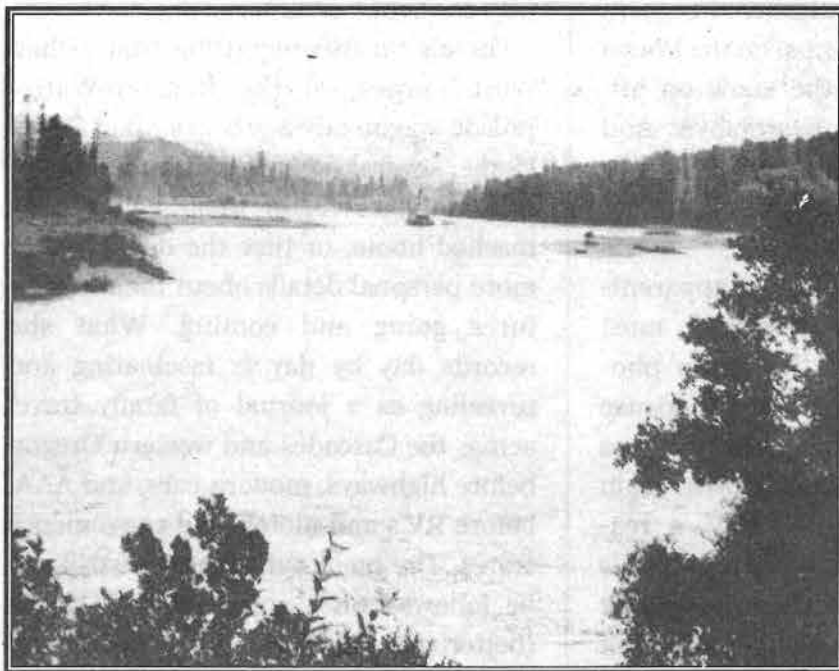
who was the photographer? Because Annie Wilson is apparently missing in most of the group photos, and because the collection has come down from her family, a reasonable guess is that she took most of the pictures. But the fact that 13-year-old Carl Watts

House," "Rhododendron Tavern" and "Mineral Springs" around Mt. Hood and "Midway" in the Coast Range—are not to be found on modern maps or in *Oregon Geographic Names*, and it would be interesting to try to locate them. There's no evidence that any of the party had ever followed the route they took before; even with a map, route-finding must have been a daily challenge, as illustrated by her mention of fording the Salmon River below Mt. Hood three times in one day. (Modern place-names and clarifications are added in brackets.)

Again, the journal co-exists with fragmentary family oral traditions about the trip—for example, that on the way down from Mt. Hood the party paid a toll to use a section of the old Barlow Emigrant Road (at "Tollgate" on present-day

Highway 26, just south of Rhododendron), and that on the return trip, probably above Sweet Home, the families paused for several days to pick and *can* blackberries. The fact that the trip took place in the summer weeks leading up to wheat harvest is puzzling—if Central Oregon farm families went on extended trips in those days, they typically did so *after* harvest was over. The wheat crop in 1913 was by all reports a good one, so most likely Grandpa Billy simply left harvesting in the hands of his oldest sons Claud, Leslie and Bernard and his bachelor brother Levi. Daughter Verl, who was 15 in 1913, recalled 70 years later how indignant *she* was to be chosen to stay behind to help her older brothers and sisters on the farm, while her younger siblings Gus and Bea got to go.

Although Lillian Watts does record the exact time when her party actually saw the Pacific near present-day Lincoln City on Siletz Bay ("sighted Ocean at 3:30 pm [July 10]"), she does not bother with an account of what they saw, or how they felt about it. Let's hope that after coming so far from Missouri, and more recently across two mountain ranges and numerous rivers and wretched roads, they were not disappointed! Evidently, having traveled every day without a break and in fact often going on to the night's campsite after stopping for dinner, they did spend some time camping near the shore (judging from one of the photos, in scrub woods just behind the beach). This can be inferred because, although the return entries are not dated, in her entry for the third day of the return trip, she mentions



Taken near Salem on east bank of the Willamette river. Note steamboat in center of photo.



