— Fall 2021 —

THE·AGATE

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CONTENTS

N.S. 16

WELCOME, READERS —

LOCAL HISTORY LOVERS, WELCOME to Issue 16 of THE AGATE, Central Oregon's only local history journal. In this issue, beginning our eighth year of publication in collaboration with the Madras *Pioneer*, we're not following theme, but rather trying to exhibit something of the diversity of this area's history. So we hope you enjoy Jane Ahern's lead feature tracing the Farrell Homestead House, from its rich history with the Farrell family near Gateway, to its remarkable second life as a popular "treasure house" with the Historical Society at the county fairgrounds.

We're also proud to offer a vivid excerpt of Gail Clowers' memoirs, on his boyhood experiences on and around an Agency Plains farm at the beginning of the North Unit irrigation era, 1947-9; and a critical examination of the campaign to re-name country roads in the agricultural heart of Jefferson County back in 1951-3. And much more! Come along—but first please read the following:

IS IT TIME TO REVIVE "HISTORY DAY" AT MMS AND MHS? For the better part of two decades, ending in 2016, students at Jefferson County Middle School and Madras High School (mainly the former) had the opportunity to participate in a program of independent, out-of-class research called "History Day." Starting each January, working at noon and after school (and at home), they devised historical projects on local, state, or national topics, researched them, and presented their discoveries in the form of tri-fold posters containing graphics and texts, or in videos.

From its inception in the 1990s, History Day was directed by 509J Talented and Gifted Program (TAG) teacher Courtney Lupton, who helped the participants focus their projects and locate research sources. She brought in local historians to meet with students and advise them. Near the end of the school year, in late May, the finished projects were put on display in the middle school library, where they were judged by visiting judges, including members of the Jefferson County Historical Society. On occasion the society also made research materials available to the students, and in the program's last six years it awarded a $200 "Best Project" prize.

Undertaking and completing a History Day project outside of classwork was demanding, but it was a very popular opportunity, drawing as many as 30 finalists a year. After the Oregon Historical Society undertook statewide sponsorship of it in 2012, local winners were able to compete with their exhibits on the state level, where they frequently won top honors. In 2015 and 2016, Courtney Lupton took state winners from Madras (including Thyreicia Simtustus of Warm Springs) to Washington D.C. for the National History Day competition.

Ms. Lupton was awarded the historical society's Beth Crow Award in 2016 for her devoted service to the cause of history education. She retired at the end of that school year, and despite the well-documented success of the program under her direction, and pledges of continued support from the Historical Society, it was subsequently terminated by the middle school administration.

Why did this happen? No doubt it would have been difficult to replace Courtney Lupton, a notably energetic and resourceful educator, and no doubt such a program was administratively challenging in a time of rigorous testing demands, rigid state-mandated instructional requirements, and so on. But its demise was, undeniably, a regrettable loss to Madras students — a loss of intellectual and creative opportunities that bright kids like the following were able to enjoy and profit from on their way through their Madras schooling and beyond: Jordan Gemelas, Sophie Gemelas, Jacob Rudd, Thyreicia Simtustus, Melissa Oliveira, Florencia Aguilar-Cruz, Jon Marcotte, Maricela Rodriguez, Carly Breach, Mikayla Weinke, Chelsea Buck . . . (and many more).

With a new 509J Superintendent, Jay Mathisen, now at the helm, and with the pandemic at least partly behind us, maybe it's time to bring History Day back to Madras. For a summary of the ongoing state-wide program that Madras could rejoin, see http://www.ohs.org/education/oregon.history.org.

AN AGATE SALUTE to former JCHS Board member Dan Chamness, for organizing and leading local hikes (usually with historically interesting routes and destinations) for two years now, in defiance of the pandemic! Dan and JCHS Beth Crow Award winner Gary Clowers have wonderfully advanced the cause of local natural and human history by regularly venturing out with their devoted walkers to close-in places like Wagenblast Canyon, Juniper Butte, Upper Willow Creek and McMeen Springs, Mecca and Mecca Grade, and so on. We are lucky to have Dan as an expert organizer and leader of excursions. Where next, Dan?

AND A FOND HAIL AND FAREWELL to two true friends and supporters of Jefferson County history, who recently passed away-- Loyd Vincent, and Irene Conroy. The son of a 1909 homesteader east of Willow Creek , Jud Vincent, Loyd attended Grizzly School in its last years, and graduated from Madras High School in 1950. After military service, he was employed for many years by PGE at the Pelton Dam, and he and his wife, Delores Snyder Vincent and their family raised cattle. His knowledge of local history was rich and accurate, and over the years he made generous donations of photos, books, and documents to the JCHS archives. Irene grew up in Prineville, but after college married Rich Conroy of Conroy Chevrolet, and for many years was a much-loved teacher at Madras High School. In later years, she has been an active and generous volunteer in the community, and a contributing member of the Historical Society. Loyd and Irene will be missed—but the memory of them is evergreen.

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
Graphic Designer: Jamie Wood
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Cover: Oil painting by Jeanette Macy of the Farrell Homestead House in its original setting near Gateway

Pioneer Homestead Exhibit: Legacy of a Local Family

By Jane Ahern

The exact date that the Farrell homestead house was moved from its original location in the Sagebrush Springs area is not a secret, but it is a mystery. A close perusal of the *Madras Pioneer* narrows it down to sometime between May of 1969 and February of 1970, when the *Pioneer* published a photo of the house being moved.

No matter the date, the house, donated to the Jefferson County Historical Society by Phil Farrell, has stood on its rock foundation at the JC Fairgrounds for about 50 years, providing generations of schoolchildren, fairgoers, and history buffs with a three-dimensional, multi-sensory glimpse of local history. While it doesn't fully compensate for the society's ongoing lack of a permanent museum, the homestead house is priceless as an authentic example of how early farming families lived.

The unpainted board-and-batten house is gray and weathered, as it must have already been when it was moved. Shutters covering the windows and door were added for security after the house was moved. Look closely and you will see tin can lids and small rectangular pieces of metal nailed onto the outer walls to patch holes left when the knots fell out of the planks.

The front door opens into the one-story part of the house consisting entirely of the kitchen, whose relatively large size indicates its status as the heart of the home. There is a large, wood-fired cooking range in the corner of the kitchen, as well as a dining table, a rocking chair and some antique implements for washing clothes.

Most of the furnishings throughout the house are not original Farrell family possessions, but rather were donated by a variety of families. The historical society has provided notes explaining what the items are and where they came from.

Farrell House now, at county fairgrounds

An interesting feature of the kitchen is the "wallpaper," applied by Edna Campbell Clark after the house was moved to the fairgrounds.

The paper is actually old copies of newspapers, mostly *Madras Pioneer* , from the 1910s, '20s, and '30s, reflecting a common practice among homesteaders of using what was on hand for insulation and decoration. One of the newspapers gracing the western wall of the kitchen is a rare May 1916 *Jefferson County Record* published in Metolius. Across its banner is a photograph of the city in the foreground and the Cascade Mountain range from the Three Sisters to Mt. Hood in the background, with each mountain labeled. Underneath, the text reads, "Business district of Metolius, People's candidate for permanent county seat."

To the left as you walk in the front door is a sitting room in the two-story part of the house, with a single bed against the far wall, some armchairs, bookshelves, and a small stove for heat, which must have made the room cozy despite the thin walls. Through the sitting room is the entrance to the downstairs bedroom, with its iron bedstead, rocking chair, patterned wallpaper, and a glimpse of colorful diamond-pattern linoleum under the dresser.

The door to the stairs, possibly seen in the photograph of the house being moved (see p.7), is in a corner of the kitchen. Upstairs are two bedrooms.

That's what you would see if you toured the homestead house today, but this is only the latest incarnation of a house that sheltered five generations of Farrells. During that time, the home underwent significant changes that paralleled the evolution of the farm and family it served.

The experiences of the Farrell family from the early homestead days to the arrival of irrigation, and the gradual move away from farming are personal to them, but in broad strokes are typical of other homesteading families of Jefferson County. The Farrell family history exemplifies the history of Jefferson County in much the same way that their old homestead house exemplifies the Pioneer lifestyle.

Homestead Under Construction

The first generation of Farrells to put down roots in what would later become Jefferson County were William and Martha Sharinghousen Farrell. William Farrell had been born in Ireland in 1852. Upon immigrating to the United States, his family settled in Wisconsin. William moved from there to Scappoose, Oregon as a young man to "work in the woods."

Martha Sharinghousen's family had arrived in Oregon via the Oregon Trail in 1852 and Martha was born in 1863. She and William married in 1884 and they began their married life working her father's Donation Land Claim near Scappoose, where their three children were born and raised.

By the early 1900s, Central Oregon had some of the last land available for homesteading. Perhaps it was the possibility of obtaining their own land and passing it on to their children that led the Farrells to leave Martha's family's established farm in Scappoose for the uncertainty of the high desert.

This area was still lacking in infrastructure, including rails and roads, so getting here wasn't easy. Their daughter, Nellie Farrell Priday, in a piece included in *The History of Jefferson County, Oregon: 1914-1983* (Jefferson County Historical Society, 1984, pp. 82-83), wrote that to get to Central Oregon her father traveled by boat to The Dalles and then by wagon to Madras. A couple years later, Nellie would arrive by train in Shaniko and be picked up there by her father in a horse-drawn carriage.

There are many written accounts of the establishment of the Farrell homestead and most say that William and Martha Farrell came to the area around Sagebrush Springs in 1905, built a home, and began growing dryland wheat and barley.

Each account fills in the story with additional or slightly different specifics: William came first to set up a home and Martha followed within a few months — or maybe it was a year. The one-story part of the house was the original portion, and the two-story part was added later. Or the two-story part of the house was the original portion, and the one-story part was added later. The contradictions illustrate how difficult it can be to nail down the facts more than 100 years after the events.

One alternative account stands out for its detail and solid sourcing and also because it is contradictory. It was written by Carolyn Grote, Jefferson County resident and staff writer for *The Bulletin*, for the August 1, 1972 Fair Edition. In it, Grote quoted Nellie Farrell Priday, daughter of William and Martha Farrell; and

John L. Campbell, the historical society member who took the lead in acquiring, moving, and restoring the homestead house.

According to Grote's article, the house was built in 1903 by Walter Eldinger and sold to William Farrell in 1905. The house was just a one-story shack, about 14' by 18' feet when Farrell bought it.

Nellie Priday was quoted in the article saying, "We moved in two beds, a kitchen range, a piano, and a high-boy." There was very little floor space left over and the family had to keep the rest of their furniture outside under a tarp.

In this version of the story, the family lived in these cramped quarters until 1909, when George Monner was hired to add on the two-story part of the house. The size of the kitchen as it stands today about matches the 14' by 18' described by Nellie, so it makes sense that it could have been the original part of the house, whether built by William Farrell or Walter Eldinger.

Regardless of who built which part and when, the construction of the house is notable. The style is known as a "box house." The walls are made of 1' by 12' vertical planks with battens to cover the seams. Box houses are built with no studs or interior walls or insulation and there is minimal framing at the corners.

On the inside walls, the Farrell house does have some kind of covering over the boards and under the wallpaper. It is about the thickness of cardboard and has buckled in places, possibly caused by moisture. Inside the bedroom closet you can see the bare planks, which look to be the same as the outer wall planks but not weathered.

In Carolyn Grote's 1972 *Bulletin* article, John L. Campbell is quoted as saying, "It's almost impossible to find this type of construction today." The article explained that box houses were easy to build for people who were farmers, not carpenters.

Originally there was a trap door in the middle of the kitchen floor that led to a cellar used for cold storage of eggs and dairy products. Bob Farrell, who lived in the house with his wife and daughters in the late 1960s, said that when he and his father were putting in new flooring, his father showed him the trap door in the middle of the kitchen. The door had been nailed shut because the cellar was no longer in use; it had been replaced by a larger one behind the house. "They probably didn't like moving the table and everything every time they had to use it," Farrell said of the original cellar.

In the early days, there was no running water. The family had to haul it from Sagebrush Springs and store it in a cistern. In 1916, William had a well drilled and installed a windmill to pump water out of it for household use.

Even with the well, the Farrells were frugal with water. Gray water from the kitchen would be used to water the garden.

The family raised most of their own food. They had some cows, chickens, and pigs for their own use, and they could trade eggs or milk for other groceries at the store in town.

The well provided water for household use, but it wouldn't have produced enough water for irrigating crops. Like other area homesteaders, the Farrells sometimes struggled with dryfarming. "Wheat was planted, but some years there was no crop if there wasn't enough rain," Nellie wrote. (*HJC*, p. 83)

Perhaps it was to supplement the farm income in meager years that William and Martha worked at the boarding school on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation. According to Nellie, William taught the boys agriculture during WWI — the 19-teens were years of prolonged drought — and Martha taught sewing to the girls.

William also was a road supervisor, helping to maintain roads in the Gateway area. It is not clear whether this was paid work, but sometimes the county allowed men to work on roads in lieu of paying taxes, so maybe he was paid indirectly by the county.

While William and Martha were setting up home and farm in the high desert, their grown children were still back on the wet side of the Cascades. Their oldest daughter, Verna, was training to be a nurse at Good Samaritan Hospital in Portland. Sources don't elaborate on how she met her husband, Andrew Tellefson, but they were married at the Priday ranch in 1913, had two daughters, and homesteaded near Paxton. They moved back to Portland in the 1930s.

Home Comfort kitchen range

William and Martha's son, Henry Ward (he went by Ward) and younger daughter, Nellie, were both at Oregon Agricultural College (later OSU) when the homestead was established. They joined their parents in Central Oregon in 1907. It is not clear whether Nellie got a degree from the agricultural college, but she wrote that after she came east, she passed a teacher's exam in Prineville and was hired to teach in a one-room school at Bear Creek.

