

THE AGATE

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY • SPRING 2023

**When Disney
came to town**

**Tom Power:
Jefferson County
homesteader
and county judge**

**Dean of rodeo
photographers:
profile on
DeVere Helfrich**

**Demise of
'Whistling'
Smith in John
Brown Canyon**

**Importance of
history; new
push for a
museum**



WELCOME, READERS —

WELCOME TO AGATE XIX!

We're back with a new issue — along with the springtime arrival of the yellowbells in the sagebrush and the songbirds — with a cargo of well-researched articles on local history, and important news of Jefferson County Historical Society events and plans:

- Memories of Disney Studios' filming of Tonka on the Warm Springs Reservation back in 1958 are still alive hereabouts, but Jane Ahern's lead article is a rich harvest of those memories and forgotten details, and probably stands as the definitive history of a momentous encounter between Hollywood and Jefferson County;
- We're pleased to offer, for serious local history buffs, probably the first published bibliography of sources for researching Jefferson County and Central Oregon history;
- Profiles of county native son DeVere Helfrich and his illustrious career as "the Dean of Rodeo Photographers" and of longtime county judge Tom Power;
- Tom Manning's inspiring account of planning for a new museum, and why local history matters so much now;
- And much more — pull up a chair and enjoy the issue!

We take pleasure in noting that Warm Springs elder and author George Aguilar Jr. (Oregon Book Award-winner for *When the River Ran Wild!* and AGATE contributor) has recently been honored by American Warriors.com as the last Korean War veteran of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation. The featured interview with George



begins: "In this episode he shares a proud heritage of Native Americans serving in the armed forces as well as a fresh perspective on cultural identity in the light of historical tradition..."

In line with Jeff Scheetz's article in AGATE XVIII on early "hydraulic" ventures on Crooked River adjacent to today's Crooked River Ranch, a group of CRR residents are mobilizing to gather, organize, and preserve the history of the ranch and its locale, and THE AGATE is glad to publish here the following appeal from them for support for their important venture:

Crooked River Ranch History Committee Makes Progress

Last fall several CRR residents met to discuss forming a committee to identify, catalogue, and preserve the historical resources associated with Crooked River Ranch and the surrounding area.

After several meetings, we have outlined tasks and procedures to accomplish our goals. We have organized ourselves into subcommittees with specific tasks and priorities. Our mission is "To identify, preserve, and protect the historical resources of Crooked River Ranch and the surrounding area focused from 1900 to the present." Also essential to our mission is to provide public access to this historical information via a database on the internet.

Another important goal is to preserve oral history, the memories of longtime residents of this area. We invite anyone having knowledge of our community's past to share their remembrances with us.

The plan is to start reading historical documents, and extracting relevant data that will be stored in the database that is currently being developed.

We welcome anyone interested and willing to participate in helping us achieve our goals or anyone wishing to contribute to the historical record of our community to please contact us.

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Cover:

Tonka Movie Poster

Disney Studios



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The mission of the Society is to research, gather and preserve the history of Jefferson County and Central Oregon for public education through the display of artifacts and archives.

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WHEN DISNEY CAME TO TOWN IN 1958

By Jane Ahern

It is bedlam on a July-dry, high-desert hillside. Dust clouds the air, kicked up by cavalrymen who mill around on horses before beginning to dismount, kneel, and fire their weapons. The noise is overwhelming as leaders shout orders above the sounds of hoofbeats, bugle, gunshots and war whoops and the riderless horses are driven up the hill.

Amid the commotion, a young man in uniform runs, crouching, across the lower third of the screen from left to right and throws himself onto the ground to shoot from prone position. Then the camera angle changes and Gary Clowers' 15 seconds of fame is over.

Clowers, now 83, was 18 years old and fresh out of high school in 1958 when Walt Disney came to Central Oregon to film its movie, *Tonka*. Like many of his peers, both White and Native American, Clowers jumped at the chance to be an extra in the movie.

Most of *Tonka* was filmed in other parts of Central Oregon, but the climactic scene depicting the Battle of the Little Bighorn was filmed on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation. The location was chosen because of its similarity to the actual site of Custer's Last Stand.

While Clowers played a nameless fighter in Gen. George Armstrong Custer's 7th Cavalry, Johnnie Guerin, a Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs tribal member who was 16 in 1958, had a significant role in the film as a body double for Sal Mineo in scenes where the main character is shown galloping across the countryside. He also participated in battle scenes as one of the Indian warriors and is one of the few locals whose name appears on the cast list.

Another tribal member, Paul Smith, participated in the battle scenes and has clear memories of the daily routine on set: "Our first stop would be, around 6:00 in the morning, we'd go to Charley Canyon to pick up our horses. We could pick any horse we wanted. We'd saddle it up, get it all ready to go and then a bunch of us would all ride up together to the movie site, probably a mile or so, maybe longer."

Gerry Galbraith was just 14 years old in 1958 and was likely one of the youngest locals to land a role

as an extra. He said, "One of the only reasons that I was able to get into it, because of my age, my dad had to be with me. Dad was also in the cavalry. We both had our military uniforms on, and we both had our horses."

Most of the actors and extras in the battle scene were mounted, so lots of horses were needed. The Galbraiths supplied four or five horses for the movie, in addition to those they rode themselves.

The Galbraiths, Smith, Guerin and Clowers were among the approximately 100-150 local men and boys who had a rare opportunity to take a break from mundane work, rub elbows with Hollywood actors, see the movie-making process up close, and go a little wild. They have carried fond memories of the experience with them for more than 60 years and those memories are well worth sharing.



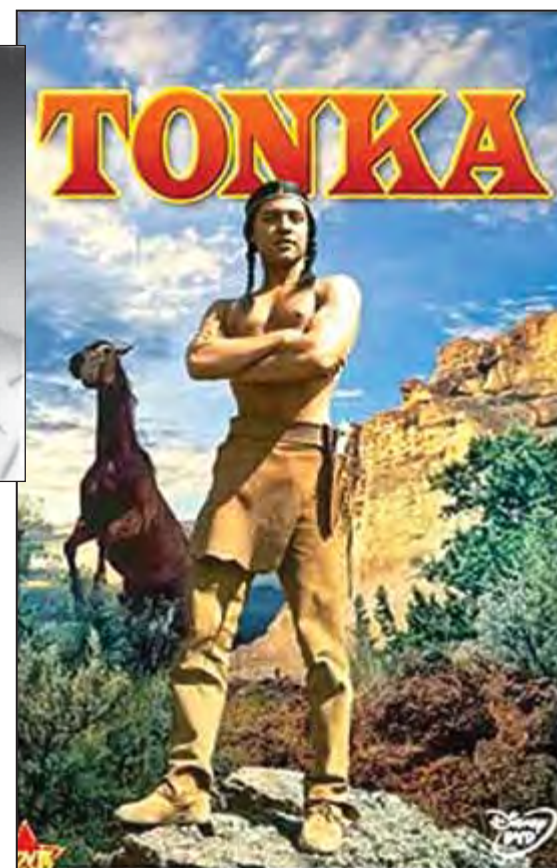
Gary Clowers 1958

THE MOVIE

In 1958, *Tonka* was a pretty big deal. It was a full-length Disney film with a million-dollar budget and a cast of well-known Hollywood actors and it was filmed in Technicolor by one of the best in the business.