Yamhill River, probably taken July 8, west of Dallas, in Coast Range foothills.

eating lunch "on the banks of the little stream where we had camped going to the ocean a few weeks before."

Lillian does mention frequently the fine, well-established farms and elegant farm-buildings and thriving grain-fields, orchards, and dairies they saw as they traversed the Willamette Valley, and it is easy to imagine what she was thinking about as she took in such sights of a settled region. Back home on Agency Plains in 1913, the farmhouses were unpainted homesteaders' cabins, the fields were still raw and rocky, and dryland farming was (as ever) a hit-and-miss occupation, especially for newcomers from Missouri trying to learn how to do it. But still, it was now home, and sometime at the end of July 1913 the Ramseys, the Wattses, and the Wilsons returned from their remarkable trip to the ocean, to take up their tasks and tell the home folks all about where they'd been and what they'd seen.



Off-beach campsite near Siletz Bay—Wilson "carriage" visible on right.

## Trip to Ocean

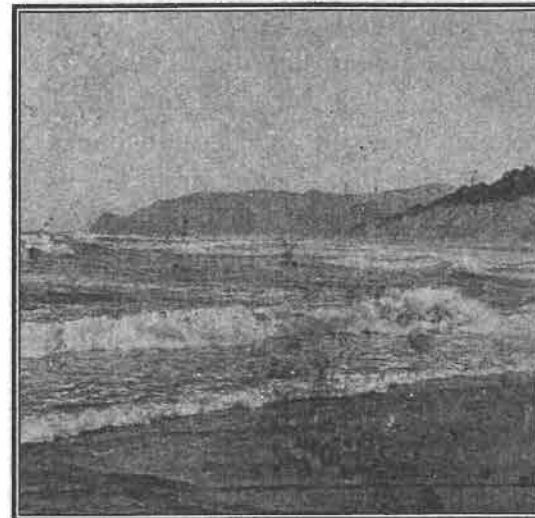
— Lillian Ramsey Watts

**L**eft Agency [Plains] July 1, 1913, crossed D[eschutes] River into Indian Agency and camped at Warm Springs for the night.

Next morning drove over Mutton Mts. and reached Ind[ian] Cemetery [at Simnasho] which was very interesting. Drove through our first pines and camped for dinner at Ind[ian] Spring farm. Reached Bear Creek at night having driven through pine and fir. Rained on us here—made us very uncomfortable. Next day drove over very bad roads and forded Silver Creek, camping at Cedar Flat at noon.

Drove to Frog or Wahoo Lake and camped for night and dried our bedding.

Left Frog Lake, passed through big meadows, forded Salmon R. three times, reached Summit House at foot of Mt.



Siletz Bay, looking north—near modern-day Lincoln City, and the so-called "Miracle Miles."

Hood and stayed rest of day.

Next morning the fog lifted and gave us a fine view of Hood. Some of the party climbed to snow line. Visited the Mineral Springs [now Still Creek USFS forest camp] and Gov't Camp.

Left Summit House July 5, passed by Gov't Camp and Mt. View Hotel [now "Charlie's Mt. View Tavern"] and went down western slope of Cascades by way of Rhododendron Tavern. Camped on Stone Creek for dinner, passed Cherry Villa [Cherryville east of Sandy] and camped on Trout Creek.

July 6 left camp and traveled through some nice farms. Reached Estacada, a town of 400, situated on the [Clackamas] River. Camped one mile west of this place at an old Mill.

Traveled over plank roads and camped at a Grange Hall near Clark's. Next morning traveled through fine farm lands and elegant houses. Camped [with]in a few

miles of Silverton on Apaqua [Abigua] Creek near St. [Mt.?] Angel College.

Next morning drove through fine hop country. Camped at Salem on banks of the Willamette at noon. Many saw mills here. Logs being rafted down river.

Drove along fine farms and fine houses. Camped at Dallas for night. This place is surrounded by prune orchards and hop fields.