Nellie met her future husband, Trout Creek rancher Leslie Priday, in a makeshift dance hall above a granary. They were married in 1912 in the Farrell homestead. Nellie took a homestead by Willowdale, and she and Leslie built a house there. This was the house that the Ron and Laurice Ochs family later lived in.

Ward had graduated from college before he came to Central Oregon. Once here, he worked at various ranches, including the Priday ranch. There he met Alexandria "Allie" King, a young Englishwoman who was visiting the ranch. Ward and Allie were married in 1914 and homesteaded on Pony Creek.

Ward and Allie's first son, Phillip, was born in the Farrell homestead house in 1915, even

though his parents had their home at Pony Creek. His daughters, Brenda Black and Janet Farrell, said Ward and Allie were staying at a house near William and Martha at the time.

Perhaps she was having complications in her pregnancy because Phillip was premature. "He was like maybe four pounds, something. They kept him right by the stove," said Black.

Ward and Allie's second son, William King Farrell, was born in 1918 and the next, John Arthur Farrell was born in 1919. Their youngest son, Roy Keith Farrell, was born in 1927, after the family moved to the Farrell homestead near Sagebrush Springs.

Writing in *Jefferson County Reminiscences* (Binford & Mort, 1957, 1998, p. 254) for the chapter on Pony Butte, Lucille A. Thornton said, "Ward Farrell built the first dam on Pony Creek, and so had an abundance of water for cattle and irrigation on a garden scale. This watered garden was the loveliest in that part of the country."

Despite the plentiful water, the Pony Creek homestead didn't work out for Ward and Allie. According to Janet Farrell, "He wanted to have a horse or mule farm and the locoweed killed off his livestock."

In 1921 or '22, Ward and Allie sold the Pony Creek homestead and bought William and Martha's place.

Next Generation: Ward and Allie

After they took over the Farrell homestead, Ward and Allie continued growing wheat, barley, and rye like William and Martha had. Some of their land was used for pasture for their livestock, which included 16 mules and 15-30 horses for pulling the plow and the combine. Even after Ward and Allie bought a tractor, their son Phil used the horses and mules on the rougher patches of ground.

Allie was fond of flowers and developed extensive flower beds around the homestead house. "Grandma was from England, and she really had a lot of nice flowers, and it was big. It was bigger than the house, the flower garden was. And there was a lot of locust trees and elm trees around it too. And then in front of the house there was a wisteria that grew up the side of it too," said Allie's grandson, Bob Farrell.

Ward, with Allie, signing first North Unit irrigation land contract, 1938

Homestead house exhibit sitting room

The kitchen sink drained into a trough outside the kitchen and from there water was distributed to the flower beds. "Everybody saved their water back then. Wastewater got used seven or eight times," said Farrell.

Ward was active in the local community. He served on the board of Lyle Gap school and on the board of Madras High School. He was on the Selective Service board during WWII and was a member of the Masons, Eastern Star, and the Episcopal Church.

Allie was active too. She was a founding member of the Jefferson County Pioneer Association, a precursor to the historical society, and led the committee that produced *Jefferson County Reminiscences* (Binford and Mort Publishing, 1957, 1998), which is an indispensable source of local history.

Eventually Ward and Allie instituted big changes in the farm. For one thing, they were able to buy up other farms and increase the size of their holdings up to about 2,000 acres. But most importantly, irrigation became available under Ward and Allie's watch and that changed everything.

In fact, in 1938 they had the honor of being the first signers of the contract between farmers of the North Unit Irrigation District and the Bureau of Reclamation. The contract would allow farmers to receive irrigation water, but in signing it, they agreed to keep only 160 acres of irrigated land for themselves. They could keep more irrigated land if they were willing to lease it out to someone else. This land redistribution was intended to share the wealth so that money spent by the federal government on the irrigation project would benefit as many Americans as possible.

Suddenly there were thousands of acres of irrigated land for sale, which attracted droves of newcomers to the North Unit Irrigation District, creating a second wave of immigration to the area.

The Farrells gave 160-acre parcels to each of their four sons and kept 160 acres for themselves. The rest they

would have had to lease or use without irrigation, possibly for pasture.

With the water came the possibility of growing a whole range of different, lucrative crops.

"When irrigation came, it kind of branched out to alfalfa and clover and still grain, still raised quite a bit of grain," said Bob Farrell. The water also enabled the Farrells to increase the number of livestock on the farm.

Getting the land ready for irrigation was a big job. There were ditches to dig, sluices and check boxes to install, and land to be leveled and sloped so that the water would flow evenly across it. (See the Gail Clowers memoir in this issue for a detailed description of this work.)

Some families hired the Clowers Brothers Company to help prepare the fields, but Bob Farrell recalls his family doing it themselves. " I remember when I was probably eight years old, holding a stick for my dad while he was running a level instrument. We would run grades for where the ditches went and my job was to pack that rod and a hammer and a sack full of stakes and I'd go over a ways and he'd tell me which way to move the stick so they'd have the right fall for the ditch and then I'd pound a stake in. And then he'd come along with a tractor with a ditcher behind it and go from stake to stake to stake and wind around through the fields," Farrell said.

One side benefit of the irrigation is that it drew Ward and Allie's sons back to the farm. All of them received parcels of land and had homes on the farm, but it was Phil who eventually took over the farming operation after their parents retired.

Phil had grown up helping on the farm. A July 5, 1995 *Madras Pioneer* story written about Phil when he was named Pioneer Man told the story of how Phil used to brag about his skill driving a 16-mule team until he saw another man driving a 33-mule team — with one arm.

Phil went to Oregon State College and graduated with a degree in Range Management. While still in college, he spent a Thanksgiving at the home of one of his professors. The professor and his wife had a niece staying with them, earning her room and board by cooking and cleaning for them while she attended college. She cooked the Thanksgiving dinner that Phil enjoyed.

The niece's name was Alys Belle Faike and she married Phil in 1938 after he finished college. When Alys Belle graduated two years later she was pregnant with their first child, Bob.

Phil worked for the Farm Security Administration right out of college, first in Corvallis, then in Redmond. Their son John was born in 1943 and Larry was born in 1944, the same year Phil joined the US Navy.

Allie and Ward Farrell on horseback, Priday Ranch 1914

WWII was still going on. Phil was given the rank of ensign and stationed at Pearl Harbor. Their daughter, Janet Farrell, has the letters Phil and Alys Belle exchanged while he was in Hawaii and she was in Redmond. Though he was away for less than a year, it felt like a long time to Alys Belle, who was home alone with their three young sons. "They were rather poignant letters," Janet said.

After the war, Phil worked for Deschutes Farmers Cooperative in Redmond. Their fourth child, Brenda, was born in 1947 and Alys Belle was pregnant with their last child, Janet, in 1949, when the irrigation water finally reached the Farrell homestead.

Ward and Allie were still living in the homestead house, so Phil and Alys Belle built themselves a new home on their parcel of land. Their house was made of cinder blocks in a style known as an Agency Plains special, which was a machine shop with living quarters at one end.

Phil and Alys Belle and their four children stayed at the old homestead house with Ward and Allie while their new home was being built. By this time, Ward and Allie had installed running water and electricity. There was a "jut-out" behind the kitchen where the bathroom was. The washing machine was back there too.

Those extra rooms behind the kitchen are no longer part of the homestead house. It could be that they were removed when the house was moved to the fairgrounds and never put back. Plans for the homestead house include building a lean-to behind the kitchen for the washing machines that are currently in the kitchen.

Ward and Allie's sons: back, Arthur, Phil; front, William holding Keith, ca. 1926

Homestead changes hands again

Ward and Allie retired from farming a few years after Phil and Alys Belle moved back to the farm. They eventually bought a home in Madras near the old rock shop that used to be on Highway 26 north of town.

Phil and Alys Belle worked the farm with the help of their children. "Growing up that way, with all five of us kids, it was definitely a family effort. Everybody had chores. Every spring break we were picking rock. Whenever there were sheep or cattle to move, we were all involved, or shearing, or whatever project was going on, all of us were involved," said Janet Farrell, Phil and Alys Belle's daughter.

Janet and her sister Brenda laughed as they recalled that while all the kids worked hard on the farm, some worked a little harder. "We were out there working with the men, and it was time for coming in to eat. Brenda and I had to hurry up and go in first so we could help Mom get everything done and on the table. And they would just sit down and read the paper. And then we'd help her clean up while they rested."

Janet added, "But Dad was really clear, and Mom too, if there was anything that you really wanted badly enough, you would find a way to make it work. You would do it. So, it wasn't like we were in stereotypical roles all the time. No matter who you were, if you had an interest and you

wanted to pursue it, you'd find a way and they would be supportive. Probably not financially, particularly because there wasn't much extra money."

In the years that Phil and Alys Belle had the farm, they diversified, trying many different crops and expanding their livestock operation. Their son Bob explained, "In the '50s, we had pigs first. We had quite a few pigs. Then we started feed-lotting cattle. And we ended up, when we quit, we were running 1,000 head of ewes and about 250 head of cows."

The Farrells' crops included clover, bluegrass, ryegrass, wheat, barley, alfalfa, corn silage, and peppermint. They experimented with growing pinto beans and sugar beet seeds.

Phil was active in the larger farming world, at one time serving as president of the National Wool Growers Association. "He was innovative with the way that he rotated sheep and cattle through the pastures. He had a lot of connections with the experiment station of Oregon State," said Janet. If livestock died of unknown causes, he'd have them autopsied at Oregon State so that they could do research. "He was very smart that way, wanting to know about how things worked and how they could be improved."

Alys Belle was known for her cooking. "Whenever people would come, if it was anywhere near a meal, if anybody would drop by — and it was surprising how many people came out, 10 miles from Madras — but he'd (Phil) say 'Oh stay for dinner! 'Alys Belle will put another bean in the pot!'" explained Janet.

The old homestead house did not stand empty after Ward and Allie moved out. Brenda and Janet recall a few summers in the early 1960s when it was occupied by Humphrey Chamberlain, Grandma Allie's college-age nephew from England, and his friends. They helped on the farm, got paid for their work and got a free place to stay.

"They ate meals with us and were treated like part of the family," Janet said. "It was great. Some were really fun because they'd tease, and we'd tease back. On the weekends, we'd go water skiing or looking at the countryside."

The Farrells maintained contact with Humphrey and at least one of the others for many years. Brenda and Janet have visited them in Great Britain a few times, and Alys Belle went with them once.

Madras schoolteacher Ted Dowell lived in the homestead house with his family for a time. And in the late 1960s Bob Farrell and his family were the last of the Farrells to occupy the house.

Bob, his wife, Diane, and their three-year-old daughter Shannon moved into the house in 1965. Their second daughter, Becky, was born in 1966 while the family was living there. Asked whether the house was comfortable for his wife and daughters, Bob said, "Probably it was not as comfortable for Diane as it was for me. I don't need too many creature comforts."

Bob's girls don't remember living in the homestead house because they were so young at the time, but they were raised on the farm and Bob said he is glad of that. "I'm very thankful that I had the opportunity to raise my kids that way because they all ended up with a very good work ethic," he said.

Bob's family moved out of the homestead house in 1967 or '68 and the house was moved to the fairgrounds sometime between late 1969 and early 1970. His father, Phil, had donated it the historical society.

New purpose for the old house

It is unfortunate that nobody living seems to have participated in or witnessed the moving of the house from the homestead to the fairgrounds. Dave Campbell's grandfather, John L. Campbell was both the brains and the brawns behind the endeavor. John was the president of the Jefferson County Museum, which later merged with the Pioneer Association to become the Jefferson County Historical Society.

Dave Campbell remembers helping his grandfather prepare the house to be moved, but he was young at the time, and he says his role was minor. He wasn't present when the house was moved.

Campbell remembers being told some facts about the process. He said they jacked the house up high enough that they could back the truck up underneath it. He thinks the movers took the house apart and moved the kitchen wing separately, a fact corroborated by the photo in the Pioneer . The movers had to work with officials to get the power lines taken down along the route to make room for the big load coming down the road.

The two-story portion of the Farrell House being moved from the homestead near Gateway to the county fairgrounds — *Madras Pioneer*, Feb. 12, 1970

The photo tells something about how they moved the house. In addition to separating the one-story and two-story parts, the roof was removed, from the two-story portion at least. It looks like the upper story window was removed too. The white patch on the side of the building must be the interior wall of the one-story kitchen, including the door to the stairs and the door into the sitting room, although it doesn't look big enough in the picture.

The house seems to have lost some of its amenities in the move, moving a little closer to its original state. There is no sign of plumbing or electricity. Even the kitchen sink is gone.

An interesting anecdote about the moving of the building is that a colony of bees lived in the walls of the house when it was still on the homestead. The bees came along with the house and continued living there for years. They may live there still.

Once the house was at the fairgrounds, John L. Campbell marshalled volunteers to restore the house and make improvements in the surrounding area. A *Madras Pioneer* article from May 18, 1972 reports that Campbell and county extension agent Jay Binder had developed a detailed plan for the project.

By the time the article was written, Campbell and Colin F. Dawson had completed the split rail fence on the east side of the yard, having salvaged the already-weathered rails from the Gordon Monroe place.

A Madras High School agriculture teacher had enlisted his students to help plant flowers and shrubs around the house. He had selected varieties that were popular with homesteaders. The Campbells transplanted poplar trees from their ranch to the west side of the homestead house, though they're gone now. Poplars were a favorite with homesteaders because they grow quickly and don't need much water.

Other projects had been completed. Binder had built a woodbox and repaired a bookshelf; Campbell and George Dee built skirts around the bottom of the house to enclose the foundation, probably using the lumber Campbell had salvaged by dismantling a building on the old Resettlement Administration camp site; and Warren Hodges had built window shutters to protect the building when not in use.