Initial news reports touted Fess Parker as one of the stars of *Tonka*. But Parker, best known for playing Davy Crockett in the Disney television series and Daniel Boone in the NBC TV series, balked when he learned he would receive second billing after teen heartthrob Sal Mineo. Having recently given Parker a contract, Disney suspended him for his refusal to act in *Tonka* and eventually let him go.

Mineo rated top billing because he had been nominated for an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his role as Plato, James Dean's sidekick in the 1955 movie *Rebel Without a Cause*. He had also recorded a few pop music songs, one of which, "Start Movin' (In My Direction)," reached number nine on the American pop chart in 1957.



Disney Poster for *Tonka*

In *Tonka*, Mineo — a 19-year-old Italian-American from the Bronx — plays a young Indian on the verge of manhood who tames a wild horse and names it Tonka Wakan, meaning "Great One."

Philip Carey replaced Parker in the role of Capt. Myles Keogh, a cavalryman who later acquires Tonka, renaming him Comanche and riding him into battle at Little Bighorn.

Other Hollywood actors in *Tonka* included Slim Pickens as a horse trader; Jerome Courtland as Lt. Henry Nowland; Britt Lomond as Gen. Custer; H.M. Wynant as Yellow Bull; Rafael Campos as Strong Bear; and Joy Page as Prairie Flower. The only two professional actors in the movie who were Native American were Eddie Little Sky, who played Spotted Tail, and John War Eagle, who played Sitting Bull. While none of these actors had starring roles in blockbuster films, they were all solid actors with long

careers in both movies and television.

The real star of the show, *Tonka*, was not one but several horses, each trained to do specific types of things such as bucking, pawing the ground on cue, and playing dead, according to a *Bulletin* article. One of the chestnut beauties had a white blaze, so the blaze had to be painted on the other horses. It is easy to tell which blazes are fake if you know to look for it.

Despite this slight flaw in costuming, they were all superbly trained and they put in the best performances in the movie. The *Bulletin* reported that the scene in the movie in which Tonka fights with another stallion was not acting, however, and that in real life their handlers had to pull the horses apart before Tonka got whooped.

Tonka was based on the book *Comanche: Story of America's Most Heroic Horse* by David Appel. The movie plot is Disney simple.

After Mineo's character, White Bull, captures and trains Tonka, he shows off his horse to the tribe. His older cousin, Yellow Bull, claims the horse as his own and the tribe's chief, Sitting Bull, reluctantly agrees that he has the right. But when White Bull sees his cousin abusing Tonka, he sets the stallion free.

Later, Tonka is captured by a horse trader (Slim Pickens' character) and sold to Capt. Keogh of the U.S. cavalry. Keogh values Tonka as much as White Bull does and treats him well. As things come to a head between the Indians and the 7th Cavalry, White Bull sneaks into the military fort for reconnaissance. There he finds Tonka.

Capt. Keogh catches White Bull, but the two share a love of Tonka, so Keogh escorts White Bull out of the fort and even lets him ride Tonka a little way before taking the horse back to the stable.

The battle of the Little Bighorn is the climax of the movie. Keogh is killed, along with all the rest of Custer's men, but Tonka survives. The movie ends with White Bull improbably taking a job with the cavalry so that he can stay with and care for Tonka.

FILMING ALL OVER CENTRAL OREGON

Disney sent a topnotch cinematographer to work on *Tonka*. Loyal Griggs had earned an Academy Award for Best Cinematography for his work on the 1953 movie *Shane*. Other movies he worked on include *White Christmas* and *The Ten Commandments*.

While Tonka's climactic scene was filmed on the Warm Springs Reservation, the rest of the movie — the majority of it — was filmed at other locations in Central Oregon. Disney's crew arrived in Bend on June 1, 1958 to begin work. To their credit, they sought out sites that would provide a dramatic backdrop to the movie — and they found some.

Filming of Tonka's capture and taming took place in a dry riverbed east of Bend; the Indian village was in meadows near the head of the Metolius River; Tonka was shown running wild on the high slopes at Smith Rock with the Crooked River visible far below; and Custer's Fort Lincoln was at a site near Benham Falls where the Bend Chamber of Commerce already



Still shot from the movie: Tonka (the horse) at Smith Rock

had a fort built for use in movies previously filmed there (*The Indian Fighter*, 1955 and *Oregon Passage*, 1957).

The *Bulletin* provided extensive coverage of the moviemaking, with feature stories on each of its Hollywood actors, plus one about the sound crew and a humorous one in which the columnist says she was sent to interview Tonka. When the filming moved to the Warm Springs Reservation in July, the *Bulletin* covered that too, but the *Pioneer* wins the prize for best headline: "Custer and the 7th Cavalry Try Again at Warm Springs."

MADRAS AND WARM SPRINGS GET THEIR TURN

Cut to July 5, 1958. The Disney crew is moving its headquarters to the Huntington building on the north end of Fourth Street in Madras. The *Madras Pioneer* has reported that anyone who wants to work as an extra in *Tonka* should apply at the farm labor bureau and that Disney would accept 200 applications.

There must have been a second sign-up location in Warm Springs, because Guerin and Smith don't remember coming to Madras to apply and Smith said he would not have done that.

News reports before the filming were all over the place in talking about how many local extras Disney would hire: 600 people in the final battle scene ... 250 Indians plus 150 cavalymen ... 400 mounted Indians.

However, a *Pioneer* article published on July 24, 1958, as filming was coming to an end cited a Disney representative's estimate that the number of extras used in the battle scene averaged 50 Indians and 40 white cavalry soldiers daily.

Guerin and Smith both said they wanted to be in the movie to earn some "big money," as Guerin described it. Smith was working full time for \$1.25 per hour and bringing home \$110-115 every two weeks. He recalls Disney paying him \$25 per day — at least twice what he could make at his regular job.

Clowers, too, needed to earn some money. "I graduated from MHS in '58 and it was a bad summer for employment," he said. "Nobody could find jobs. I didn't want to work on the farm anymore, so I was out looking for a job with everybody else and we didn't get much. But then Disney came to town."

When Clowers learned about the job opportunity, he got in touch with his close friend, Herb Graybael, and they both applied.

"What they wanted was young, fresh-faced guys because a lot of the troopers in the actual last stand were young. And so they hired us when we said we could ride horses, which Herbie I don't think had ever been on one," Clowers said. "And the pay was \$15 a day, which was pretty big money for us in those days. And lunch."

Clowers could have earned \$20 a day if he had brought his own horse. It is unclear why Smith earned so much more. After the filming, a studio

representative said Disney had paid between \$38,000-40,000 in wages to extras during the three weeks of shooting on the reservation.

Once the cavalry extras were hired, Disney instructed them to go to a hangar at the Madras airport to get their costumes and props. Clowers' first memorable experience occurred before he even set foot inside.

"As Herb and I got out of the car, walked up toward the building, at the front steps there was a little crowd and as we approached we could see a guy on the ground right at the base of the concrete steps flopping around," he said. "We saw that nobody was doing anything to help him. We knew right away what was going on; it was an epileptic fit. So, we kind of dove through these guys and got ahold of him. I held his head; Herbie held his feet. He'd hit his head on the concrete and was bleeding. And I got his tongue out of his teeth and we held him. And while we're there, he's calming down and getting over it, but then all of a sudden there was kind of a roar, people kind of went flying and in came this great big guy who said, 'Way to go, boys!' It was Slim Pickens. It was his son, his epileptic son."