July 8. Left Dallas, reached foot hills of the Coast Mts. Camped at Yamhill R. for noon. After noon drove through Grande Ronde Indian Agency through many oaks. Camped a few miles beyond for night at Midway.—damp and rainy.

July 9. Drove to Salmon River and camped for dinner. Very bad roads, worst on trip this drive. Reached Alder Brook for night.

Next day drove through forests over bad roads and camped by roadside for dinner. After dinner drove through fields of ferns, passed a cheese factory, and passed Devils Lake and sighted Ocean at 3:30 pm and camped about 200 yards from the beach.

## Return Trip from Pacific Ocean

Our caravan consisted of two vehicles hitched one behind the other and drawn by four horses [plus the Wilson's wagon]. Started from Taft, Oregon Thursday morning July [?] 1913.

We passed a large cheese factory from which we bought a cheese. Stopped for lunch at noon at a very uncomfortable place by the roadside. Camped for the night on \_\_\_\_\_ River, whose bank on



Location unknown, probably in western Cascades foothills east of Sweet Home. There appear to be more travelers here than just the party from Agency Plains, and yet the site does not seem to be a very desirable camp-site.

one side was a perpendicular wall of rock a hundred feet high. The roads were very poor.

The next morning we passed a ranch named Alder Brook [see entry for July 9]. This morning Jim struck a \_\_\_\_\_ [?] with our vehicle which was trailing and broke some part of it, but he was able to repair it with wire so that we could continue our journey.

Friday noon we ate lunch on the banks of the little stream where we had camped going to the ocean a few weeks before. I had left my comb here but it was not to be found when we returned. The children amused themselves wading in the water. On this afternoon's travel the roads were very bad. We reached and passed over the summit of the Coast Mountains. Passed Midway [see July 8] and camped

for the night a few miles east of Midway.

Saturday morning the monotony was broken by an accident which gave us a hearty laugh. Mamma's [Clara Ramsey, or possibly Lillian herself?] breakfast upset in the fire and she was forced get an entire new one. This morning we passed through Buel[] and Grande Ronde. Here we stopped at a blacksmith shop to have our trailer repaired but as the smith was out we were unsuccessful. This day noon we ate our lunch a few miles south of Willamina. We passed through a pretty hilly country in this region. We met many of the Grande Ronde Indians who are a very intelligent looking tribe.

At Grande Ronde we admired the fine Catholic Church building. Saturday we pitched our camp on a little creek near a schoolhouse. Here the children had a fine

time wading and sailing toy boats. We passed through a very beautiful region this afternoon with fine farms and beautiful country homes. The country here is quite hilly.

Sunday morning's travel was through a region not quite so hilly where there were many fine orchards of apples, prunes, and walnuts. Many berries grow in this section.

We were forced to make camp for lunch at a very unpleasant place by the side of the road. The water here was very warm but it was wet.

At this place the children found a playhouse and mudpies were sunbaked. Their make-believe lunch was soon in progress. Two-year-old Jimmie helped do up the playhouse dishes and wiped the refuse from the mud pies on his clean pink dress.

Our afternoon travel took us through Dallas, where we made another unsuccessful attempt to have our vehicle repaired. We could get no bread here so we were forced to bake flap-jacks for our evening meal. We pitched camp by the side of the road and carried water from a nearby farm house. Here we were a few miles from Sumner and eight miles from Albany.

Monday morning we drove through a very fine country. For many miles we

**Clear Lake (just off the Santiam Wagon Road) was created when a late (ca. 1000 BC) lava flow dammed up some of the headwaters of the McKenzie River. In the incredibly clear, deep water of the lake, preserved spars of dead trees can be seen reaching up to just below the surface. Probably the boat-men in the photo are looking for them.**



**Running down in line along a ridge just west and above the Cache Creek Toll Station are five small volcanic craters—a natural wonder almost unknown today, but apparently a well-known attraction to travelers on the Wagon Road a century ago.**





A very rare photo of the Cache Creek Toll Station, at the east end of the Santiam Wagon Road, with our Madras party stopped at the gate to pay the toll—probably \$6. George Scott was gate-keeper at the time; the station shut down in 1914. From here, the Ramsey-Watts-Wilson party was only about two long days from home.

traveled along the beautiful Willamette River. We crossed the river and entered Albany about 11 am. Here at last we were able to get the much needed repairing done to our wagon. At this place we were able to get bread so we laid in a supply of thirty loaves. The baker wanted to know if we were preparing to feed a crew of threshers. We laid in a good supply of miscellaneous provisions at this place.