The historical society moved an old windmill from the Gray Butte area onto the property and put in the machine shed. Dave Campbell said he remembers helping his grandfather collect the antique farm equipment stored in the shed. They got the reaper from Hay Creek Ranch and a horse-powered stump puller from the Joe Howard ranch near Lower Bridge.

The historical society brought in the old schoolhouse in 1983.

Now it's another era and another Campbell has plans for the homestead display at the fairgrounds. As described in "Campbell's Corner" in this issue, Dave Campbell and a group of volunteers are getting ready to build a porch onto the back of the old Farrell house for the antique washing machines that are currently in the kitchen.

Campbell and other volunteers recently put up a new shed and plan to put siding on it. Campbell said he would like to turn the south bay of the old machine shed into a working blacksmith shop and provide blacksmithing demonstrations during the annual threshing bees. Another idea is to set up a Model T in one of the bays to look like it is in the middle of being repaired.

Other historical society members have ideas for improving the homestead exhibit. Board member Margee O'Brien has some irises that Alys Belle Farrell gave her many years ago. This year she dug some up from her yard and planted them around the homestead house. Unfortunately, rock chucks devoured the bulbs, but O'Brien will try again once she figures out how to get the critters under control.

Farrell family legacy

Phil and Alys Belle farmed the old homestead with their sons Bob and Larry until 1985, when they retired from farming and the farm was sold. Phil and Alys Belle bought the old Nellie Watts house in Madras that is up the hill from Ahern's market. They lived in the home and ran a new enterprise out of it.

"They had a shuttle business. They shuttled mainly fisherfolk down to the Deschutes River or Trout Creek. That turned out to be as good a moneymaker, or more so, than ranching," said their daughter, Janet Farrell.

The work suited Phil and Alys Belle's personalities. He enjoyed being out in the countryside where he grew up and she enjoyed entertaining.

"They made some good friendships doing that. There were people that would return. They were good at being hospitable and making friends with whoever they were doing business with as well," said Janet.

A few members of the extended Farrell family are still engaged in agriculture, but most have branched out into different fields. Janet was a Methodist minister in Madras for years and Brenda worked for the city of Madras. Still, the pioneer spirit lives on in them.

"One of the things that was important that we carried on through the generations was that sense of responsibility and community service and the idea of participating in community life, taking leadership when that's appropriate," said Janet.

She added, "Dad was that kind of person who thought it was important to look people in the eye and being respectful, helping your neighbors, extending hospitality, those sort of pioneer traits, I think were important in the way we were raised and in the way they were raised."

None of Phil and Alys Belle's five children live in Jefferson County anymore, but Janet is proud that the old homestead house is being used to teach people about local history. "I feel like it's a continuing legacy even though we aren't there," Janet said.

Sources for Further Reading

Steven Cordill, T*he History of Jefferson County Through the Pioneer Kings and Queens* Jefferson County Historical Society

Beth Crow et al "Welcome to the Homestead House "(4-page flyer produced by Jefferson County Historical Society)

The History of Jefferson County 1914-1983 Madras, OR: Jefferson County Historical Society, 1984

Many Hands, *Jefferson County Reminiscences* Binford & Mort, 1957, 1998

Just After the Water Came

Excerpts from a memoir by Gail Clowers

Introduction by Jerry Ramsey:

Gail Clowers (1936-2014) was born in Harlingen, Texas and spent his early boyhood years in Eastern Oregon (Baker City and Nyssa). In 1947, the extended Clowers family (his parents, Wiley and Christie, and Gail and his younger brothers, Gary and Randy) Wiley's brothers Allen, Phil, and Tom, and their father, George, and families all moved to Jefferson County to take up farming on Agency Plains just at the "coming of the water" on the North Unit Irrigation District. The Clowers brothers also came prepared with heavy machinery and earth-moving experience to do their share of preparing formerly dryland fields on the plains and elsewhere for irrigation — land-leveling (always a challenging operation, but especially so in this area's thin, rocky soil) and ditching. Gail actively participated in all of his family's hard work, making his recollections of it immediate and insightful.

After graduating from Madras High School (where he was an outstanding football lineman), Gail married his classmate, Sharon Metcalf, and attended Oregon State University before enlisting in the Air Force. After his discharge in the 1960s, he and Sharon and their small son Ron returned to Madras to farm with his father. Later, he owned and operated a farm-services company here (spraying, fertilizer applications etc.), and in later years he and Sharon moved to Washington State, where he served until retirement as a valued agricultural consultant at the WSU ag-station near Puyallup.

He was truly a man of many (moving) parts — an expert with machinery of all kinds, a talented musician (trumpet and baritone), and artist (his stained-glass works still adorn the Lutheran Church in Madras). But first and last, in his roots and in his temperament, he was a farmer, whose love of the soil and what could be grown in it was fundamental. The upbeat, optimistic spirit of his memories of the beginnings of irrigated farming here may seem bitterly ironic now, as today's farmers face dire challenges of prolonged drought and lack of water for their crops, and beneath that, the specter of climate change. But such cheerful can-do optimism is a legacy from the pioneers of the North Unit to us now. As they squared up and "adjusted" and held forth against the daunting challenges of their era, so can we, in ours.

[We're grateful to Sharon Clowers and her family for permission to publish the following excerpt from Gail's memoirs, and to Gary Clowers for calling it to our attention. The full text is available in the Jefferson County Library.]

Gail Clowers in later years

A fateful encounter in Madras — Gail Clowers' Recollections 1947-1977, p. 8:

My parents' dream was to own a farm and that summer we traveled across the state on our way to a new irrigation project that was being developed in Washington called the Grand Coulee project. Our route took us to Nyssa where we left Gary to stay with Grandma Susie, then across the desert to Madras, Oregon where we ran out of gasoline ration coupons and had to wait there for a few days before we could get some more.

During that time, Dad met Hiram Links. He was a wheat farmer and farmed a large piece of land to the north. Hiram told dad about an irrigation project that was coming to the Madras area. It was being developed by the Federal Bureau of Reclamation and under the rules, all the landowners in the project were required to sell off all but 160 acres of their land.

Hiram offered to let my dad have the pick of the land he had to sell. His son, Roscoe, had already chosen the farmland that he wanted. I remember that we drove out into the country and walked out into the wheat stubble to look at land. Dad picked out a piece of land toward the north end of what is now Agency Plains at the southwest corner of the intersection of Columbia Drive and Juniper Lane.

From then on, everything we did was in preparation to move there and start farming. Of course, the fact that Mom was carrying another baby that summer was exciting also. Later, I realized what an accomplishment this was.

My folks had saved very hard to put together the amount of money that would enable them to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the government for people to buy land in these new projects. Hiram Links was a Godsend too. He allowed my parents to buy his land with very little actual cash money. My dad was always very grateful to him for his assistance. At any rate, the trip we took to Central Oregon that summer was one of the most exciting things we ever did.

Settling in on the Agency Plains — from Gail Clowers' Recollections pages 14-24

Another summer passed by on the farm as we continued to put up hay and milk the cows. We spent a lot of time planning our big move. Mom and Dad were doing everything to make extra money and save up for starting out on the new farming adventure. We were all moving that fall.

The men got the equipment moved that summer and we spent a lot of time organizing our goods to take with us. Soon it was time to start the fifth grade. My teacher was sad that I was only going to be in her class for a short time because we were moving to Madras in October. In no time at all, it was time to finish packing up and move. I was excited to be going to Madras because my dad said we were starting the biggest adventure

of our life.

We had a four-door sedan and my dad had built a fairly large, covered trailer, which we hitched up to the car. We packed up everything we could carry and headed west through Vale and across the Oregon desert. My mom drove our car and Allen followed along behind us in his black Ford with Phil and Vera and baby Paul behind him. Dad drove the company service truck, which was a surplus Navy six by six. It wouldn't go very fast, so the convoy just crept along.

I remember stopping along the way a few times. Once at a drinking water fountain along the Malheur River. Then across the high desert. We climbed up over the hills east of Burns very slowly, then through the town of Burns and out into the sagebrush country.

I remember we stopped and ate at a wide spot in the road called Hampton Station. I remember Gary getting a knot on his head while we were stopped there. Uncle Allen opened the trunk on his car to get something and Gary leaned in to look just as he slammed the lid shut. Of course, Gary howled up a storm, but was OK after a little while.

It was a long trip and took all day. We started out before daylight, and we arrived late in the afternoon just before dark. I remember coming into town from the south and as we approached town the highway was covered with blowing dust and tumbleweeds.

As we came down the little hill just before the center of town, I noticed my mother was crying. I think she was scared of what lay ahead. We were kind of like pioneers, traveling with everything we owned on our back, so to speak, and homeless.

My folks had made arrangements for a cabin at the Madras Hotel, and we moved in there with plans to build a cabin out on the farm right away. The hotel was a square multistoried building about two blocks west of Main Street facing north. There was a brand-new row of two room cabins built along the full length of the hotel on the south and west. It wasn't very big, but it was cozy.

In 1947, Madras was not very big. There was nothing much south of the highway coming in from Culver and nothing north of Willow Creek Bridge except the highway maintenance department. The town was only a couple of blocks wide each way east and west of Main Street. There were many vacant blocks.

The high school sat off by itself to the south and the grade school was east of town, down by the creek.

McCalou's Drug Store was a small white frame building located at the NW corner of the intersection of the two highways. Poole Krieger Implement Co. was across the street to the west of the drug store. On the SW corner of that intersection was the Green Spot Hotel and across the street to the east was the bank. On the NE corner of the intersection was the Odd Fellows building and behind that was the county courthouse and jail. Across the street to the south was the Shangri-La Cafe. To the east of the courthouse was the community hall.

The Madras Market was in about the center of town, next to the Dodge dealership and the Texaco gas station was across the street to the west next to Copeland lumber store. Down the street to the north was Madras Main Street Garage, which was the Chevrolet dealership and Standard Oil gas station. Next door to that was the Cactus Inn.

Toward the north and across the street was Michael's Associated Gas station and repair garage. Across the bridge going north was a gas station on the left. That was just about it.

Going south from the center of town and up the hill past the movie theater, was the Mason House. That was a boarding house and cafe. That was just about the limit of the businesses on the south of town. Beyond that was the Episcopal Church and another gasoline station.

The first order of business was to get a home built on the farm. My dad and I got at it right away and built us a 600 square foot, one-room frame cabin containing kitchen, living, and sleeping spaces for all 5 of us. This was my first experience at actual carpentry and was a good learning experience even though I was just a grunt, carrying and fetching stuff.

We did have electricity and running water, but no sewer at that time. Our toilet was outside to the west of the house. It was my first experience of utilizing an outdoor privy. We had a "Sparks" oil burning heater in the front of the house and we were quite cozy except for being kind of crowded.

It had an enclosed porch on the front facing east where we kept our outdoor clothes and boots, etc. This was where the hot water heater was located. Mom rigged up some curtained off areas for hanging clothes. Her kitchen was the northeast corner of the room and cupboards were little more than boxes nailed up on the walls.

The plumbing was very primitive that first year and the sink was basically a dishpan. We did not own a refrigerator for a while and kept food in a box outside on the cool north side of the house. We got moved into our new home soon after Thanksgiving and began our new life. Thanksgiving was celebrated that year in our cabin beside the hotel. We were very thankful for our new life.

The house was set back away from the one-lane dirt road named Columbia Drive. Our yard was just dirt and was ever on the move since it seemed the wind blew constantly.

Mom had a washing machine, but no room for it in the house. We kept it outside next to the porch. When she washed clothes, we heated water in a big tub over a wood fire and bucketed it into the washer. It had a crank-operated wringer, and it was my job to crank while she directed the clothes through it. We rigged up a clothesline along the south side of the house where we could hang the wash.

We had to work hard since we had few amenities. These conditions created a sense of togetherness for our family that stayed with us the rest of our lives. I believe it also had a great deal of positive influence on our work ethic.

School days

Gary and I began classes right away at New Era School. This was a one-room schoolhouse with one teacher for all eight grades. High school

kids had to be transported all the way to Madras. The school was about a mile south of our place, across the road from the big house owned by Hiram Links, the man from whom we bought our farm.

It was a typical country school with a west facing front entrance porch where we kept our gear. Our teacher was an attractive red-headed woman about my mother's age. She was an exceptional person who was able to supervise all the kids and give them each a lot of attention. We remember that her first comment in learning that Gary was coming was "I hope he's not a second grader." Of course, he was and that filled out all eight grades. Later in her life, Helen Hering was recognized several times as "educator of the year."

As a fifth grader, I had several classmates. Helen Links was one of the first kids I met after moving to Madras. Her parents farmed the land adjacent to ours on the north. Roscoe was the son of Hiram Links from whom we bought our land. Helen's mother was named Aurel and quickly became a valuable friend.

Roscoe's sister, Bessie, was married to Kenneth Binder, a dry land wheat farmer and cattleman who lived on the east side of the plains. Helen had an older brother, Gordon, and a sister, Jewel. Janice Luelling lived with her parents, Chester and Amy, just across the road to the east.

Gail in front of first Clowers house on Agency Plains, 1948; Gary and Randy in back

Chester's brother Lloyd and his family lived to north at the end of Columbia. They had several children. Jerry Ramsey lived about three miles south down Columbia Drive across the highway leading to the Warm Springs Indian reservation. Jerry and I became good friends right away.

Ed Needles was another fifth grader. His parents had bought a farm about a mile to the east. They were from Nampa, Idaho and had moved to Madras during the summer. Ed had an older brother in the eighth grade named Stanley.

There was a boy named Norman Kollen from down at the south end of Columbia, and later in the year the Lydys moved into Hiram Links' house just across the road from the school. John was in my class and Kenny was in Gary's.