"So he kind of adopted us for a while," Clowers said. He helped us get horses. At that time he was acting, but his family was tending horses for the movie."

The cavalry props included sabers as well as rifles and pistols that could be loaded with varying strengths of blanks. Clowers explained, "There were several kinds of blanks. The long-range blanks were full-load. And then there were close-quarter blanks that were like a half-load because a blank can do some damage. In the battle scene itself they were firing quarter-blanks and half-blanks so it didn't hurt anybody with them."

Clowers mentioned one other thoughtful amenity of the cavalry

costume: "Herbie and I wore black-rimmed glasses and the uniform we had had a little pouch thing on the belt and that's where we kept our glasses, 'cause can you imagine the scene going by, a guy wearin' black-rimmed glasses in the cavalry? Well, I don't think that happened."

The cavalry extras were told to meet at the airport the next day to convoy out to the filming site where Charley Canyon meets up with Skookum Canyon on the Warm Springs Reservation. Clowers said there were at least a dozen cars, plus Disney's rigs.

"So here we go, and their big mistake was thinking we were going to drive in an orderly fashion out there. They didn't know about us," Clowers laughed. What Clowers meant by "us" was a large group of young men, all around the same age, who mostly knew each other from Madras High School and who enjoyed a little friendly rivalry.

"Everybody was driving their own cars out there, so it became a great big race, chaotic and dangerous and crazy. All the way out there, down the highway, out to Kah-Nee-Ta, and out the road going up Charley Canyon it was just one big dusty race. It kind of set the tone for what was going to go on for the next couple weeks while we were filming."

After that, the cavalry extras were bused to Warm Springs from the Madras airport.

Because they were already in Warm Springs, Guerin and Smith followed a different routine. After picking out their horses at the Charley Corral and riding them to the movie set, the Native American extras would get ready for their scenes.

"When we got there they would make all of us change our clothes," said Smith. "That's when they'd give us the outfits, the Indian wear, the wigs, all that stuff. And they'd spray you down with a paint, brown paint so that everybody'd be the same color because everybody is

not the same color ... And then you'd get dressed, put on your costume."

In addition to the two-braided wigs, the costumes consisted of buckskin pants, sometimes a buckskin shirt, a headband – sometimes with feathers – and sometimes a bone breastplate. Makeup artists would put war paint on them.

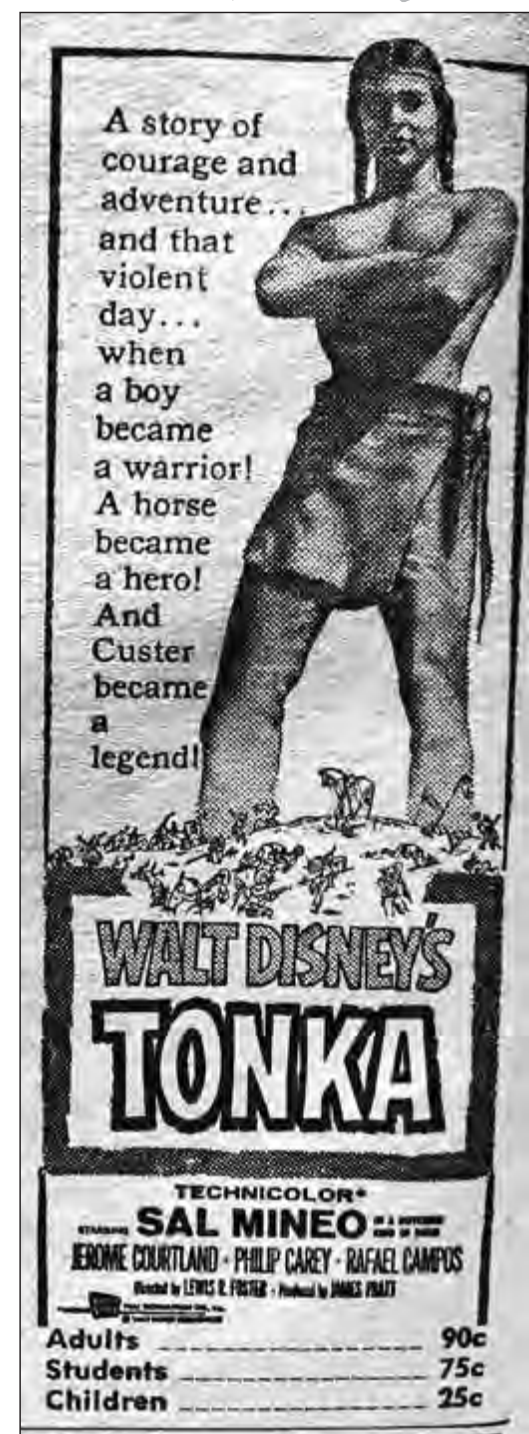
Smith said that the Indian extras could choose whether to carry bow and arrows or a rifle. Smith chose a rifle; Guerin chose the bow and arrows.

The Indian extras would be given breakfast and then they would have a chance to paint their horses. Smith said they could paint them any way they wanted. "It would depend what kind of horse you got. If you got a white horse, you could put on different colors. If you got a brown horse or a black horse, you would use mainly white or gray, so that wasn't too pretty."

There was no prescribed design. Smith described some of them: "Zigzag like lightning bolts or lines with an arrowhead, whatever you wanted to put on there, depending on how good an artist you were, too. Mine were pretty plain. A couple handprints here or there, something like that, no big deal."

What came next in their routine? "Then after that you just sat around. I would say that 90 percent of the time that we were working, we'd actually just be sitting around. They'd be filming other parts of the movie, they'd be shooting a cavalry scene," Smith said.

"We got to be complainers," Guerin said because the waiting could be monotonous. "All the glamour was gone."



Chief Theater ad in *Madras Pioneer*.

ACTION!

While they were waiting for their turn to film, Smith said, "We couldn't go wandering around all over the place. If they wanted us right now, they wanted us to be ready to jump on horses and go to the location they were getting ready to film."

When it was finally their turn to do something, the Indian extras were divided into three groups that would be asked to carry out different maneuvers. "They called us the red army, the white army, and the blue army. They would announce, 'Okay, red army, you're going to advance down toward this gully,'" said Smith.

Smith estimates that there were between 30-50 people in each group, but because of the way the scenes were shot, with riders going in different directions, it would look like considerably more people in the movie.

Smith was in the blue army, but he was also selected to take part in a fourth group who appear in the movie at the beginning of the battle scene. The group was not mounted. Instead, they crouched down in a gully, waiting to ambush the cavalry as they rode by, lured by four Indians on horses.

Smith said, "They got about 20 to 30 of us to do that. We said, 'Well, what are we now?' They (the film crew) didn't understand what we were talking about. But we were talking about what color we were going to be. We knew we were either red, white, or blue, we knew that. When they put us into a separate group, we didn't know what we were ... so we said, 'Oh, we'll be the purple people eaters.'"

When the cavalry got near, the purple people eaters were to fire their blanks at them, but to aim over their heads because the blanks could injure people, though they were just wads of paper. Smith said the cavalry were only 10 to 20 feet away from them during that scene.

If the cavalry extras got bored with waiting around, they found plenty of excitement when it was their turn to film.

Clowers said, "I don't really remember too much about that first day, but the second day when we actually got on the horses and they

got set to film, one of the first sets in the first scenes was the horses charging down a long hill and it really shows in the movie."