We ate lunch in our wagon while the other was being repaired. In the afternoon we passed through Monmouth and got a good view of the State Normal School buildings. We admired the beautiful country through which we traveled

this afternoon. Crops of wheat and oats and some corn were in a thriving condition. There are beautiful forests of oak, fir, and other species of trees. Dairying is a very profitable business in this section.

[The text of the journal seems to be confused here in both order of travel and dating. After leaving Dallas on Sunday, the party would logically have passed through Monmouth on Monday, and reached Albany the next day, pausing to get the Watts' wagon repaired and lay in provisions, and then gone on to Lebanon Tuesday afternoon.]

Monday [?] afternoon we reached Lebanon and camped for the night a few

miles out at Crowfoot Grange. Tuesday [?] morning we started for Sweet Home which is located in the foothills of the Cascades Mountains . . .

[Here the journal ends. From route-maps, family tradition and the Wilson photographs, it's clear that the party traveled up the Santiam Wagon Road past Tombstone Prairie, Lost Prairie, Fish Lake, Clear Lake, Big Lake, and so on to Cache Creek Toll Station. They continued east around Sisters and into sagebrush- and juniper country, across the Deschutes River at Lower Bridge, and then across the Crooked River at Trail Crossing. From there they went north between Juniper and Haystack Buttes into and through "the Basin" and Madras and on to their places on the west side of Agency Plains. They had traveled far and wide through Oregon for a summer month; now it was time for home and harvest. The next year, 1914, Jefferson County was officially created, and Lillian Watts became its first School Superintendent, a post she held for thirty-five years.]

## SOURCES:

McArthur and McArthur, Oregon Geographic Names, 7<sup>th</sup> edition

Lawrence E. Neilsen, Doug Newman, George McCart, Pioneer Roads in Central Oregon

Clackamas and Wasco County Historical Societies, Barlow Road (Bicentennial Edition, 1974-5)

Jefferson County Historical Society files

# Culver as I have Known It

— Theo Schonneker

**W**hen the organizers of Culver's Centennial Celebration program in 2010 wanted to feature a Centennial speech by a prominent Culverite, their choice was obvious. Theo Harmon Schonneker was a little girl when she moved to Culver in 1932 with her parents Chester and Esther Harmon and her three brothers, and she has embodied the life and history of the community through eight eventful decades. From her school years on, Theo has been an indispensable citizen of Culver, and, with her late mother, a faithful keeper of its history, and we are delighted to print these excerpts from her 2010 remarks.

My folks had come from the Midwest in 1926 to Coquille on the coast. They had been told by relatives that the wages were much higher here in Oregon, so they sold their farm and came west in a brand-new 1926 Ford touring car. I've heard Dad tell of how he earned \$1.50 per day skidding logs near Coquille.

While on the coast [brothers] Chuck and Bob were born, and my mother developed heart trouble, and her doctor told Dad, "If you want that girl to live, you better move to a much higher elevation." So that was the impetus for the family moving to Culver—and as many of you are aware, Mom died on May 9 last year [2009], just three weeks shy of being 107 years of age. Makes you wish that everything we're told by our physicians could be that "right on."