Dave Green, his brother Allen and his sister Nancy were also in the school. Another student, Morris Evick, lived down Columbia to the south.

The school was heated by a wood stove, and I remember it being quite cold in the winter. One of the chores we all shared was to carry wood in for the fire. I remember that Mrs. Hering always had to get there real early to get the school warmed up.

That winter, there was quite a heavy snow and I remember it was a struggle to get to school, which was about a mile from home. Helen, Janice, Gary and I would usually walk to and from school together. When the weather turned nice in the spring, it was a lot of fun walking to school or riding our bikes. Recess was always fun since we generally had an organized game of kick the can or some other game which involved the whole student body.

Getting to work

That first fall was a busy one for us. I remember we had to gather and burn a lot of tumble weeds that had collected along the road edges and develop the boundary lines around the farm. Besides building a cabin to live in, my dad began to disc up our land which was in last year's wheat stubble. He had purchased a Ford tractor and an eight-foot-wide disc, and we were going to plant everything to winter wheat again.

It was a very busy time. Dad and his brothers were getting jobs lined up for the land leveling operation and were also working on a couple of small jobs south of Madras. Dad would run the tractor pulling the disc during his available time during the day and I would drive it after school. Our land layout was a mile long by a fourth of a mile wide. We went round and round the whole farm pulling the small disc and a harrow. When that was done, dad planted wheat with a John Deere grain drill that he and Phil and Allen went together to buy. We took turns using it and before long all of our farms were planted.

That first spring, Clowers Brothers Co. was hired to do work at the newly constructed water storage reservoir, "Wickiup Lake." There was an old CCC camp there, and the buildings had to be demolished and cleared before the water rose up and covered that area. This work lasted well into that first summer and Gary and I went with Dad up to the lake several times.

It was pretty exciting to play in the forest of big trees and explore the area. This area was to become the main source of irrigation water for our new project and was being filled at that time. In those days, the highway was not too good, and it took quite a long time to get there. Several times that we went we slept in a tent and did not come back home for a few days.

Our new wheat crop was growing nicely, and we were making plans to harvest that summer. Dad started building onto our house. He added a room onto the back end of the original cabin, making it double in size. This new addition became our sleeping area with expanded closet spaces. We got new beds and it was very comfortable. It had windows in three sides that opened up for ventilation and we liked that a lot when it started getting hot in late spring.

We got a nice refrigerator, but we still washed clothes outside with the old wringer machine and heated our water over a fire. There was nothing fancy about our place during those days.

The house was located on the south side of the driveway about 100 feet west of Columbia Drive. There was no grass, of course, and our parking area was on the north side of the house. We used that dusty area to play in and quite often had little towns laid out where we played with our toys.

I remember one day when Randy was sitting on the ground playing with his cars when Uncle Allen drove in. He pulled into the parking area and failed to see Randy sitting there. When he got stopped his left front wheel was up against Randy's leg and was pinching it pretty hard. Randy let out a blood curdling scream that we could hear all over the yard. It scared Allen badly to think that he nearly ran over him. Fortunately, he was only bruised and not injured. It didn't take long for Randy to recover and begin begging for his treat. Uncle Allen never came by but what he had some gum for us. We always thought Uncle Allen was just plenty all right.

Later that summer, Dad dozed out a hole in the ground to begin construction of the basement of a new house. He purchased a block maker, and we began making "pumice" concrete blocks, two at a time. The plan was to make enough of them to be able to build the basement the next year. By mid-summer, Clowers Brothers Co. was very busy leveling land for the coming irrigation and our wheat crop was getting ready to harvest. We had been blessed by good rains that year and we were looking forward to a good crop.

Our extended family was growing. That summer of 1948, Uncle Allen and Jewel Links got married. We were all very pleased. I liked Jewel a lot. She had kind of taken me as a nephew anyway. She was always practicing her cooking and I was handy to try out her dishes on. They moved into a house owned by Roscoe in Madras. Allen and Phil had bought farms adjoining each other south of the Madras-Warm Springs highway on Columbia Drive. Phil and Vera had built a small two-room house similar to ours.

Clowers Brothers had purchased a small International crawler tractor and a pull type combine. That summer, we used the combine on all of our places to harvest the wheat crops. The combine was a sacking type machine and I learned how to sew wheat sacks and to drive the 6x6 truck while the men picked up the wheat sacks and loaded them onto the flat bed. We then hauled the wheat down the twisty grade into the depot town of Gateway where it was put into a warehouse alongside the track to await shipment.

Gary and I enjoyed riding along to the depot and rock-hunting while the wheat was being unloaded. I enjoyed the harvest since my dad was teaching me how to operate equipment and drive the truck. I was large for my age and soon was working like another man. We had a good wheat crop that year, and I remember my folks talking about how encouraged they were that things were going well. Right after harvest, we began to prepare the land for another crop. This time it was easier for we now had the crawler tractor and some better equipment. It was a frenzy of activity by now, and we were also leveling the land in preparation for irrigation. As soon as a field had been leveled, we started preparation for planting.

The land leveling project to get the farm ready for water was extensive. Our land in the west 80 acres was very rolling and had a large hill on the south side of it. This hill had to be cut off and spread over the rest of the area to create fields sloped and level enough to irrigate by flood. This was quite a lot of dirt to move. At one point there was 22 feet of soil to be cut to bring the hill down to grade. When it was completed, it became a very nice laying farm that irrigated very efficiently.

That year most of the rough in work was started following that first summer's wheat harvest. By fall, there was a drastic change in the farm. Water was to be delivered the following year, so we were hurrying to get ready. We concentrated on the east 80 in order to get it ready for irrigation first. The west 80 was still being leveled after the water became available in the late spring of 1949.

During that year, whenever I had spare time, I had made pumice blocks. Dad would go out after supper and make as many as he could too. We were accumulating quite a number of them. Dad had poured concrete footings in the excavation, and he was starting to lay the blocks for the walls. He had never done that before and so was learning that skill block by block. Between growing wheat, building the basement and working on the land leveling equipment, Dad was working terribly long hours. All of us were working very hard.

Back to school

I had been looking forward to going back to New Era School, but just before school was to start, I learned that we would be going to Madras to school. We would be riding a school bus which would pick us up right at our driveway. So, that year I started the sixth grade at Madras Elementary.

Our old New Era school building was moved and placed right to the east of the elementary school and was to be used as a shop classroom for the seventh and eighth grade students. I enjoyed going to school at the bigger school and I also got to go visit Aunt Jewel and Uncle Allen in their house which was just a block west of the school.

The school did not have a cafeteria in those days. We usually carried our lunch from home, but once in a while we were allowed to go downtown and get lunch. My favorite place was called the Mason House Cafe. They had a super hamburger and fries. It was a challenge to get there, eat and return to school on time so we developed fast legs. By running all the way down and back, we could just make it.

Winter, that year, laid down a great deal of snow and drifted most of the roads closed so that the school buses could not get around. So, we got quite a few days off from school and spent them pulling sleds behind the tractor. I was allowed to take the Ford tractor out and around the country. We would add more and more sleds on behind the tractor until we had most every kid in the neighborhood hooked on. It was a lot of fun to pull that long string of sleds and kids over the countryside. Most of it was still in dryland wheat fields and the roads were not barriers, and there were no fences, so we could go just about anywhere we wanted.

As we traveled along, we were often invited in by various mothers to have hot chocolate and treats. We would all pile into the house to warm up and enjoy the treats. Most of the houses at that time were small, temporary buildings and didn't have much room in them, but we would pack them full of kids.

A lot of the houses were what they called Agency Plains specials, which were basically machine sheds with a small living area built into one end of the shed. I have fond memories of that activity. The next couple of years saw so much leveling of the land and construction of irrigation ditches that the open terrain disappeared. We could still take a tractor

out into the fields and pull sleds, but we were confined to relatively small areas after that first winter.

In the spring of 1949, there were more and more new farmers moving into the area and the plains were filling up with people from Idaho, Eastern Oregon and California. All of them had bought farms and were coming in anticipation of the irrigation water which was coming soon. Clowers Brothers Co. was working all out to level land and get the farms ready for flood irrigation.

The Bureau of Reclamation, which was constructing the various canals and lateral ditches, was working hard to get the project completed. Water had already been delivered to land around Culver and south of Madras by then, but one of the last steps that had to be done in order for water to be delivered to the big plains was construction of a pipeline across the Willow Creek canyon which separated the two sides of the project.

Our farm was located almost to the north end of the project about 10 miles from town, so would be one of the last to receive the water. We often went down to the construction site to watch the progress. This was quite an undertaking, since a giant pipe had to go down the south side of the deep canyon, cross a trestle, and then go back up the north side to join the main canal again. As you can imagine, everyone was anxious to get irrigation water. We were scheduled to receive water very soon.

Reshaping the land

The shape of our land was changing. Dad had designed the layout for the various fields that would result from the leveling. Our land was quite rolling, especially on the west 80, and soil had to be moved around to create many fields that could be contoured to allow water to flow from head ditches and then through the fields.

What started out as one big 160-acre piece of land ended up being divided into 10 separate parcels. The smallest field ended up being about 4.5 acres and the largest 28 acres. Water would be delivered through a large main canal which traversed the central high ground of the project and then dispersed through smaller lateral ditches to individual farms by way of gated weirs located at the high points of the farm.

The lay of the land was sloping from south to north, so they were able to wind the ditches around strategically in order to deliver water to all of the land within the project. Many of the ditches consisted of a fairly high fill that was made by borrowing adjacent soil and piling it up, forming a long fill in which the open ditch was made.

The result was quite a number of borrow-ditches alongside the filled areas. Over time, these became filled with water most of the year and created duck ponds and nesting areas for millions of red-winged blackbirds.

Our farm was basically divided into an east 80-acre parcel and a west 80-acre parcel, each one a quarter of a mile wide and one half of a mile long. The supply lateral ran through the high ground between these two parcels and water was delivered from two weirs directly across the lateral from one another.

There was another lateral that crossed our farm from south to north just at the west side of the field next to the house that carried water to lands to the north of us. When we finished shaping our land and building the ditches, we would be able to direct water to every acre we owned from those two weirs. But there was much work to be done to get to that point.

When it was dry enough, the land leveling got going in earnest. We had the walls up on the basement project and were ready to finish our new home. Uncle Paul was going to be coming out west to stay with us and do the framing and finish work. He was a very good craftsman.

We were busy laying out and putting in the ditches to carry the water to the various fields. As soon as each field was leveled and the ditching finished, we planted spring wheat in anticipation of being able to irrigate as soon as the water arrived. Some of the fields were reserved to plant to Ladino clover when water arrived.

Vintage D-4 "Cat" pulling a smaller landplane than what the Clowers Bros. used

Check boxes

When Uncle Paul arrived, one of the first projects was to build “check boxes” to install in the ditches. Each head ditch would have several of these check boxes placed according to the fall across the field. Each one was placed in a position that would allow us to create a reservoir upstream deep enough to be able to gravity water out of the ditch into the fields. I was given the job of helping Uncle Paul build the check boxes.

This was a great experience, because he was a great teacher and instructed me in the fine art of measuring, cutting and nailing. He passed on many useful tips that I continue to use to this day. These original boxes were constructed of good quality redwood and would last many years. Many of them were still in use throughout my entire life on the farm. They were all of the same design and size, so for several days we just measured and cut the wood stock into the various pieces to be assembled into the check boxes.

It took 133 check boxes to cover the entire farm so there were a lot of pieces to cut and nail together. We also made redwood sluice boxes that would be installed through the banks of the ditches to allow water to run into feeder ditches that ran parallel to the main ditches. These were spaced evenly about every 24 feet and installed at the same elevation. They had a metal slide gate in the front end of them that could be pulled up to control the amount of water that flowed through them.

Dad used his surveyor’s transit to determine the placement of both the check boxes and the sluice boxes. The check boxes were spread just far enough apart to allow the upper end of the reservoir backed up behind them to reach the previous box. That way the entire area between boxes could be raised enough to let water out into the field. The water then

overflowed the check boards to fill the next area between boxes. Installing these boxes required a lot of hand digging and tamping of dirt, so many days were spent at hard labor.

Once we received water, we would install the sluice boxes by using the level of the reservoir between checks as a guide. This would involve lots more digging. Gary and Randy and I each had our own shovels and learned how to wield them early.

Ditch digging

All that spring we were working frantically to get ready for the water that was scheduled to arrive very soon. One big job was to install the ditches. The company had purchased a large "V" ditcher that had hydraulic controls to keep it level as it was pulled down the surveyed route of the ditch. It was hooked up behind the TD9 crawler tractor and then pulled along with the point of the V digging the ditch to the desired depth and the wings directed the earth to the outside, forming the bank. The wheels that the ditcher rode on could be raised up and down, regulating the height of the banks.

An operator would ride in a seat on the back of the ditcher to operate hydraulic jacks which raised or lowered the wings. In order to form a really good ditch, we would make several passes over the same ditch, increasing the width and height each time until the desired shape and size was obtained. My job in those days, was to ride on the ditcher and operate the jacks.

My Dad would operate the crawler and maneuver the ditcher in and out of the ditch at the right places. He was very good at pulling that very cumbersome rig around, but the ditcher rider had to hang on tight or be tossed off. We installed nearly 3½ miles of ditches on the 160-acre farm that spring and summer, counting drain ditches.

Ditching on Agency Plains, late 40s'

Then we needed to install the check boxes, but they would not be installed until water was available to "mud" them in. This was a process where we would dig out the trenches in the ditch where the check would then be placed. We would then allow some water to flow in and around the new check box and fill in the trenches with soil creating a muddy fill around the box. As this dried and set up, it created a seal that prevented water from seeping under and around the box.