Right away, the cavalry props caused a problem. "When we first did that they had us wearing the 7th Cavalry sword and so here we have rifles to hold and swords flopping on our sides and beating the horses and us to pieces and falling off and it was chaos," Clowers continued.

Clowers said being hit with the Indians' rubber-tipped arrows made the horses buck too, although Guerin could have told him that not all the arrows had rubber tips.

"A lot of the guys, they'd take the tip off and they'd shoot those soldiers with them. There was just wood, you know. They were some ornery guys, or fun guys, or whatever, I don't know," Guerin chuckled.

Clowers said, "That first charge was unbelievable. Horses didn't do very well and neither did we and we scattered equipment and people all the way down the hill. So that was kind of wasted footage," he laughed.

In fact, some of the extras were injured in that first charge. The newspapers reported that Robert Patrick, a 19-year-old from Madras, suffered a broken rib and extensive bruising when his horse fell and rolled over him. Other horses then ran over him as they galloped down the hill, leaving hoof marks on his body.

Leland Thompson of Warm Springs was kicked by a horse and sustained a compound fracture of his arm and a Portland man fell off a horse and broke his wrist. Another extra was hit in the mouth by a rubber-tipped arrow.

After the fiasco of the cavalry's first charge down the hill, the film crew made some adjustments. Clowers said, "They then found out, they did a little more studies, that the 7th Cavalry, even though they had those swords, they did not use them or have them at Custer's Last Stand. And then the next day we

reenacted it without the swords and we kind of got squared away a little bit more about how to do this and that was pretty good."

In fact, there is a scene in *Tonka* wherein the soldiers are instructed to leave their swords behind so that their jingling would not alert the Indians to their presence. Some historians have theorized that the cavalry would have fared better in the battle if they'd had the swords for fighting at close quarters.

When it was time for the cavalry to try charging down the hill again, Clowers was on a different horse because his first horse was injured during the first hectic charge down the hill. Clowers described what happened with the second horse:

"And somebody, who I won't name, had given them five horses that had never been ridden and I got one ... Well, my horse was working pretty good, I could handle it and it wasn't bucking until we're charging down the hill and then everybody's supposed to start shooting their pistols. So I pull this .44-caliber single six, which you have to cock to fire, and fired off the first shot and the minute that I shot and everybody else was shootin', the horse just went crazy ... I fired a round and cocked again to fire again when he started bucking ... and it was a rodeo."

"Other horses were actually hitting us," Clowers continued. "As we were having a rodeo, they were still going down past us. So I grabbed the reins with my pistol hand and I'm pulling up on the reins and the pistol goes off and burns a hole in his neck that big around and then he put it in high gear.



Johnnie Guerin, left, and Sal Mineo. PIONEER photo

"So he takes off and we're going up the hill and I'm still trying to get his head up and he's got his head down, running like crazy until we get up on top to the flat and we're running across kind of a grassy stretch that was where the corral was and all the guys that kept the horses and we're going full blast and by this time I've got his head up and he was really running fast and I couldn't think of anything to do, but if I was going to break my neck I wanted to do it where somebody would see it and come to me, so as we're going by the corral, with the real cowboys with the real horses, I bailed off. I just bailed off and I rolled and rolled and rolled, didn't get hurt a bit, but I was really embarrassed.

"And none of that was on film. That would have been good," Clowers added.

As Clowers recalls it, they had to make three or four attempts to film the

downhill cavalry charge. Each try involved so many moving parts and required so many small adjustments that they could only do one per day.

"It wasn't until probably the final time until they got what they wanted," he said. "Sometimes it was something wrong with somebody not looking right and the director would scream and cut."

MOVIE MAGIC

It surprised nobody when the star of the movie, Sal Mineo, got hurt. Guerin said, "He didn't even know how to ride a horse. Walking, he was fine, but if it started trotting, he bounced up and down like a balloon."

The injury occurred when Mineo was getting ready to film a scene on horseback. Tonka shied and reared and Mineo fell off and hit his knee on a rock, breaking the kneecap. He spent several

days in the hospital in Redmond, used crutches on the set, and gave up on riding.

The Disney crew had to use its voodoo to concoct the rest of the scenes in which White Bull rides a horse. They used a body double some of the time and for close-ups Mineo "rode" a stepladder.

During his downtime between filming, Galbraith watched Mineo fake it. He said, "They were doing a scene of him riding a horse and he was on a stepladder ... and the cameras were down there filming him like he was on the horse, but he was sittin' on a big stepladder, high up above the ground." One of the crew would stand near the ladder and hold the horse end of the reins and pull on them and Mineo held his end and they moved the reins up and down to simulate the motion of a horse.

For longer distance shots, Johnnie Guerin was Mineo's double. Raised on a Warm Springs ranch, Guerin spent his childhood on horseback. "I used to chase wild horses. I'd go through the timber. Not to brag, but I was a good horseman."

Guerin would be dressed as White Bull and the shot would show him from the back or far away or with face slightly blurred so that viewers couldn't tell it wasn't Mineo. The most memorable scene Guerin acted in is the one in which the cavalry is chasing White Bull, who is riding Tonka. Guerin as White Bull jumps over a gully and dashes up and down the rocky hillsides, not on one of the Tonkas, but on his

own horse, Redwing, also a chestnut color. They fly across the landscape and of course the cavalry can't begin to catch them.

With so much waiting around, the young men had time to watch the movie crew at work



Disney poster for *Tonka*

and observe their equipment and techniques.

Guerin was fascinated by the camera truck. "They had a real old vehicle ... It looked like a Stanley Steamer or something," he said. "It had big old headlights. It was their camera car. They'd have them running a scene and they'd be driving alongside taking the pictures. They'd go a certain distance and then stop." He said the movie crew graded a smooth path for it which is still visible today.

Galbraith saw how they filmed the scenes in which someone is hit by an arrow. He said, "It was staged on that part so it looked like he really got shot, but you could see how they took the precaution with the pads and everything else. You could see where the arrow was going along a string to make sure it's going straight and in the right spot. Not like a live person

TONKA REVIEW

By Peter Carlson

Peter Carlson is a retired teacher who taught The Art of the Film at Madras High School for about five years. Here he gives his critique of the movie.

Why stay up late to watch a Disney film made 65 years ago? Well, for one thing, the evening began with great friends eating a delicious smorgasbord of Mexican food. Then there was the appeal of a cast of hundreds playing out an epic period of Western history on the beautiful stages of Central Oregon where we all live. There too was the enthralling presence of one of the film's extras to share two weeks of memories taken while working on its production.

Much Madras history went down that night, and a spectacular film made on the Warm Springs Reservation was a part of it, with the help of long-time resident Gary Clowers, who was actually one of the film's extras.

Disney's *Tonka* tells two epic stories, one the personal struggle of White Bull, a young Sioux brave played by Sal Mineo who struggles to become a man by capturing and training a wild horse he names Tonka or "Great One." Unfortunately, White Bull's horse is commandeered from him by his cruel older cousin Yellow Bull, who mistreats the horse so that White Bull sets him free rather than watch the abuse.

Meanwhile, the story's secondary plot is unfolding inexorably towards its historical conclusion on the battlefield of the Little Big Horn where Gen. George A. Custer plans to annihilate the Sioux nation which is led by Chief Sitting Bull backed by over 1,000 better-armed warriors.