**Theo Schonneker**

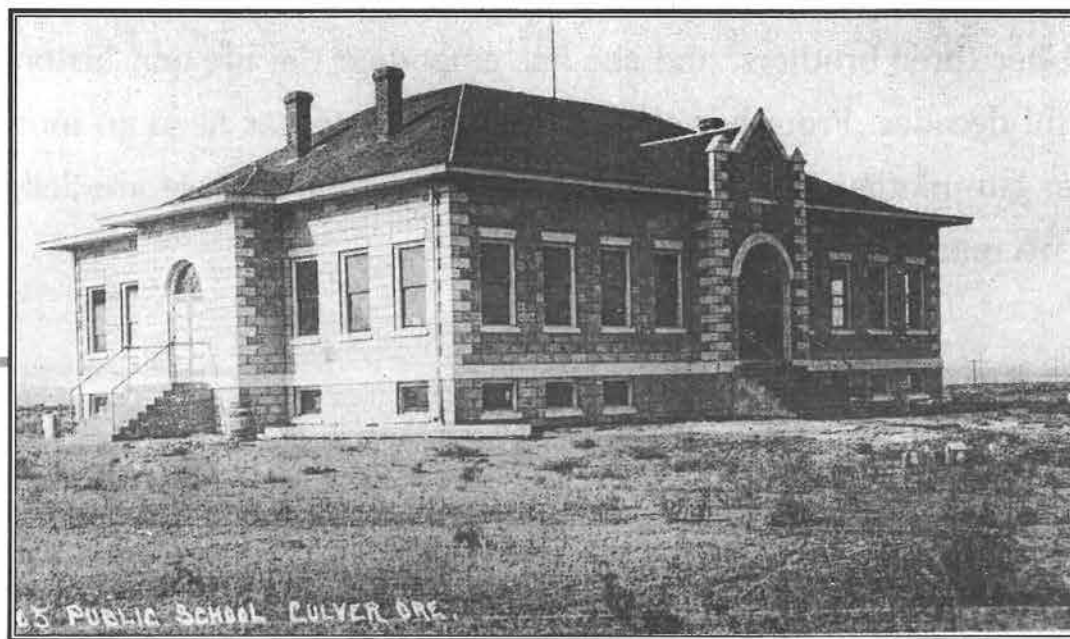
So in 1932, in the height (or depth) of the Depression, we came to Culver and Dad worked in the harvest for Luther Harrington. That year was the start of a seven-year drought, and Lute, like so many other farmers here, sold his land to

the government ("Marginal Land" it's called now) for \$300, which allowed him to move to Redmond, build a house, and work as a house painter, as he did in his youth. So obviously a dollar went a long way, back then.

We lived in a homestead shack near the Crooked River rim, on the Jack Lidell Place—hailed water to the cistern—and we kids had what seemed to us like a gazillion acres to roam free to our hearts' content. Later my dad purchased the land (1 ½ miles southwest of Culver) where I still live, as does my grandson Kurt—and many more acres, just for taxes.

By that time Dad had a big old sedan and he or Mom drove it as a school bus—picking up about five kids on the route, among them Richard and Donnie Tate,

Our school was a large stone building comprising four rooms, each one with a large cloak room, a main hall, a basement that housed the rest rooms, and a furnace that heated the rooms with coal heat ...



Culver Public School

Thayne Corwin, Larry Lyons, and Gene King. But the big money break came when Dad was hired by the Government to run a "Star Route [rural mail route] three times a week to Grandview and then on to Geneva. In those days neither grade [in and out of Crooked River canyon] was paved, and they were mostly one lane—and you "pulled out" as best you could to let another vehicle pass. The [Grandview] grade had a violent "in your eyes" switch-back, so that you had to back up to make the turn to go on higher. And neither rain, nor snow, nor dark of night excused you from making this run. For this you got \$75 per month, and you supplied the

car and the gas. However, it was steady income and therefore a life saver. Dad and Mom ran the route for many years.

Unfortunately, it took World War II for jobs to open up and the entire economy to change, and our world as we knew it.

The biggest change here, of course, came in 1946, when irrigation arrived. That literally was when "Idaho" came to Culver, and if we had to absorb a bunch of newcomers, we couldn't have asked for better. Although we Harmons had lived here only 14 years when the water came

in, we who had been "those new Harmons" became instant old timers.