We got the ditches made and then set out the check boxes in their places. We set the first check box dry at the proper point in the ditch leading away from the East delivery weir. This would allow us to dam up the water and distribute it over the first set in the field on the big day. We would then proceed to mud in the remaining checks by allowing some water past each set to run down to the next check position. This turned out to be a huge job, but by taking it one step at a time and taking pains to give the ditches a final touching up by hand as we went, the initial construction of those ditches turned out to be nearly permanent.

It is difficult to relate all this activity with words that adequately describe the feverish pace at which we all worked to get this farm ready to receive water and begin to fulfill our ambitions for it. My dad and mother were working from before dawn till after dark each day. The land leveling business was still in full swing to try to get all the clients' property leveled and ready to receive water also. Clowers Brothers Company had made a major change in the face of the Agency Plains and had even hired out to the Bureau to assist in the construction of the canals and laterals that would carry the water across the project.

Dad and Phil and Allen had reached a point where they could not continue to do all the equipment operation and had hired some capable fellows to work for them. One of these "cat-skinners" was Bill Green, who ran our equipment during the time that the brothers could not be available. Bill was also a new landowner in the project and was working for the company to help pay for the cost of leveling his own land. Bill and his family became lifelong friends. Their children became our classmates and grew up alongside us.

Another fellow that worked on the big Cat was named Don Maxwell. He was a big, gruff, young man that was good natured and took time to pay a little attention to this young man who yearned to be involved as much as possible. I even got a chance to operate the big brute sometimes.

Land leveling

I learned how to pull the 100 foot long "landplane" and would often go drive it to give the other operators a dinner break when we found ourselves getting behind schedule. It was fun for me, but then I didn't have to drive it for 12 hours at a stretch.

Between all of us, we kept the big D8 moving all the time that was available, seven days per week. It didn't always go smoothly though, since big equipment like that breaks occasionally. That was when we really put in the hours. The cat had to get going, and we worked whatever time it took to get it fixed and back in the field. Sometimes that meant working all night to repair a track roller, brake drum, or even sometimes an engine cylinder.

The equipment in those days was all cable operated, so there was always cable to splice and pulleys to replace. Modern day land leveling equipment operators don't realize how easy they have it now with all the modern hydraulic controls available. In our day, one had to be able to anticipate the length of time it took to spool out a cable drum to lower the cutting blade and how long it would take to retrieve the slack out of the line. If you couldn't, the cut or fill you made in the field would have the appearance of a roller coaster track. No lasers either.

I walked many a mile, back and forth across the fields to be leveled, carrying a target for my dad to sight in on through the surveyor's transit. There was a prescribed layout and we walked a given number of paces, placed the target, and turned it toward the transit. Dad would then use hand signals to communicate the plus or minus required to bring that particular spot into grade. The carryall operator would then use these

stakes as a guide to tell them how much to cut of fill as they went back and forth across the fields.

It is still amazing to me how well they developed the grades to guide the water across the fields. The final operation was to pull the "land plane" over the fields. This was a piece of equipment 100 feet in length and twelve feet wide. Amidships, it carried a blade across the width of the machine that could be raised and lowered by the cat operator if necessary. When it was being used to "final grade" a field, it was placed in a floating position and automatically cut and filled as the long machine bridged over high or low points in the grade. It did a great job of finishing the slope, so that when water flowed down the hill, it would not puddle.

Clowers brothers and their D-8 'Cat' — L to R Wiley, Phil, Allen; and "Moose" Bailey, their brother-in-law

At the ripe old age of 12 and nearly full grown, I was capable of carrying a hefty load myself. Each day, before and after school, I would work out in the fields or around our developing new house. Gary, at 10, was also able to fetch and carry and perform many valuable duties. I have always looked back with pride on our accomplishments of those demanding years. It was some years later that I was mature enough to actually understand that all of our frenzy was dictated by a definite plan of action.

My Dad was a thorough planner, and had our steps lined out to a T. We worked hard and were getting more and more excited about the coming event. We had planted our grain crops that year as each field was readied and installed corrugations in them to facilitate the irrigation as soon as water came available. I remember some of the neighbors around us, having been dry land wheat growers all their lives, had no concept of "irrigating". They often would come around for advice from Dad, who had not been raised on an irrigated farm, but had some experience from Grandpa's dairy in Nyssa. Most of the immigrant farmers who bought land in the Madras project were from Eastern Oregon and Idaho, where irrigation was old hat.

The water arrives

We had concentrated our efforts on the east half of the farm and were as ready as we could get. I don't remember exactly what date it was, but in the late spring of 1949 we were able to order water. In the beginning, a farmer's water order was placed several days prior to the time one wished it to arrive. I remember that our water was actually turned out of the east weir late in the evening and we made our first water set on the 28-acre field adjacent to the east side of the lateral and on the north side of our feed ditch.

We had pre-installed the sluice boxes in the ditch bank using the surveyor's transit and excitedly watched as the water flowed out of them into the little feeder ditches from which water was metered into the corrugations that would lead it down through the field. I remember walking over the set several times that night by flashlight as we made sure the water was distributed evenly across the set. My dad had ordered a small amount for that initial phase just to make sure we could take care of it, so it did not spread very far across the field on that first night.

The next day began the process of allowing some water past the first check box and into the next set. A second check box was mudded into its designated spot, and we put in check boards to create a pool between the two check boxes. After the water rose up to the right depth, we installed sluice boxes through the ditch bank using the water level to put them at the right height.

This process continued through that spring until the installations were completed. We were still completing the leveling and ditching on the west 80-acre parcel, but we were able to get most of it under irrigation that same year. Throughout that year it was a constant routine to irrigate and plant crops.

Ladino clover was the key crop that we all counted on. The price was very high, and we were grateful to get even a light crop from the new fields that late fall. This crop was like gold dust. Each seed was precious and was guarded closely. The crop was combined and put up in sacks. I remember we would take the sacked seed into town each evening. Mom and Dad and Randy would ride in the front of our new pickup and Gary and I would ride in the back with the seed sacks. The weather was

turning cold by then and Dad would arrange the sacks so that there was a space for us to get down behind the cab so that we were somewhat protected from the cold wind. The trip to town was always an adventure. It was exciting to ride "shotgun" on several thousand dollars' worth of seed.

That same year, we were also building the basement house. Uncle Paul was in charge of the project, and we all assisted him in the construction of roof, interior walls, entry stairway and cabinets. Being a basement house, there was need for an entry structure at ground level, which was built like a small house and connected to the stairway that went down into the basement alongside the kitchen area. The living space was divided into a kitchen-dining area, a large living room, two bedrooms and a bathroom.

Quite a few windows were installed in the walls which extended above the ground level about three feet. There were enough windows to create a very light and cheery atmosphere inside the house.

The bedrooms were large, which provided enough space for us three boys to share a room. The bathroom was shared by the whole family. The plumbing was a challenge since the septic disposal system had to be installed deep into the ground so as to drain the wastewater into it. The effluent from the septic system was then drained into a "dry well" drilled deep into the earth. This was the prevalent method of on-site disposal in those days. The plan was to live in the basement for a couple of years until a house could be constructed on top of it. This did not happen until I had left home to attend college following high school. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

During that summer, Uncle Paul and Cousin Jack stayed with us on the farm while the house was being built. We set up the military truck bed with its canvas top behind the cabin and we boys all slept out there. We thought it was quite an adventure, although managing all of the details of cooking and caring for all of us under these rather primitive conditions was quite a job for my mother. We were all looking forward to the completion of the basement house very much, so that was a very high priority.

We went back to school in Madras again in September. I was in the seventh grade, Gary in the 4th. There were a lot more kids on the plains by then and we had many new acquaintances. We had a floor in the new house by now and the walls were nearly finished. This was to be the last winter in our small cabin and the last winter that we could really use the tractors pulling sleds over much of the land. Time passed quickly and before we knew it, we had celebrated Christmas, New Years and all our birthdays. Here we were in 1950. I was now 13 years old and pretty much full grown physically.

Acquiring the tools

A project that was completed that summer was a wooden grain storage building to give us the ability to store our grain on the farm. John and Hank Kollen, who farmed a few miles south of us, contracted to build it for us. This was completed in time for that summer's wheat harvest.

Dad bought our first flatbed truck for which we built sideboards to be used in hauling the wheat from the field to storage in bulk. At first, I was excited because I was to haul the wheat in and put it in storage. I soon learned that unloading a truck load of wheat with a scoop shovel was not all it was cracked up to be.

We bought a long, motorized auger that would reach through the door of the granary and reach almost to the middle of the building. It had a box built onto the lower end that the truck would back up to with the unload door centered above it. As the truck backed up to it, ramps were placed under the front wheels so that the front of the truck would rise as the truck backed into position. The door in the back of the truck was then opened and the wheat ran out into the auger. A good share of the wheat would run out of the truck by gravity, but a lot of it had to be pushed out from inside the truck. That was the hard part. I helped to unload many truckloads that year.

Early North Unit field irrigation set-up, on Rodman farm near Culver, 1946

A large portion of the land was planted to clover by now and Dad, Allen, and Phil each became owners of the first new CO-OP self-propelled combines on the project that year. Now we would not have to depend on our crops being custom harvested. We also purchased a stationary threshing machine that we would use to re-thresh the clover. That brought about another project that turned out to be very hard work.

We bought some four wheeled wagon frames from Sears and Roebuck that arrived in a disassembled state to the farm. We uncrated them and put them together piece by piece. Then wooden flat beds were built. These were about 8 ft. wide and 16 feet long. A plywood box was built to attach to the bed in which to haul clover straw from the fields into a stacking area behind the new granary. These boxes were about 8 ft tall and had solid side walls. The back consisted of two full height doors that swung open from the middle and back along the sides leaving the back totally open. The front had a half-wall from the bottom with the open upper half creating a large open window.

A large "dozer" was installed facing rear ward that had skids with chains attached. The chains extended out the back door. The wagon was pulled behind the combine as the clover was being threshed with the back of the combine extended through the open window dumping the straw inside the wagon. One person (often me) would ride inside the wagon and pitch the straw and chaff to the rear until the wagon became full.

Then the wagon was un-hooked from the combine and pulled by a tractor and positioned strategically in the stacking yard. The rear doors were then opened and the chains from the dozer were connected to another tractor. The wagon was then pulled forward which in effect pulled the dozer toward the rear of the wagon. This deposited the entire load on the ground. The dozer was then pushed by hand back to the front of the wagon, the doors closed, and the wagon returned to the field. By then the second wagon would be full and waiting to be pulled to the stack yard.

The job of riding inside the wagon while the clover was threshed was a mean one. The dust was terrible. We wore goggles and dust masks over our mouth and nose, but we inhaled a great deal of it. After harvest was over, we had a massive pile of clover straw to thresh.

Dad had purchased an "H" Farmall tractor from a farmer in Grass Valley and we bought a "High Lift" attachment for it. This was basically a large, high reach front end loader with forks instead of a bucket. This was used in the stacking area to lift and pile the straw into a high stack which would later be put through the stationary thresher.

The Farmall tractor had a side mounted pulley that provided power for the thresher. We put on a long wide drive belt that ran from the tractor pulley to a pulley on the side of the thresher. The thresher was placed up as close to the stack as possible and we used forks to pitch the straw and chaff into the elevator that carried the material up into the throat of the machine. It was moved occasionally as the stack became farther away. Being stationary, one could do a finer job of adjusting the sieves and blowers so that every seed that had been thrown over by the combine in the field could be captured. There wasn't a lot of seed but after a day of pitching straw, we would have a sack to take to town. At the price of the seed, it was well worth the effort.

Fun and friends

We worked hard, all of us. However, there was some time for recreation too. We discovered that the lateral was a good place to cool off in the hot afternoons. We were allowed to drive the little Ford tractor over to where the weirs were located. There was a 3x12 board across the ditch between the two weirs that made for a great diving platform. The water was about four feet deep in the pool between the weirs and this extended to the north down to where the check in the lateral backed the water up to create the weir pool.

On the other side of the check, the water dropped down a concrete slide about 6 feet into the bottom of the drop. We soon discovered how much fun it was to climb over the check boards and slide down into the pool at the bottom. The water was quite turbulent in that pool, and one had to be careful not to get trapped in the whirlpool. We became very good swimmers in that ditch, and it became a gathering place for all the neighborhood kids.

I remember when some of our neighborhood kids arrived on the scene. In the summer of '49, Dad and Gary and I were working on our ditch that ran to the west from the weir alongside the south side of the west 80. We had built a road alongside the ditch partly on our property, and partly on the neighbors'. This land belonged to the Simms Brothers farming company from Idaho, but we had heard that some other people had purchased it.

We heard a car, looked up and here came a Chevy with kids hanging out of windows all over the place. It was the Olson family who had bought the land adjoining ours to the south. That land was still in wheat stubble from that crop and the kids jumped out as soon as the car stopped and scattered in all directions. They had been cooped up in the car all day and needed to exercise. Louie, Margarite, Ron, Jodi, Steve, and Jeri became good friends and neighbors after they moved there that next year. Ron and I spent many years hanging out, hunting, hiking, double dating and playing sports. Eventually, he served as my Best Man at my wedding, but that is for later in this story.

The hard part is over

During the spring, our basement house was finished, and we moved in. What a relief to have indoor plumbing and real bedrooms. Even though our cabin had been warm and comfortable, we were all ecstatic over our new home. Mom and Dad were very happy to have their own room again.

All of our land was now leveled and prepared for water. The work was completed on the west 80 and we were looking forward to raising irrigated crops on the whole farm this year. We planted more clover varieties for seed and some alfalfa for hay. One variety of clover that I liked very much was named Kenland. Dad had a good contract to raise "breeders seed." This was a level of state certification that required that there be no weed seed in the crop.

Therefore, we learned how to "rogue" the fields. This meant that we walked up and down the rows watching for any weeds. When we found one, we dug it up by the roots and put it in a sack. All the weeds were carried out of the field to prevent any possibility of their contaminating the field by going ahead and making seed after they were dug up. The fields required inspection by the county agent to certify them weed free.