Director Lewis Foster chose the Warm Springs Reservation and meadows around the Deschutes River near Bend to make the film rather than the original Native American villages and US 7th Cavalry outposts in the vicinity of the Little Bighorn River and the site of the great battle. For us that evening, recognizing local areas and hearing Gary Clowers' stories of his involvement in the film was part of the fun.

Not so much fun is the way American Indians are portrayed in the film. As to be expected from a cast of white people playing all of the Indian parts except Sitting Bull (played by John War Eagle), they spoke in a wooden, broken manner that made them seem more like robots than humans. And, although there is much positive to be said about Mineo's performance, he and his sidekick, Strong Bear, played by Raphael Campos, both seemed like two bare-chested Italian teenagers out of the Bronx. Nevertheless, their youth and

shooting a regular bow and arrow at somebody to hit him. They had it pretty well controlled, at least on that one spot that we watched.”

Paul Smith made good use of his downtime by chatting with Slim Pickens. He said, “It happened that I personally knew Slim Pickens when he was a rodeo clown.” When Smith was a young boy living in Albuquerque in the ’40s, he used to help in the chutes at the rodeo. Two years in a row, Pickens asked him to collect about 15 of his friends from the stands to take part in a gag where the clown drives a VW bug into the arena and more and more kids jump out of it.

When Smith saw Pickens on the movie set, he reminded Pickens that they’d met before. “I don’t know if he really knew me or remembered me, but he said, ‘Oh, yeah, I remember you!’ I don’t know if he really did, but I felt good that he said that.”

One day Smith was watching Pickens do “falls.” The movie crew would film Pickens running and falling with his horse repeatedly. When Smith asked if it hurt to fall like that, Pickens showed him how the ground had been prepared. It looked like regular desert dirt, but underneath there was a pit of soft sand. Pickens and his horse would land on that soft spot and he would get \$25 for each fall in addition to what he was paid for his *Tonka* role as a horse trader.

The falls look brutal on film but Galbraith, whose father provided some of the horses for the movie, said none of his horses was injured in the filming. Galbraith further explained, “A good cowperson can make them go down and not hurt themselves. I’m sure it didn’t feel good — some of them were going at a pretty good clip.”



Sal Mineo, left, with Johnnie Guerin on set of *Tonka*, filed in 1958.

Also disturbing are two scenes in which first Yellow Bull and then later a White horse wrangler try to forcefully subdue Tonka while he fights back. Galbraith said horses can be trained for that kind of action and that he didn’t see any horses abused during the filming.

One of the most impressive aspects of moviemaking is how the professionals can turn what seems like a haphazard collection of film clips into a coherent story.

Guerin said, “They piece it all together and that’s the movie?” He said that during the filming, “We didn’t hardly know anything that was going on. They would just tell us to go here or go there ... we weren’t privy to the whole making of the movie.” Because it wasn’t filmed in order and parts of it were filmed at other locations, “It was kind of confusing, but amusing also.”

Clowers said, “All this action stuff was chaotic, but the film doesn’t show that at all. It all looks really well-filmed and well-organized, so it was a wonder that they edited and directed it to the point they made a really good film of it out of all the craziness. Of course, we enjoyed the craziness.”

THE “DEAD SCENE”

A small part of the chaos of the battle scene was generated by locals, both cavalry and Indians, who attempted to do something that would stand out so that they could recognize themselves on the movie screen. Clowers said, “During the dead scene and the battle scene, everybody was talking about how we could show up on the film and everybody had their little role of their own to play, regardless of the director.”

Clowers worked out a scheme with a friend. “One of my best friends down there was Byron Patt. He was

passion for their roles I’m sure won the support and loyalty of most audiences to whom the film was released on Christmas Day 1958.

A cast of veteran actors helped give the film credibility. Philip Carey plays Capt. Keogh, who acquires the runaway Tonka after White Bull frees him. Having quickly bonded with Tonka, Keogh rides him into the battle, where he is killed but Tonka survives. After the battle, Tonka is captured again and is reunited with White Bull for a delightful Disney happy ending.

The predetermined bad guy of this story is of course the flamboyant Custer who would like nothing more than to advance his career by wiping the Sioux nation from the face of the earth. His short scene shows him in his golden curls giving orders that will result in the deaths of all the men of the 7th Cavalry. It must have been a plum of a role for Britt Lomond.

Another notable actor was the ubiquitous “Slim Pickens” who plays a wrangler in his usual “Hee Haw” persona which audiences have loved for more than half a century.

However, I think most audiences would agree that the best acting in this film is done by the horses, which must have been superbly trained to perform the gymnastics that they were put through. People who would like those animals treated more humanely on movie sets would not be happy with Walt on this one [On screen it looks like the horses suffer, but see Gerry Galbraith’s comments on the subject in the accompanying article, page ____]. Nor would those who think exposing children on holiday to the mass carnage of over 200 corpses on the battlefield at Christmas time appropriate.

Sal Mineo’s career had reached its apex in the great film *Rebel Without a Cause* starring James Dean, so this part in which his acting partner for most of the film was a dumb animal was surely a challenge. Because of this, some critics claimed he did his best acting in this film because he pulled it off. Here is an example from classic film blogger Carolyn S., posted on her site *Garbo Laughs*:

“He plays White Bull with heart, optimism and youthful exuberance; his emotions run the gamut from ecstatic to devastated, and he deftly portrays them all. A lot of his acting is done with an unpredictable horse as his costar, and even though he grew up in an apartment in the Bronx, Sal looks and acts as if he’s been around horses all his life. It’s a spirited performance ... to watch his friendship with the horse is heartwarming and charming.” This might also be a credit we can attribute to the film’s horse trainers.

At the film’s conclusion, if you are not overtaken by its warm and fuzzy ending which shows White Bull dressed in a US Army uniform blissfully playing with Tonka while the kindly Lt. Morland, who captured Tonka and returned him — and had also been a part of the nation’s forces that were trying to annihilate his people — looks on, you might find this ending puzzling and ironic.

on a horse and this was just in the first part of the battle scene where Custer's troops got off their horses and began to kind of circle the wagons. (Of course, we didn't have any wagons.) And Byron, he came ridin' by, and I tried to grab his saddle blanket and pull it off and he whacked me with something, I don't remember what it was, so that was our little soldier-Indian confrontation."

That altercation didn't make it into the final cut of the movie, but Clowers was able to adlib an appearance in the previously described scene in which he ran between the dismounted cavalymen and threw himself on the ground.

Smith also wanted to make sure he could identify himself in the movie and he got his chance during what Clowers refers to as the "dead scene." Dead cavalymen and a few dead Indians lie all over the ground. The victorious Indians come through and take their spoils and later a surviving cavalry unit walks among the dead.

"I heard where they (the cavalymen) were going to come through, so I purposely lay down where they were going to come in," he said. "So there's one scene where the first person lying on the ground is me."

Smith is easy to spot, lying bare-chested on his back, arms spread wide. His clothing flutters in the breeze and the officer looks at him briefly as he passes, continuing up the hill where dozens of bodies sprawl, most of them in cavalry uniforms.

Smith's cameo lasted for seconds, but the dead scene took hours to film. The extras had to lie unmoving in the hot sun for as long as it took to get the shot. The Disney crew took still photos of them before they took a break so that later they could coach the extras back into the exact same positions. When they stopped filming for the day, they would make sure to start at the same time the next day so that the sun would be in the same place in the sky.