When we came in 1932, brother Chet was a 5th grader and I

entered the second grade. Our school was a large stone building comprising four rooms, each one with a large cloak room, a main hall, a basement that housed the rest rooms, and a furnace that heated the rooms with coal heat—great big, square registers that it was pure delight to stand on when it was cold. The first room on the left had one teacher and the first four grades and the second room on the left had one teacher who taught grades 5 through 8. The right side of the building was the high school with the students and

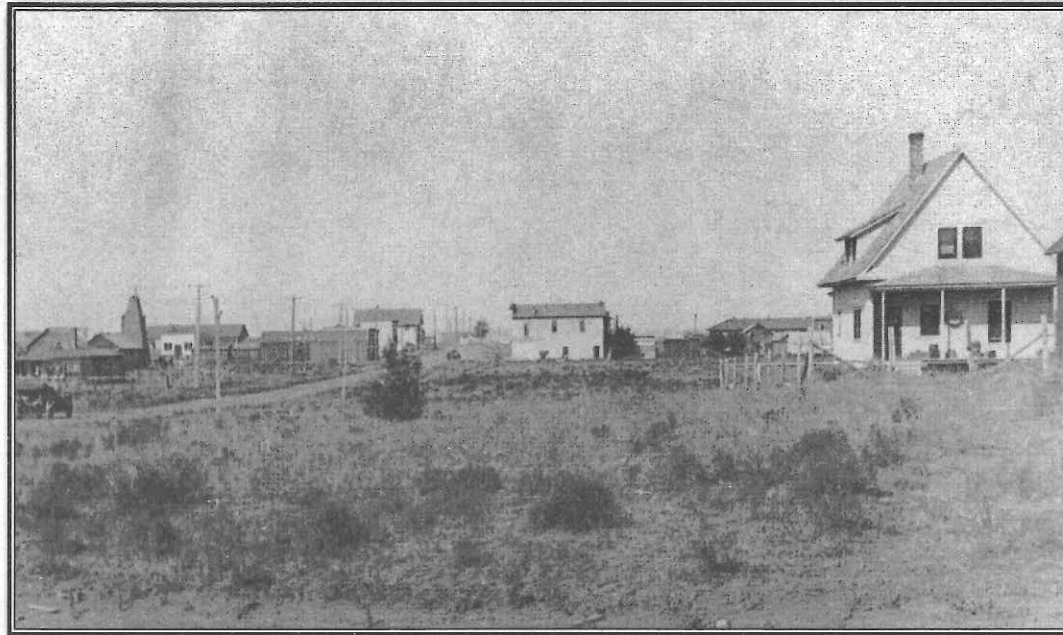
two teachers (one of whom was acting principal). I see by the pictures in the hall of the new high school that there may have been close to 20 students sometimes, but by the time I was there it had dwindled considerably.

Actually, that fact made it so that each student got a vast amount of attention—perhaps more than we would have wished! We were blessed with excellent teachers who demanded the best from us. Della Gibson is the one I remember the most. She had been widowed prior to the birth of her son . . . and that son Harold is here with us tonight. She was a thorough teacher. Does anyone here remember diagramming a sentence?

In one of her English tests the only instructions were “DIAGRAM THIS”—and then into Shakespeare’s “Sweet are the uses of adversity, which like the toad ugly and venomous wears yet a precious jewel in its crown, and this our life, exempt from public haunt, finds tongues in trees, books in running brooks, sermons in stone, and good in everything.” This didn’t make me love Shakespeare!”

She organized parties, games, debates, and recitations; took us to Linfield College, her alma mater, to enter con-

tests; and hosted us at the home of her mother (Mrs. Ethel Odell) in McMinnville. In this day, perhaps this doesn’t sound like much, but believe me, she gave us some great learning experiences. We were also forced to hold positions [and offices] that perhaps we



Culver - 1920s

wouldn’t have, because of our sparse numbers. We were forced to memorize “Robert’s Rules of Order” and take our turn being responsible in many areas.