The red clover fields were very beautiful during blooming because of their crimson color. The entire field was covered in red blossoms that the bees and hummingbirds loved. When you walked out into fields in summer, you got used to being surrounded by the buzzing of large black and yellow bumble bees. In those days they were very numerous and did an excellent job of pollinating the blooms so that we had good seed set.

I also remember the huge numbers of hummingbirds. There were overhead power lines along the north side of the fields and there were so many hummingbirds roosting shoulder to shoulder on the wires that they appeared to be about 4 inches in diameter. They darted back and forth from wire to the blossoms in such numbers that the sound of their wings could be heard from a distance. Unfortunately, over the years, the use of pesticide to control the pests in the clover crops drastically

A modern big landplane in operation

The Great County Road-Renaming Episode 1951-3

by Jerry Ramsey

If you've spent any time driving on country roads through the farmlands in the middle of Jefferson County, say if your travels have taken you along Highway 26 across Agency Plains or southbound along Highway 97 east of Culver, you've probably noticed and maybe briefly wondered about the road-signs marking roads crossing your route.

Some of these road names are catchy, even fanciful and a little exotic, especially around Culver--Eureka, Jericho, Iris, Feather, Gem, Elbe, and so on. How did unassuming rural roads acquire names like Jericho, or Elbe (a river in Germany), anyway? As is so often the case with local history, the answer to the question about the origin of our road-names turns out to be more complicated and more revealing historically than you might think.

Placenames, as verbal markers of physical places on the land, are important items: they encapsulate local history, often pointing to stories worth knowing. The field of geography includes a branch of study known as "topology" (sometimes called "toponymics"), which concerns itself with places and their names; linguists also study this kind of material under the headings of "onomastics" and "topolinguistics." There is a very lively American Name Society, and in the UK, an English "Place-names Society."

American Indians have always understood the importance of local places and their distinctive names — the Western Apaches have a saying, "Wisdom sits in places," and their mental map of their rugged territory in Arizona is full of images and stories that remind the Apaches where they came from and how they should live their lives. Predictably (though not inevitably), the "discovery" of what was once Native America by Europeans and their successors has led to the wholesale replacement of Indian placenames by the names we now see on our maps — Portland, Salem, Phoenix and so on. How Washington State managed to retain its original Native placenames much more extensively than Oregon did — Seattle, Tacoma, Yakima, Spokane, Puyallup, Cle Elum, Enumclaw, Pysht — is an interesting puzzle; maybe, experiencing its main population growth later than Oregon, Washington's founders were able to think more carefully and farsightedly about the possible wisdom of preserving existing Indian names for their cities and counties.

A local example of what's at stake in re-naming the landscape has recently come to light in the Gray Butte hills east of Smith Rock State Park. Very prominent on the skyline above and northeast of the park area stands a solitary monolith, which locals have called (since the late nineteenth century) "Squaw Rock," because its outline suggests an Indian woman sitting in her robes. But the Northern Paiutes, who regularly visited the Smith Rock area for untold centuries, knew this landmark as *peawabe*, the old woman who sits looking east. For the Paiutes, the name conveyed a haunting story: the woman's sons once went hunting over east, but they never came back, and so she sits, looking eastward. The twenty-first century "recovery" of *peawabe* and her story is good news, but knowing it, it's hard not to regret how much we've lost, through our re-naming zeal, of "the wisdom that sits in places." (Personal communication to JR on August 29, 2020 from Wilson Wewa, Paiute historian and author of *Northern Paiute Tales*. Corvallis: Oregon State U. Press, 2018.)

Squaw Rock, aka Peawabe

But let's return to our search for the real story about the origins of the present-day names for Jefferson County road names. Prineville historian Steve Lent provides

a crucial set of clues in his indispensable (and alas out-of-print) book on Jefferson County place names. In many of his entries on roads in the county, he indicates that as the area that in 1914 became its own county grew and its road system developed, most of them did acquire names, usually those of nearby families. He gives many of these earlier names, sometimes adding a brief explanation as to how they were supplanted in the early 1950s.

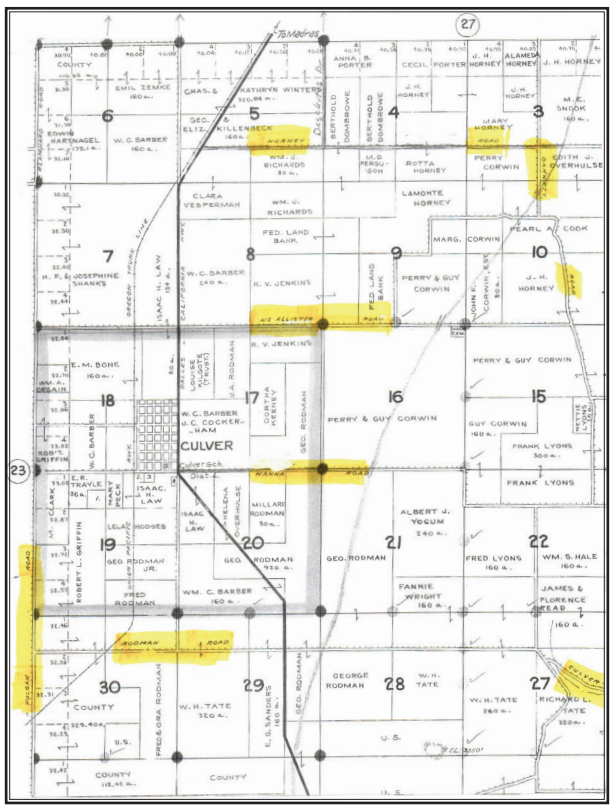
For example, this entry for today's Ivy Lane (on the north end of Agency Plains): "The road was originally named 'Klann Road.' Charles and Anna Klann were among the earliest settlers on Agency Plains coming to the region in 1903 . . . Unfortunately from a historical perspective most of the early roads were re-named by the county in an effort to simplify road identification, and were named alphabetically with the east-west roads on Agency Plains being named for trees . . . . 'Klann Road' became a historical memory." [Steve Lent, *Central Oregon Place Names. Vol. 2, Jefferson County*. Bend: Maverick Publications, 2008, p. 123.]

We come closer to the full re-naming story, and specifically learn who was in charge of the project, in two articles in the Madras *Pioneer,* the first on November 29, 1951. On page one of that issue, the *Pioneer* reported that a committee of local farmers had been established by the board of the North Unit Irrigation District for the purpose of re-naming the roads in the NUID. The members of the committee represented the Farm Bureau, the Farmers Union, and the Mud Springs Grange. Chairman of the committee was Glenn Dowers of the Agency Plains Farm Bureau; other members were John Clemens of the Metolius Farm Bureau; Homer Earnest, Mud Springs Grange; Perry Henderson, Farmers Union; Kenneth Green, Agency Plains Farm Bureau; and Art Carlson, Agency Plains Farm Bureau.

Chairman Dowers explained that the naming would proceed alphabetically, with the Main Street of Madras (today's Fifth) and Ashwood Road as north-south and east-west baselines respectively. Roads running east and west would be called "lanes," and named after trees; those running north-south would be called "drives," and be named after rivers. Dowers added that "the naming committee would be seeking public input on the project, and that the final choice of a name for a road will be determined by persons living on the road, the only requirement being that the name chosen must fit the alphabetical scheme."

The *Pioneer* does not report further progress on the work of the committee until August 12, 1953, when this page one headline appeared: "Major North Unit Project Roads Named." The article notes that three new members had been added to the original team: George Clowers of Agency Plains, Emil Henske of Metolius, and newly arrived county agent Jay Binder as committee secretary. And the naming scheme seems to have been altered along the way. Now it used Madras as a dividing line (no mention of Ashwood Road as the other baseline),

Intersection of Boise Drive and Ivy Lane (once 'Klann Road')



Pre-WWII County Map of Culver area, showing 'Rodman Road' and other original road names (highlighted)

with roads to the east named after famous men, those to the north after trees, and roads to the south being given "miscellaneous" names. According to Dowers, the State Highway Department (now ODOT) would begin to erect road signs "later this year."

Taking the two articles together, we can begin to see not only how the re-naming committee did their work in 1951-3, but also the basis of their authority for re-naming the county map. Lent is wrong in claiming that it was authorized and sponsored by the Jefferson County Court, nor does it seem to have operated under a mandate from the State of Oregon. One would have thought (as Lent probably did) that such a project, involving county roads, would have been instigated or at least officially sanctioned by the county court — but not so. Likewise, there is no evidence that the State of Oregon was officially involved — except ex post facto with the erection of the road signs, as noted above. Instead, the re-naming committee was evidently created and empowered by the board of the North Unit Irrigation District, then as now a powerful entity in local government affairs, but officially only in terms of irrigated farming and use of NUID water on lands within the district. The NUID then as now comprises about 58,000 acres; the roads being re-named traverse a lot more of the county than that. It might be wondered if maybe the NUID's federal parent the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation might have mandated or at least suggested such a project, but there seems to be no evidence of such a bureau policy, either here or in other irrigation districts. And the fact that soon after the committee was created the NUID formally began to transition to administrative independence as a bureau-sanctioned irrigation district, makes it unlikely that "Reclamation" would have imposed such a task on the NUID.

Likewise, there's no evidence of a directive from the State of Oregon — although the *Pioneer* article for March 4, 1954 does note that, in addition to the installation of road signs, the State Highway Department (now ODOT), was planning to draw up a new official Jefferson County map, "including names and locations for all county roads."

So we're left with the conclusion that the North Unit Board of Directors took upon itself in 1951 the considerable task of re-naming all the roads in its district and the country around it. Why would the board have decided to do this, and under what warrant? If we could somehow interview Chairman Dowers or his committee-mates on their intentions and assumptions back then, no doubt we would find answers — but seventy years later we're forced to follow what might be called "informed speculation."

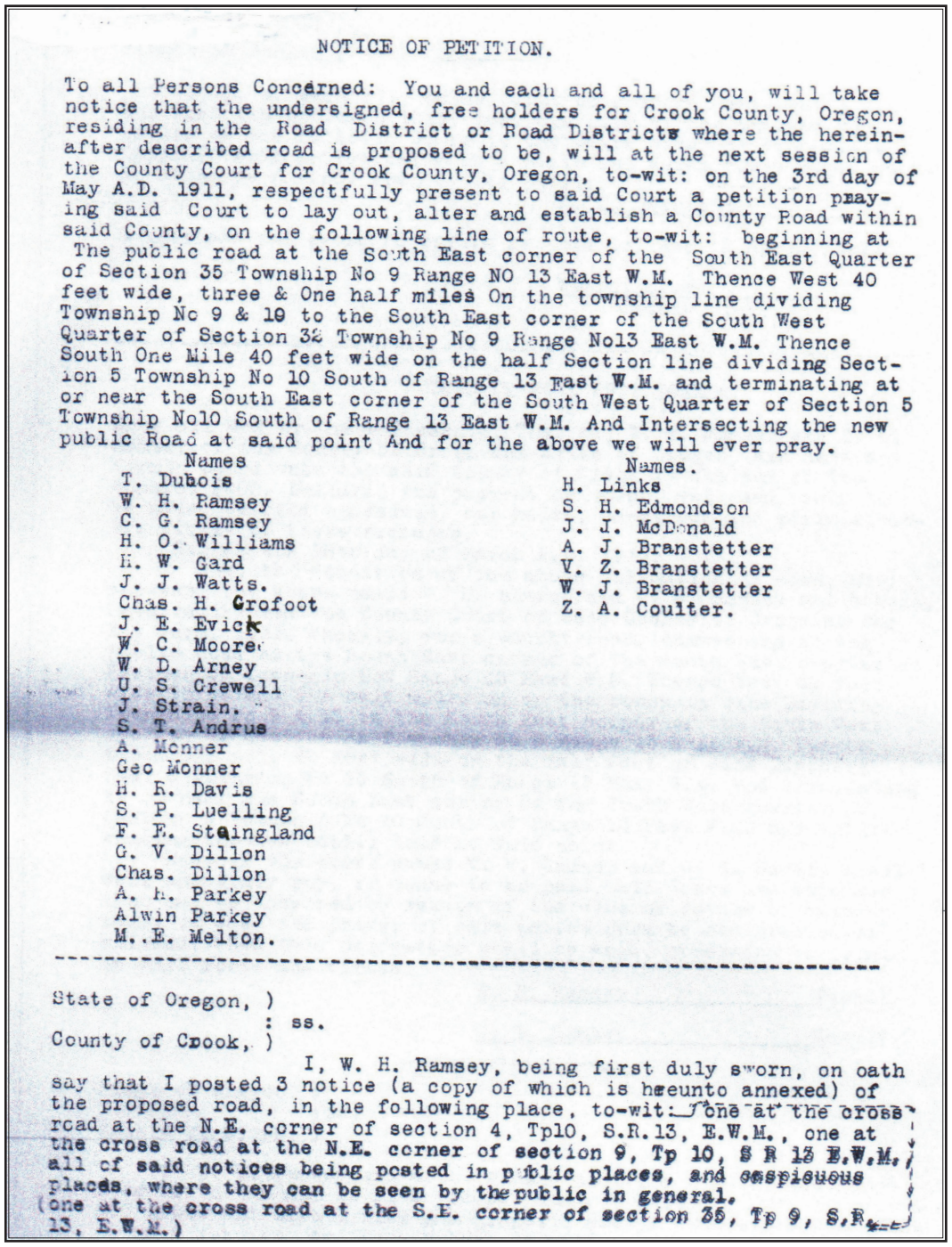
In 1951, then, the North Unit was really coming into its own as a local force, still welcoming new farmers, and their families from the Oregon/Idaho border and the Malin/Tulelake country, and, as already noted, it was getting a measure of autonomy from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. There had truly been a lot of shaking and moving

in and around the NUID since the water arrived in 1946, with the landscape itself transformed, new and amazingly lucrative crops discovered (Ladino clover, for example), and new and assertive leadership emerging from the farm sectors of the community, especially from the Farmers Union and the Farm Bureau. For the newcomers, it's easy to imagine that the old roads in the district and their quaint homestead-era names were confusing and off-putting, especially so because road-signs per se were virtually non-existent. "And where on (say) 'Klann Road' does so-and-so live — and how, by the way, do we get to 'Klann Road?'" The actual numbering of rural residences road by road didn't come about until the 1970s, as required by the statewide 9-1-1 emergency system and by new federal postal regulations, but when these changes came, they were based on the new names, as manifested in the 1950s by the road signs provided by the State Highway Department.