Galbraith was in the dead scene too. "They told us, 'Pretty soon they're going to start filming and you're going to be dead and you can't move and the other thing is, the Indian women are going to come up to you and start taking your boots and clothes off.' And we said, 'Yeah, but if they start doing that, we're going to be coming alive,'" he said.

"In our area, we never did see them come up and try to take our boots or hats or any of that," he added.

Clowers and Smith both mentioned that the dead horses in that scene were dummies. The dummies were hollow and slightly flattened underneath so that they would lie properly on the ground.

They didn't use a dummy of Tonka, probably because he wasn't supposed to be dead.



Madras boys Terry Orcutt, left, and Gerry Galbraith, right, with Britt Lomond ("Gen. Custer"), in uniform at Warm Springs PIONEER photo

Clowers ended up not far from where Capt. Keogh and Tonka were lying so he was able to observe the

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movie crew drugging the horse. He said, “They drugged him and then several of the crew would hold the horse until it got so shaky they could help it lay down and then it would go completely unconscious.”

Clowers felt lucky to be situated near Capt. Keogh, played by Philip Carey, because Carey was the only one of the Hollywood actors that would stay with the extras during the breaks. Clowers said, “Carey would sit there with us and talk and joke around and he was interested in the country and asked questions about where we were from, what we did. It was really neat.”

STARSTRUCK?

While the Disney headquarters were in Bend, Mineo was thronged by teenagers everywhere he went, and he did a live, local radio show on KBND to address his many young fans. By contrast, the Warm Springs extras were not interested in Mineo and maybe even had a little disdain for him. At the very least, they didn’t have much in common with him.

In his book *Sal Mineo: A Biography*, Michael Gregg Michaud writes that Mineo did not want to be in *Tonka*. He was trying to get away from roles as juvenile delinquents and transition into more adult roles, but he had overextended himself financially and so he did *Tonka* because he needed money. Michaud’s book is not a reliable source for facts; most of what he writes about Mineo’s role in *Tonka* contradicts local reporting or exaggerates ridiculously. However, it does ring true that Mineo was unhappy to find himself in Central Oregon because even the locals were aware of it.

Smith said, “We knew that early on. We found that out that he didn’t really want to do that movie. It didn’t take long for rumors like that to get around up there at Warm Springs.” Smith said the people he knew didn’t care. “We weren’t starstruck,” he said.

The local girls might have felt differently about it than the boys, but the newspapers were mum on the subject.

Rafael Campos, the young actor who played White Bull’s sidekick, Strong Bear, spent at least a little time in Madras. He was introduced to Carmen Piercy (now Carmen Green), daughter of the Chief Theater owners, and she invited him to one of the regular Friday night dances at the Oddfellows hall. Her husband, Jerry Green said that he was dating Carmen at the time and he was jealous that she went to the dance with a movie star.

There were a lot of visitors at the Warm Springs site. *The Bulletin* reported that on a single Monday during the filming there were 200 visitors from all over Oregon. Smith said his wife and his cousin Gertrude

were told to go ahead and knock on Rafael Campos’ trailer door if they wanted to meet him. Campos was cordial and let them take a picture with him.

Guerin, who was also in the Kirk Douglas movie *Indian Fighter*, filmed in Bend in 1955, missed his chance for a career in movies. When they were on the set together, Mineo told him he should come to Hollywood. After the Disney crew left Warm Springs, Guerin received letters from Hollywood — Mineo’s agent? — asking him to come. Guerin didn’t know about it at the time because his grandmother tore up the letters. She didn’t want him to go.

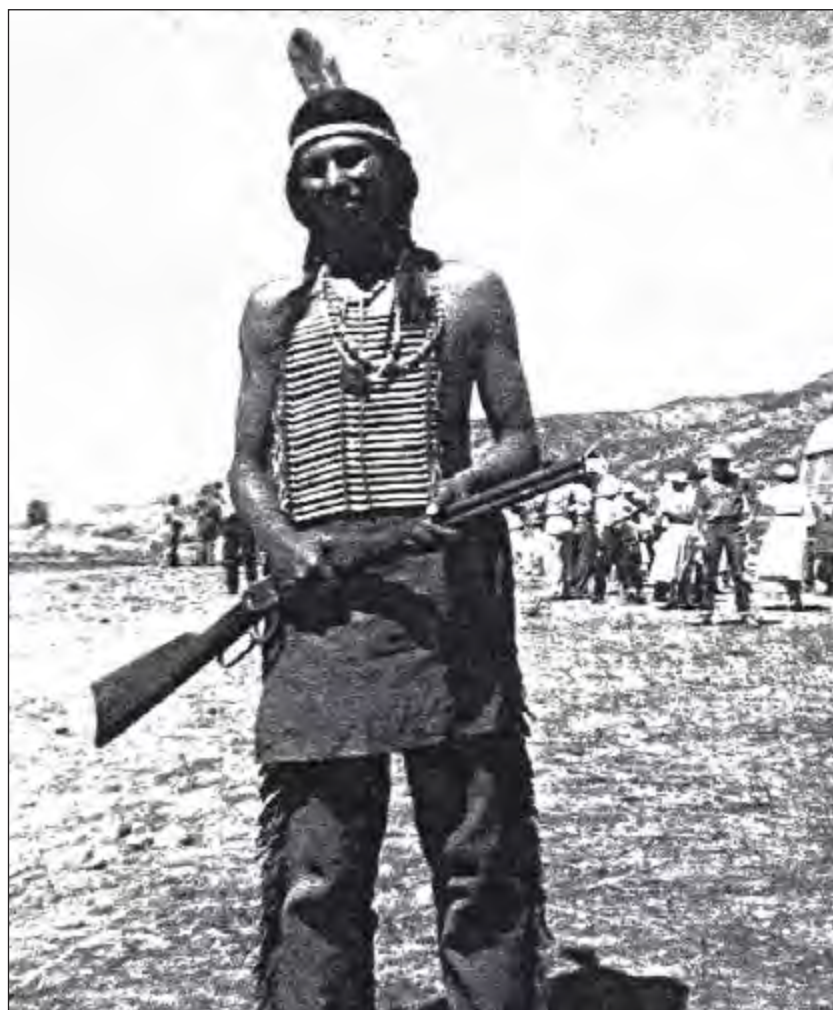
Guerin doesn’t seem too heartbroken about it, though like the other extras, he enjoyed being in *Tonka*. “It was fun,” he said. “Riding the horse, the camaraderie of everybody, our fellow tribesmen being in it. It was an experience, for sure.”

Smith said that he appreciated having a break from his regular job and the chance to earn some extra money and Galbraith similarly was happy to be there with his dad and their horses and to get some time away from farm chores.

Galbraith came away from the set with a memento, an asphalt-tipped tomahawk that he somehow swiped. Clowers and Herbie Graybael walked away with one of the cavalry swords and found a way to share it. “Herbie took it for the first 10 years, I got it for the next 10, Herbie got it for the next 10, and Herbie’s gone now and I don’t know where the sword is,” Clowers said.

Sword gone, Clowers still treasures the memories. “Herbie and I, we had really got a surprising adventure. Two or three weeks out of high school and here we are in a movie. And then the thing with Slim Pickens — at the time didn’t really strike us because we thought he was just a horse wrangler. Nobody really knew who he was then and he turns out to be an incredible actor.”