Mr. [Arvid] Rahkola was our principal—he taught science and some math (Della taught math also), and some social studies. Mr. Rahkola was drafted in 1942, and in order to be an accredited high school you had to have two teachers. During the war, another teacher wasn’t to be found; therefore, our school board, still rankling over our courthouse being

stolen by Madras thirty years before, decided to bus us to Redmond. There were only nine kids in the whole high school! We had lost the Akiyama family [four children, all in high school in 1942] when they were sent to a [Japanese] internment camp. I had been the only

one in my class as a freshman, sophomore, and junior. However, we found we’d come to Redmond pretty well equipped due to efforts of teachers like Della Gibson, who became a life-long friend. She demanded much of her students, and very much of herself—we were blessed to have her.

Nothing daunted Della—we put on plays (never any that had a royalty fee

attached), enlisting community members to join the cast when we didn’t have enough students. She saw to it that we had annuals [school yearbooks]. The pictures were posted in photos. The pages were hand-typed—no carbon copies. Later, some were mimeographed. It was a stringent learning experience for all.

She organized a glee club or girls’ choir (there were about six girls in the school, so we had six in the glee club). We somehow raised money to order “dirndl” dresses from Montgomery Ward for

\$2.49 apiece—and we sang our hearts out in matching clothes.

The upper grades had a library. It filled a cupboard about two feet wide and six feet tall. It held maybe 30 books, and I read *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates* at least 100 times. If you got your work done, you could take a book to your desk, read and BE QUIET!

Playground consisted of some swings and a merry-go-round—all this on hard-packed dirt. East of the school was a dirt tennis court and that was used for the most part by the high school. We had one big shade tree. About 100 feet to the northwest was our big wooden gym with a stage for the plays I mentioned, and a basketball court—all heated by a wood stove. The gym burned in the 1940s.

As a forerunner to today's lavish school lunches, in the coldest winter time the mothers organized to bring a pot of soup and heat it on a hot plate in the upper class cloakroom. It was a treat in our eyes. This did not strike us as "hard times"—it was just the way things were pretty much for everybody the same.

Our athletics consisted of our play in school, and perhaps a faraway game in Madras, Warm Springs, or Redmond.

There was, however, no lack of school spirit—and you can see why those debates and contests in McMinnville seemed like a real big deal!

I went to this school; my children, Sharon, Chuck, and Lisa all attended, as did some of my grandchildren; and I now

would occasionally preach on Sundays after his usual service in (at the time) Sisters. In our time, Rev. "Penny" was better known for his long-time service to Powell Butte. Also, the Nazarene Church has been active here for many years.

So we have seen a lot of changes in the last 100 years. As my mother often said, "The only thing you can be sure of is change." For the most part that change has been progress. I don't believe we've been dragged kicking and screaming into our many changes! If we could fast-forward 100 years, I'm sure we'd be amazed at the changes to come—and let's hope that the changes will show real progress.

But of this I am confident:

that our town and community will only be as good as the families that comprise it. That we must model for our children what we wish for them to become. Thus, you'll be doing right in your lifetime and ensuring that they will do right in theirs. That's no easy assignment, but with an upbeat, can-do, optimistic attitude and a willingness to not be just a spectator, but instead an active participant in the continued building of Culver and the area surrounding it, we have NO reason to fear the next 100 years.



Culver jackrabbitt

(in 2010) have two great grandchildren attending. I feel we who have roots in such a community are blessed.

Another blessing we have enjoyed is active churches within this community. The first church here was a small, one-room edifice moved onto a piece of land donated by W.C. Barber (the same man who platted the town). Mrs. Barber, Charlotte, along with other stalwarts, was the glue that held it together 100 years ago. By the time we Harmons came to Culver, Rev. Devere "Penny" Penhollow

## In Memoriam Beth Crow and Harold Moore

Lovers of Jefferson County and Central Oregon history were saddened by the deaths in late February 2014 of two notable local historians, Beth Crow and Harold Moore.