One wonders if some member of the re-naming committee had previously lived in a utopian farming district where all the roads were clearly named and signed according to a logical system that even a stranger could follow. Or that such a notion first came up in a meeting of the Farmers Union, or the Farm Bureau? And it's easy to imagine enthusiasm for the project growing in the committee and the farm organizations represented by its members — "Look here, we're literally re-mapping the geography and the future of our county! Travelers on our roads will benefit accordingly, business will be enhanced — and all without spending any county or state money! Time for new names, and new ideas! The North Unit is making history on the land — on with the future!"

No doubt the re-namers had the best of intentions, but the evidence does suggest that their ambitious reach exceeded their grasp of what they were trying to do. Proceeding on their own without official sanctions from the county court does seem imprudent, for example. It's a fact that Jefferson County was over-extended administratively and financially in those early days of the irrigation revolution here, and the county court may well have been glad to let the project go forward on its own way, ad hoc — but on the other hand, there was a capable county road department which might have been helpfully enlisted to help with the project, but apparently was not. And, inasmuch as the roads involved covered much of the settled parts of the county, and many of them extended well beyond the boundaries of the NUID, the court's official jurisdiction and "advise-and-consent" should have been required and obtained.

In the original guidelines announced in November 1951, it was promised that the committee members would be seeking public input, and that final say on road-name selections would be left to residents along the roads. Did either process ever actually take place? There is no direct evidence that it did; on



NOTICE OF PETITION.

To all Persons Concerned: You and each and all of you, will take notice that the undersigned, free holders for Crook County, Oregon, residing in the Road District or Road Districts where the hereinafter described road is proposed to be, will at the next session of the County Court for Crook County, Oregon, to-wit: on the 3rd day of May A.D. 1911, respectfully present to said Court a petition praying said Court to lay out, alter and establish a County Road within said County, on the following line of route, to-wit: beginning at The public road at the South East corner of the South East Quarter of Section 35 Township No 9 Range NO 13 East W.M. Thence West 40 feet wide, three & One half miles On the township line dividing Township No 9 & 10 to the South East corner of the South West Quarter of Section 32 Township No 9 Range No13 East W.M. Thence South One Mile 40 feet wide on the half Section line dividing Section 5 Township No 10 South of Range 13 East W.M. and terminating at or near the South East corner of the South West Quarter of Section 5 Township No10 South of Range 13 East W.M. And Intersecting the new public Road at said point And for the above we will ever pray.

Names	Names.
T. Dubois	H. Links
W. H. Ramsey	S. H. Edmondson
C. G. Ramsey	J. J. McDonald
H. O. Williams	A. J. Branstetter
H. W. Gard	V. Z. Branstetter
J. J. Watts.	W. J. Branstetter
Chas. H. Crofoot	Z. A. Coulter.
J. E. Evick	
W. C. Moore	
W. D. Arney	
U. S. Crewell	
J. Strain.	
S. T. Andrus	
A. Monner	
Geo Monner	
H. R. Davis	
S. P. Luelling	
F. E. Staingland	
G. V. Dillon	
Chas. Dillon	
A. H. Parkey	
Alwin Parkey	
M..E. Melton.	

State of Oregon,)
: ss.
County of Crook,)

I, W. H. Ramsey, being first duly sworn, on oath say that I posted 3 notice (a copy of which is hereunto annexed) of the proposed road, in the following place, to-wit: one at the cross road at the N.E. corner of section 4, Tp10, S.R.13, E.W.M., one at the cross road at the N.E. corner of section 9, Tp 10, S R 13 E.W.M., all of said notices being posted in public places, and conspicuous places, where they can be seen by the public in general. (one at the cross road at the S.E. corner of section 35, Tp 9, S.R. 13, E.W.M.)

1911 Road Petition to Crook County Court (the road eventually was named Hickory Lane.

the other hand, I recall some old-time families who were angry when the outcome of the naming was announced, and it's doubtful that they had been given the chance to express their views while the project was in progress, or that they were able to vote on the new names along their roads. (Later, when the emergency and postal address re-naming and re-numbering was under way, there was vocal criticism of that operation — but at least it had the services of a local lawyer, John "Jack" Chinnock.)

Then there is the elaborate naming system itself, as announced in 1951 and revised in 1953, with "drives" running N and S, and "lanes" running E and W, all names in alphabetical order, and so on. Sounds logical enough, if maybe a little fussy, especially for roads traversing a territory that was wholly rural, not urban, and likely to remain so. It led to some interesting choices: Boise Drive, for example — apparently honoring the Boise River, a tributary of the Snake River in Idaho, but inevitably highlighting the capital of that state. And Ivy Lane: ivy is not a tree. Likewise, Danube and Columbia drives represent rivers, but what about Adams? Again, the 1953 report indicates a revision of the system, at least as it applied to Agency Plains, whereby roads east of the Main Street baseline would be named after famous men. So, does Adams Drive (which runs well south of Madras) owe its name to John Adams, or maybe John Quincy? But the next north-south road to the east of Adams, down in the Paxton-Mud Springs area, is Clark — maybe after Meriwether Lewis's partner? But where is there a B-named drive here between Adams and Clark? (And nowadays we might ask why the fund of names for these drives was limited to famous MEN?)

On south and into Metolius and Culver country, much of the original naming system seems to fall apart, at least as laid down in 1951. The east-west "lanes" intersecting Highway 97 are at least alphabetized, so southbound on 97 you encounter, in order, Dover, Eureka, Ford, Franklin, Gem, Highland, and so on — but what is the basis for these names, if not trees? As for north-south-running "drives" in this area, the river-names of the original system IS followed, for the most part: Bear (apparently after a river in the southeast corner of Idaho?), Clackamas, Danube, Elbe, and (east of Culver) Feather (possibly after a California river north of Sacramento?) But around Culver, a current Metsker or Pittmon map shows McKenzie Lane (not Drive, although it runs N-S?), Macy Lane and Starnes Road (both apparently named for early irrigation-era families), and elsewhere here, Imbler Road, Colfax Lane, (towns in Oregon and Washington respectively) and other anomalous namings. What happened to the system?

There's a clue in the re-naming committee's 1953 final report. "Roads to the south [apparently south of Madras] have been given miscellaneous names." Does "miscellaneous" mean "random, ad lib?" And perhaps there's a more signifying clue in the simple fact that in both the 1951 and 1953 committee rosters there seems to have been no members from the Culver area, and no mention of either Farm Bureau or Farmers Union involvement from there. Did no Culverites volunteer, or agree to serve? Why not? Does the cryptic "miscellaneous names" indicate that the independent folks in the south half of the North Unit Irrigation District declined to join up and buy into the original naming scheme, and instead ended up devising their own road names, following more or less the N-S/rivers plan, but making their own very miscellaneous choices for the E-W roads/"lanes?" If so, did *they* seek input from their neighbors, per the NUID plan, and poll the residents on their roads about the new names to be assigned?

We may never obtain the answers, but somehow in 1953 a master list of new road names *was* compiled by the Dowers committee and disseminated (to whom?), and so our county's maps were revised accordingly — not nearly as clear, logical, and "self-guiding" as the namers must have hoped, but after nearly three-quarters of a century their work has become familiar, usable, and the basis of our rural addresses.

NOT a Jefferson County road sign — somewhere south of Bend, 1920s

That said in fairness to the outcome, it also needs to be said that the namers seem to have proceeded with little or no regard for documented local history, and consequently their list of new names for our roads resulted in a net loss of local geographical and historical knowledge. The fact is that most of the ways and byways they re-invented *did* once have official names in customary use here, most of them for forty years or more. They must have known this — any county map from the '30s and '40s will illustrate the point. To be sure, the original names were not alphabetized as to their locations or labeled according to their E-W or N-S orientations, and most of them were simply the names of early families whose homesteads were along the roads when they were laid out and built. Some of these names had fallen into disuse by 1951 — for example, in the 1940s most of us on Agency Plains didn't call what became Columbia Drive by its original name, Melton Road, but just referred to it as "the Market Road." Mr. Melton was an early farmer along the road, but left the country early on, and his name dropped out of customary use and memory. Likewise, Boise Drive was as late as the end of the 1940s called Stangland Road after one of its original homesteaders, Frank Stangland (a county commissioner in the '30s and '40s).

The work of historians, local and otherwise, is in part a collective struggle against forgetting important things, and Frank Stangland at least is "on the record" and so officially remembered for his services to Jefferson County. But in some cases, the replacement of old family names by made-up names on our maps and road signs *was* in fact a real loss and disservice to local history. As you drive south along modern Highway 97 past Highland and Iris, you come, not far from the northeast flank of Juniper Butte, to Jericho Lane. A catchy, Biblical name, however it was chosen — but originally it was known as Rodman Road. The Rodman family included some of the earliest settlers in the Haystack-Culver country, as far back as the 1880s; the public celebration of the opening of the North Unit Project in May 1946 took place on land homesteaded by George Rodman. Probably he was one of the petitioners to the Crook County Court (this would have been well before the creation of Jefferson County in 1914) to officially establish and improve the road for public travel. This was how our early roads were officially created, and often the name of the lead petitioner was duly applied to the roadway being recognized. Typically, the petitioners and their neighbors actually performed the initial rough work along the right-of-way; as the county's road-system expanded, citizens could undertake to do day-labor on improving and maintaining the system as a way of reducing their county taxes!

Going on south over the southeast flank of Juniper Butte, just as the highway descends to level ground (once "Opal City Plains"), you come to the next east-west intersection with 97: the sign reads "Monroe Lane." No one now seems to know for whom or why the name was selected. There was for years a prominent Monroe family in the county, but their territory was mainly around Grizzly. Originally, until 1953, this road was known and listed on maps as "Barber Road," presumably after W.C. "Bill" Barber, who homesteaded around 1900 on the southwest outskirts of Juniper Butte, in a district that became known as "Yamhill Flat" because so many of its settlers, including Bill Barber (and his boyhood pal, my grandfather Joe Mendenhall), came from Yamhill County. Barber is generally (and rightly) recognized as the "father of Culver," and he was the leader of Culver's energetic but unsuccessful campaign in 1915-17 to make the town's temporary status as county seat permanent, against the claims of Madras. His son, Rex Barber, grew up in Culver and became one of the premier aviation heroes of WWII, as an "ace" in the South Pacific, and the flyer who shot down Japanese Admiral Yamamoto, the architect of the attack on Pearl Harbor. After retiring from the Air Force, Rex Barber returned to Culver, and served as mayor.

Did our road re-namers reflect on whether arbitrarily substituting "Jericho" and "Monroe" for "Rodman" and "Barber" would in effect diminish local historical awareness? One might now ask why the county historical society didn't oppose such transactions when they were announced—but in fact the society wasn't organized until 1974. (Maybe now it could follow up Steve Lent's lead and compile for the historical record a comprehensive list of the original names of county roads, and their stories--?)

How the outcome might have been different here can be seen by driving through Crook County toward Prineville, say along Highway 26 from Grizzly, or from the north off the "A-Y Road" south. The names on the side-road signs seem like an unalphabetized but colorful index of Crook County history—McCoin Road, Grimes Road, Gulliford Road, McKay Road, Huston Road, Ben Jones Road, McNeeley Road . . . . Along the way, new and obviously made-up names also appear, as necessitated by the county's growth and development—but the older names seem to have been respected, and preserved, in Crook County.

In sum: considering the road-naming episode in Jefferson County through the hindsight of 70 years, it would be pointless now to call for a commission of some sort to review and again re-name our roads along historical lines. What was done in 1951-3 was in many respects slapdash, historically uninformed, and unaccountable. Nonetheless, it has become through long usage the basis of our addresses on the land, indeed of our local habits of travel. But it should serve now and hereafter as a compelling object lesson for one of the primary values of knowing local history: to help our apostles of change and progress, whatever project they decide to take up, to keep faith with the past.

SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

For help and advice on this article, many thanks to Jerry Green, Delores Snyder Vincent, Gary Harris, Dean Brooks, Rev. Janet Farrell, and Gary DeJarnett, Jefferson County Surveyor.

1941 "Atlas" of Jefferson County, Oregon

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Wilson Wewa, personal communication with author, August 29, 2020. For Northern Paiute names and lore in the Smith Rock area, see Wewa's book, *Legends of the Northern Paiutes.* Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2017.

"Culver," entry in *The Oregon Encyclopedia* (online).

— Campbell's Corner —

5th Annual Threshing Bee

By Jennie Smith

David Campbell, board member of JCHS, reports another successful threshing bee. The 5th Annual Threshing Bee was held in August of this year. David stated that due to the help of a wonderful group of volunteers, some historical society board members, the Mike McIntosh family and their team of draft horses, and the Early Day Gas Engine & Tractor group of Central Oregon, the event ran smoothly.