Tonka is no *Casablanca*. It is probably not on anyone’s all-time greatest movies list, nor did it leave



Paul Smith in costume on *Tonka* set.

any obvious lasting impact in Central Oregon. Still, it is gratifying to think of our humble communities basking in the Hollywood spotlight, if only briefly, and to know the camera crew cherished our scenery as we do.

Tonka is available for streaming on Amazon Prime.

Suggested Reading

The Bulletin, various articles May 1958-January 1959, accessible at [Historic Oregon Newspapers \(uoregon.edu\)](http://HistoricOregonNewspapers.uoregon.edu)

Madras Pioneer various articles May 1958-January 1959

DEVERE HELFRICH, NATIVE SON AND PIONEER RODEO PHOTOGRAPHER

By Jarold Ramsey

Rodeos have been a fixture in the history and culture of Jefferson County and Central Oregon since the earliest days. On big spreads like the VZ and the Muddy and Hay Creek ranches, and then in early communities like Lamonta, Ashwood, and Prineville, impromptu bronc-riding contests, horse races, and so on were popular events by the turn of the last century — as the aftermath of roundups and at annual celebrations like the Fourth of July. Likewise on the Warm Springs Reservation, rodeos were a regular attraction in Warm Springs and Simnasho, and farther north and east in Tygh Valley, for years the home of the colorful All-Indian Rodeo.

Given all this, and the persistence here of cattle ranching and horse culture, it's not surprising that a native son of Jefferson County, Devere Helfrich, became "the Dean of Rodeo Photography" in the '40s, '50s, and '60s, recording rodeos large and small all over the West and Southwest, and after his retirement, placing nearly 40,000 of his arena photographs in the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum's Dickinson Research Center Archives in Oklahoma City.

Helfrich was born in 1902, the only child of John and Minnie (McCoin) Helfrich, and grew up on a homestead southwest of Lamonta, near Willow Creek and Grizzly Butte. As a boy, he learned about horses and cows (and their interactions) by riding for his maternal uncle Walter McCoin, who from his ranch just south of the Crooked River Gorge ran cattle all over Jefferson and Deschutes counties, as far south as what is now the Three Sisters Wilderness.

After trying various lines of work during the Great Depression (including operating an ice cream parlor in Bend), he took up photography, and by the outbreak of WWII was already honing his action-photography skills at local rodeos in Sisters, Madras, Redmond, John Day, Spray, and so on.

Helfrich brought to his new career an interesting set of disadvantages and advantages. On the one hand, he had



Devere and Helen Helfrich, 1950s (Devere Helfrich Rodeo Photographs, Dickinson Research Center National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum)



Casey Tibbs on Johnny Cake (Devere Helfrich Rodeo Photographs, Dickinson Research Center, National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum 81.023.04250)

vision in only one eye, having lost the other in a jackknife accident as a boy. And he began his rodeo coverage using a heavy, clunky Speed Graphic press camera, which used cut film, loaded on the two sides of a frame which had to be pulled out and reversed and reinserted for each

exposure, and which required both hands to aim, focus, and "shoot." All this made him vulnerable in the rodeo arena, and he had several knockdown collisions with bucking horses. When compact 35 mm cameras became available after WWII, he quickly (and gratefully) abandoned his old press camera in favor of the new equipment.

On the other hand, from the outset of his career, unlike most of his city-bred photographic competitors, he had the advantage of knowing horses and their ways first hand, the bucking kind as well as the tractable kind, and so was able to calculate where to stand in the arena to take the best photos of the action. And in his wife Helen (herself a capable photographer), he had a working partner, who as their business evolved, took on the job of developing Devere's photos and printing them (often at night, after the day's action was over), and marketing the pictures not just to newspapers but also to the rodeo riders themselves, who had (like other athletes) an insatiable appetite for photos of themselves in action — even if they were shown being bucked off!

After the war, the Helfriches — now based in Klamath Falls — extended their range, and became regular travelers on the western and southwestern rodeo circuits, visiting "local" rodeos like those around here when they could, but concentrating on the big-time venues like Pendleton, Red Bluff, Phoenix, Yuma, Tucson, Great Falls, Cheyenne, Reno, San Antonio, and the "Cow Palace" in San Francisco. In 1947, they became the official photographers for the Rodeo Cowboy Association (RCA). Given the still-limited touring accommodations in those days, and the long driving distances involved, it must have been a wearing circuit for them to ride (eventually they got a trailer), but they were up to it, and managed to do well financially.

The Helfriches earned the respect and friendship of many of the postwar greats of the rodeo world — champions like Harley May, Jim Shoulders, Casey Tibbs, Bill Linderman, and Harry Tompkins, who recognized that the Helfriches were fellow professionals and as such

were faithfully recording the history of American rodeo as it evolved. So it was fitting that in 1991, DeVere was elected to the Rodeo Cowboy Hall of Fame. (One might ask, why not Helen?)

After retiring to Klamath Falls in 1968, DeVere and Helen were able to turn their full attention to a longstanding interest in local and Western history. They became active in the Klamath County Historical Society and DeVere became editor of its publication, *Klamath Echoes*.

Together, they pursued, through both archival and on-site search, the subject of Western emigrant roads and trails, an interest likely inspired by DeVere's McCoin ancestors' own overland travels from California into Central Oregon in the 1870s and 1880s.

While they were still on the road following the rodeo circuit, they had become especially interested in the 1848 emigrant journal of Richard Martin May, covering his journey over the Oregon Trail and then on to Central California. During their rodeo travels, they were able to research and photograph much of May's 1848 route and in 1993, after DeVere's death in 1981, Helen and his co-author Trudy Ackerman published an

important book on the May journal, *The Schreek of Wagons* (Hopkinton, Mass.: Rigel Publications, 1993).

Out of a long association with *Trails West*, a Western trail-marking organization, the Helfriches put together another book on that subject: *Emigrant Trails West*, (Reno: Trails West Inc., 1991), likewise published after DeVere's death.

(Richard Martin May and his family left California in 1851 for Oregon, and settled near Salem, where May served several terms as Polk County treasurer. On his death in 1875, his emigrant-trail journal passed to his executor and son-in-law Edward Bolter, who a few years later became one of the earliest settlers in the Willowdale area, on Trout Creek. The Helfriches were able to acquire May's journal through the help of DeVere's mother Minnie McCoin Helfrich, who was a lifelong friend of Mrs. John Bolter, wife of Edward Bolter's son John . . . a neat instance of how the preservation of history is sometimes enabled by family and friendship ties!)

The national and local rodeo scenes have changed a lot since the Helfriches

were covering it. At the time of their retirement, big-time rodeo was actually being featured on national television (on *Wide World of Sports*, for example) and movies were being made about rodeo performers. Nowadays, this mass-culture public attention has diminished somewhat

and the RCA, now the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, has been joined by other organizations on several levels. Locally, the buckaroo endeavors that the Helfriches followed early on go forward vigorously in our Central Oregon county fair rodeos, in various junior and peewee rodeos, and in the long-running Cowdeo for kids founded by St. Patrick's Church here in Madras.