Both were long-time, well-loved teachers in Madras, and both were former Directors of the Jefferson County Historical Society. When the Society in 2011 created an ongoing award for outstanding contributions to local history, it was named "The Beth Crow Award" in her honor—and the first recipient was Harold Moore!

Harold Moore, a Madras native with local pioneer roots on both sides of his family, graduated from Eastern Oregon College and the University of Oregon, and taught social studies and writing and also coached at Madras Middle School from 1961 to his retirement in 1994. In the 1970s and early 80s, he launched a remarkable oral history project in which he and his students made recorded inter-

views of scores of pioneers and elders throughout Jefferson County, leading to a treasury of voices and recollections that has been re-edited and re-recorded on CD's, available from the Historical Society as "Voices of Experience."

During Harold's years as a member of the JCHS Board of Directors, he played a leading role in the formulation of plans for the "Central Oregon Heritage Center," which the Society intends to build when funding becomes available.

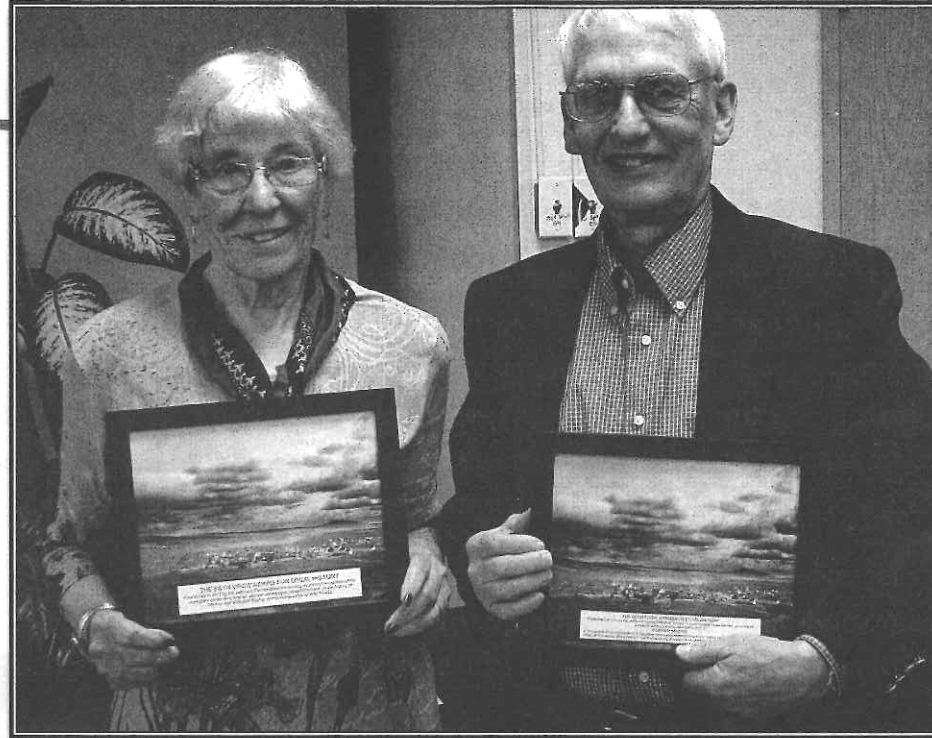
During her career as a classroom

teacher at Madras Elementary School, Beth Crow took up genealogical research, and became a pioneer genealogy instructor in Central Oregon, and was one of the founders of "Family Finders" in Madras. Her persistent research in local history has shed important new light on the early history of the town of Madras, and led her to re-discover the important Madras-based photographer Ole Hedlund and find

many of his photographs. In 2010 she collaborated with Jarold Ramsey on a ground-breaking essay and photo gallery on Hedlund and his work, in *Oregon Historical Quarterly*. And from 2008 through the centennial years of 2010-11 she served as the founding Editor of this journal, THE AGATE.

Hail and farewell, Harold and Beth—your achievements are bright examples for local historians who come after you!

(JR)



Beth Crow and Harold Moore

# THE AGATE

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 647, Madras, Oregon 97741

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