The wheat field was cut and bundled in the morning by the team of McIntosh horses and their antique binder. David's Model T pickup was in constant use hauling bundles of wheat from the field to the thresher. All the wheat was threshed by the early afternoon, and then it was time for a bit of play as those that brought homemade "get-'er-done" tractors had a tractor parade and drag races.

The area under the shade trees of the old homestead house and sheds was used for setting up wonderful displays from the Early Day Gas Engine and Tractor group and for the threshing machine and baler. On such a hot day it was nice to have the shade to work under. One of the "hit and miss" engine owners had a mister which was run by his old engine and perfect for cooling off.

Lunch was available for a small donation and included various meat sandwiches, chips and a beverage. Water was also available and kept cold with coolers and ice.

Everyone hopes that there will be enough moisture next year to hold the 6th Annual Threshing Bee. The north field, which has been in summer fallow, will be worked and planted from this year's wheat crop. The south field will then be put into summer fallow for the year 2023.

With the help of volunteers, the JC fairground staff, and Jefferson County, the fields have been cleaned up, rocks removed and weed control put in place. The goal is to continue the Jefferson County Historical Society Threshing Bee for years to come.

Old Homestead House and Sheds Update

The next step for restoration of the homestead house is to put a lean-to on the north end of the house. Plans have been drawn up and David and his team will be meeting to discuss and begin work. The roof work has been contracted out and hopefully soon, weather permitting, we will see the donated metal roofing in place. Siding will be purchased through the City of Madras Community Project Grant awarded this year, for the shed that was put in place 2020.

The Homestead House and the sheds were open during the fair for everyone interested to see. Plaques are planned for pieces of equipment in the sheds. They will have information on them noting what the equipment is and how it was used.

Threshing Bee, 2021


Horse-drawn reaper-binder harvesting Sonora wheat — operated by Mike McIntosh


2021 threshing in action


'Bringing in the sheaves' — with a Model T Truck


Harvest lunch

— BOOK REVIEW —

by Jerry Ramsey

***Marcy Cottrell Houle, A Generous Nature: Lives Transformed by Oregon*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2019. 217 pp.; $22.95.**

A Generous Nature is a very readable book, profiling twenty contemporary Oregonians who in different regions of our state have undertaken to protect and conserve natural treasures here that were in jeopardy — rivers, city parks, coastal headlands, old-growth timberland, and so on. It's a book celebrating unassuming people who found themselves inspired to take action in the face of dire threats to parts of Oregon that they loved and who, against the odds, succeeded.

The author's hope for the book is that its stories of environmental intervention will inspire readers accordingly. As she says in her introduction, "[It] is easy to take for granted that the things we cherish will stay the same and always persist . . .. They won't. Not unless someone steps up to care. That's why the stories of people who devoted their lives to protecting a place they love matters. Newcomers and longtime residents alike need to know them . . .." (p.2)

It's commendable that the Jefferson County Library has chosen *A Generous Nature* as the designated book for its 2021 Community Read, with the author in attendance — originally scheduled for Sept. 30-Oct. 1, but the latest COVID surge has necessitated rescheduling the program, so stay tuned. In the meantime, you can get hold of this book and read it!

Houle's subjects range across the state and are as diverse in their origins as Oregon's population. Neil Maine, for example came here with his hardscrabble family from Nebraska, grew up along the Coast, became a biology teacher — and ended up leading the campaign to create the "North Coast Land Conservancy," which has preserved 29 square miles of North Coast headlands and rainforest for posterity.

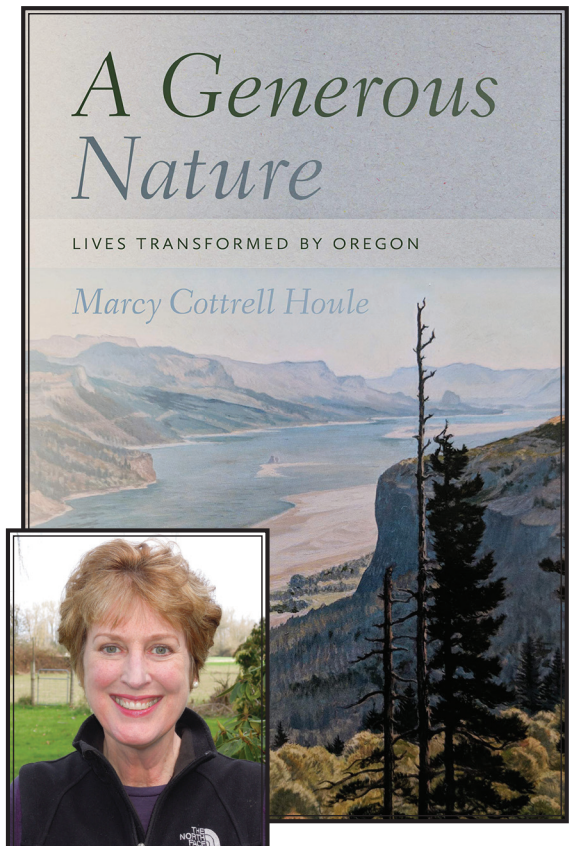
Probably most readers will meet Neil Maine and his noble cause here for the first time; likewise Harney County rancher Jack Southworth, whose leadership of the "High Desert Partnership" (founded in 2005) has been a primary unifying force in the troubled Burns country in recent years. Along with highlighting such local heroes, Houle adroitly intermixes them with profiles of widely known Oregon environmental activists, like Tom McAllister, long-time outdoors writer for the *Oregonian*, and Henry Richmond, the founder of 1000 Friends of Oregon, and chief legal and political defender of Senate Bill 100, which established the controversial Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) that played a role in Oregon's fierce "land-use" battles in the 1990-2010 era. (It's odd that in her otherwise careful summary of Richmond's remarkable career and its legacy, she doesn't mention the state-wide battles over Measure 37 and its successor Measure 49, both red-hot topics here in Jefferson County and around the state fifteen years ago, especially for farmers and would-be developers.)

Touching on Central Oregon, Houle tells how state senator Betsy Johnson (a native of Redmond, and the daughter of local philanthropists and activists Sam and Becky Johnson) joined with her family to donate the magnificent springs at the base of Black Butte that are the headwaters of the Metolius River to the U.S. Forest Service for everyone to enjoy. In the same spirit, Johnson has persisted since then in opposing efforts to develop properties in the Metolius River basin (mostly in Jefferson County), including two such projects in the last decade.

As it happens, Betsy Johnson is the only Central Oregon figure profiled in *A Gentle Nature*. Although no book like this one can be all-inclusive, it's worth pointing out that that there ARE other "environmental heroes" at work in our region, plenty of them, and one wonders why the author hasn't included profiles of one or more of *them*. For example, there's Brad Chalfant, whose tireless and capable leadership of the Deschutes Land Trust was instrumental in the preservation and reclamation of Camp Polk Meadows and Whychus (once "Squaw") Creek, and the DLT's recent acquisition of the historic Friday Ranch on Trout Creek.

And certainly Gail Achterman, Director and guiding spirit of the Deschutes River Conservancy for many years, deserves notice in a book like this. A Portland lawyer and outdoorswoman, her leadership of the conservancy involved a genius for bringing diverse people together around a table and keeping them there until they found common cause and agreed on important conservation measures and got them enacted. Achterman died in 2012, but her admiring protégés are still following her example on behalf of our rivers and the lands they run through — exactly what Houle hopes to encourage in her book.

One other critical suggestion about *A Gentle Nature*. It is, as the author wants it to be, a compelling love song to our state's natural blessings, and to those idealistic spirits who have risen or are rising to the occasion of protecting those blessings for posterity. So wouldn't it have been worthwhile to devote an extra chapter, maybe at the beginning, to a consideration of what (and who) persistently threatens those fragile blessings — as vividly dramatized in the struggles of her twenty environmental champions? It needn't be a lengthy list, for Oregon or any other state: timber companies (especially in the recent past, but the threat persists) like those who imposed clear-cutting on our timber-lands; developers intent on commodifying natural assets-for-all; merchant-power entrepreneurs like the Cogentrix Corporation and others who in the energy craze leading up to the fall of ENRON swarmed into Oregon in the early 2000s, trying to exploit the state's simplistic energy policies and regulations (still in effect!); the "Sagebrush Rebellion" forces who want to privatize (and exploit) public lands; and — a late but important addition to such a list — environmental extremists, often organized as legalistic entities like the "Center for Biological Diversity," whose lawyers and legal tactics have lately (as with Central Oregon's current irrigation crisis) made it increasingly difficult for real-world negotiations on environmental issues to be conducted, let alone lead to workable settlements. Such a list would serve to prepare readers of this book to better appreciate why and how keeping Oregon OREGON is a steep and ongoing challenge, and why the twenty good citizens profiled here are so exemplary for the rest of us.



There should be some lively discussions in this year's Jefferson County "Community Read" program, thanks to this book!

One Last Recipe . . .

One of the oddest consequences of our "Foodie Local History" issue (AGATE 15) was the discovery by Sophia Ramsey (Jerry and Dorothy's younger daughter) of a recipe from long ago and far away involving *rabbit*. Sophia was looking through the pantry at the old Tom Power homestead house at the Ramseys' Sky Ranch place under Blizzard Ridge, and unearthed the following recipe, tucked in a 1920s pamphlet on evaporated milk, and written in pencil almost certainly by Tom Power himself in the '20s or earlier. (Tom came from Newfoundland and homesteaded his place in 1909; he served during WWII and into the early '50s as Jefferson County Judge.) "Hasenpfeffer" means "rabbit stew" in German. Whoever scribbled the recipe wrote "Try this!" — did he mean with jackrabbits?!

"Hasenpfeffer" German Recipe for cooking Rabbit.

"Hash up bacon and fry brown. Cut rabbit up and roll in flour with bacon, put in pan with a cup of vinegar for one good sized rabbit. Season with whole allspice and plenty of salt and pepper. Fry the rabbit brown, then put in sufficient water for basting and then add vinegar. Also put in a little onion. Try this!

--If you haven't the bacon use lard.

NOTE ON THE RECOVERY OF JCHS WEBSITE

If you've wondered lately (and quite a few folks have inquired) what has happened to the historical society website at www.jeffcohistorical.org there's good news to report — it's back online!

Our site was disabled in early 2020 by multiple hackings (why would anybody want to hack a historical society website?), and other glitches brought it down altogether earlier this year. But expert rescue work by Elise Michaels of Elise Michaels Media, generously assisted by Brian Crow, successfully unscrambled the site's snarls and tangles — and we are hoping that, under new professional management, it will fly securely and effectively hereafter.

We'll be updating its special links — current and upcoming JCHS events and news, the continuing archive of all issues of THE AGATE to date, a gallery of historic Jefferson County photos, and an audio selection of local yarns and stories as told by old-timers in our "Voices of Experience" recording series. We hope you'll re-acquire the habit of consulting the website — and if you have criticisms and suggestions, or questions, please let us know, by going to the contact link.

JCHS website is back on-line!"

THE JCHS MUSEUM, THEN AND NOW

Children's Display in the Old Museum, 2012

Museum artifacts stored in Westside School, September 2021"

President's Message

Dear Agate readers and history enthusiasts,

First off, I want to thank you all for supporting the historical society by reading *The Agate*. This little magazine has really been a shining light for us during the last year and a half. I don't know if we can thank all the contributors enough for writing the wonderful stories in each issue.

This year has brought ups and downs for the historical society, with tours of the homestead and schoolhouse during this year's fair and to the success of threshing bee in August. We all felt that life would get back to normal and then we had to cancel the annual meeting in September. We did this after much deliberation and ultimately decided it was the best decision for our membership.

Please enjoy the stories and tales in this issue of *The Agate*. For those of you who have not joined the historical society, please take a moment and fill out the membership form on the back of this issue. We would be ever so grateful.

Please be safe and keep Jefferson County's history alive.

Lottie Holcomb
President
Jefferson County Historical Society

JCHS President Lottie Holcomb

At our last history pub before the pandemic (at Klanns' Mecca Grade Estate in late February 2020), we premiered a new JCHS contribution to local history — a 30-minute video feature combining a rare audio recording of the May 1946 celebration of the official opening of the North Unit Irrigation District and relevant historical photos from the JCHS archives. The audience response at Klanns' that night was very enthusiastic, and we have proceeded — with expert technical help from George Klos — to make up copies of the DVD, titled "First Water."

We'll have them for sale at $10 each at our next public events, hopefully another history pub later this year, and certainly at the Annual Dinner next April. "First Water" is, we think (immodestly), a worthy record of one of the great moments in our county's history — and it would make a great gift for local history buffs!

New JCHS Members March 13, 2021 – September 13, 2021:

Robley Evans
Mike Chamness
Laurie Sensibaugh
Dennis and Joni Hopper
Dean and Kathy Morrow

Donations and Memorial Gifts to the Society since September 1, 2020:

Money Donations:

Greta Pruitt

Marilyn Fiscuss

Barbara Lokting

Memorial Gifts:

In Memory of Loyd Vincent
Jerry and Dorothy Ramsey

In Memory of Irene Conroy
Jerry and Dorothy Ramsey

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JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 647, Madras, Oregon 97741

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PLEASE JOIN US!

Jefferson County Historical Society
Box 647, Madras, Oregon 97741
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MEMBERSHIP DUES 2021:
(Individual: $25 Family: $50 Patron: $150 Benefactor: $500)

Name:_____

Address:_____

City:_____ State:_____ Zip:_____

Phone:_____

Email:_____

Membership (please check box):

☐ New ☐ Renewal ☐ Individual

☐ Family ☐ Patron ☐ Benefactor

(Make check out to JCHS; mail to address at left)

☐ Yes, I'm interested in becoming a History Volunteer

☐ Yes, I would like to make a donation to the JCHS (the Society is a registered non-profit organization; donations and gifts to it are tax-deductible)

☐ I have artifacts, photos, written material I would like to donate to the JCHS Museum