And the serious business of putting on and performing in competitive rodeos has carried on unflaggingly from the Helfriches' era right up to the present, with expert horsemen like Lloyd Luelling, a savvy hazer (in the arena, to keep things moving and to rescue riders when necessary), who was much in demand in this area in the '40s and early '50s; DeVere's cousin Numa McCoin of Terrebonne, who was a top-ranked saddle-bronc rider nationally in that same period; "Son" Bain of Culver, an important local breeder and contractor of rodeo animals; Bobby Miller, a dedicated rodeo participant and supporter from his school days in Madras; and his friend Mac Lochrie, who gave up "coming out of the chutes" to become a favorite Northwest rodeo announcer for many years.

And, of course at the top of such a list should be Bobby Mote, Powell Butte native and until recently



Numa McCoin on Kickapoo, Redmond 1948 (DeVere Helfrich Rodeo Photographs, Dickinson Research Center, National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum 8.023.21496)

ranching in Culver (he has relocated to Llano, Texas)—a four-time National Finals World champion bareback rider, and now a Rodeo Hall of Famer himself." Too bad that DeVere Helfrich retired before Bobby Mote came on the circuit — they would have appreciated each other's skill and fortitude in the rodeo arena.

RESOURCES & FURTHER READINGS:

DeVere Helfrich Rodeo Pictures. Colorado Springs: Western Horseman, 1966

DeVere Helfrich and Trudy Ackerman, editors, *The Schreek of Wagons: 1848 Diary of Richard M. May*. Hopkinton, Mass.: Rigel Publications, 1993

DeVere and Helen Helfrich, *Emigrant Trails West*. Reno: Trails West Inc., 1984

Barbara Ditman, "DeVere Helfrich," *Oregon Encyclopedia* (online)

National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum, Dickinson Research Center and Archives, Oklahoma City, online at nationalcowboymuseum.org



Bobby Mote in action bareback, Sageland/Pioneer photo

LOCAL HEROES: JUDGE THOMAS A. POWER

Thomas A. (“Tom”) Power (1882-1959) served as judge of Jefferson County from 1940 to 1953. Only Hershel Read (17 years) and John King (15) served longer terms as chief executive officer of the county. (Nowadays the county court consists of three commissioners and a county administrator.) What was remarkable about Judge Power’s years as elected head of our county’s government was that it covered a period of unprecedented change and growth here — the Second World War, which brought a U.S. Army airfield to Madras, and intense military activity; and then the year after the war ended, the opening of the North Unit Irrigation project, bringing with it a dramatic population surge of farm families, an entirely new method of farming, and a new agricultural economic base. As an energetic and popular leader, Power capably navigated the county through those challenging years.

He had unlikely origins for such a career. He was born and grew up about as far from Central Oregon as is possible in North America — on a farm on Belle Island, just offshore from the capital city of St. John’s, in Newfoundland. He and his five brothers and sisters were tragically orphaned by the deaths of

their parents when Tom was a small boy, but their devoted Aunt Kate stepped in and kept the family together, with the support of a very closely-knit Irish-Newfie community on Belle Island. More than half-a-century later, in 1947, he returned to the island for an extended visit and subsequently wrote

MIT. Then he set off, like Little Jack in the stories, for Parts Unknown — meaning the Far West. He ended up working for a few years in Nevada as a signal repairman for the Santa Fe railroad, and then followed his wanderlust to Alaska, where he worked for another railroad, and did some gold-mining

on the side. This was around 1910, and after hearing reports about the Great Hill-Harriman Railway Race to open up Central Oregon, he decided to go see for himself and maybe, if the country was as promising as reported, to try his hand at homesteading. This was at the peak of the homesteading boom, so he faced a lot of competition for workable land, but he came with the advantage of a decent grubstake in gold coins from his mining!

At first the parcels of land he looked at were uninviting, and he was about to give up and go back to Nevada when an old settler persuaded him to look at an unclaimed 160-

acre parcel a few miles east of Hay Creek Ranch headquarters under Blizzard Ridge, mainly upland range country but with pockets of timber. It had been squatted on but not formally claimed or “patented” by a local renegade who was currently in the state penitentiary for cattle rustling. After Tom had filed on the place, the squatter threatened him from prison, but after his release turned up to



Tom Power and neighbor Jim Scates in Power’s cabin, 1912

a charming memoir of his boyhood there. [“Belle Island Boyhood: A Memoir of Newfoundland in the Nineties,” *Newfoundland Quarterly* LXXXV, No. 2 (December 1989), pp. 20-28 and LXXXV, No. 3 (Winter 1990), pp. 22-28]]

After public school, Power spent several years in Boston, where he had relatives and where he had some college-level schooling at what became

apologize for his threats and ask to spend the night. Tom sent him on his way — and soon afterward, he was arrested again for stealing cows from neighbors and trying to sell their meat in Madras. So, back to the state pen!

With this distraction over, Tom was able to go ahead with “proving up” on his homestead claim — building a house and outbuildings, breaking out the land and fencing it in preparation for the small herds of sheep and cattle he planned to keep on the place.

And he found time to be neighborly. In the years between his arrival in 1911 and 1920, that country under Blizzard Ridge was crowded with homesteading families — the Garretts and Kibbees to the north, the Larkins, Lippes, Gays, Ed Allen, Bill West, Jim Scates to the west, to name just a few. A school had to be established, and it was typical of Tom’s generous civic instincts that he donated land for it just north of his house and helped build Fairview School.

When a young, single woman, Evada Richards, turned up about this time, first visiting homesteading relatives and then filing on a place of her own on the road to Ashwood, Tom took immediate matrimonial notice — as did most of the other young bachelors thereabouts — but as he liked to tell it, “I owned the best saddle horse in the country, so I got the inside track when I let her use my horse.” Their marriage in 1917 involved the very first marriage license issued in the newly established Jefferson County Courthouse in Madras.

As the Teens became the Twenties and most of the country dried up in a severe and prolonged drought, many of the Powers’ neighbors gave up their homesteading and left. Frugal and subsistence-savvy (although they *were* early subscribers to the *New Yorker*),

Tom and Evada kept going with their sheep and cows and over the years were able to add adjacent homestead properties to their place, including more rangeland to the west and Gus Kibbee’s forested, meadowed uplands to the east. They named their expanded spread “the TeePee Ranch.” It must have been sad for the Powers to watch their chosen neck of the woods emptying of neighbors, especially so for someone as convivial as Tom, but they dug in and consolidated the ranch as the drought carried over into

the Depression years.

Gus Kibbee had served as one of Jefferson County’s first elected commissioners (given the distance from his place to Madras and the primitive roads between, county court duties must have been pretty light), and maybe his example inspired Tom Power (along with his own sense of civic duty) to run for a commissioner’s position in 1930, in the depths of the Depression when the main work of the county court was to keep the county from falling into bankruptcy

because of delinquent taxes. Working with fellow commissioners like Frank Stangland and John King and with Judge Riley Cook, he did his part in keeping our county solvent — barely — through those discouraging times.

In 1940, with Riley Cook’s retirement from the court, Tom ran for and was elected judge. He and Evada bought a house in Madras so that he could attend to court duties and still be on the ranch some of the time. Somehow, along the way he had become an enthusiastic advocate for *aviation* and hooked up with a local flyer who owned a small plane and ferried Tom to meetings and conferences all around the Northwest, to the point that he became known as “the flying judge.” One aerial junket in particular, to a county government convention in Eastern Montana, involving many fuel stops going and coming, was widely noted.

Power’s enthusiasm for airplanes and flying must have helped him cope, as county executive, with the arrival in 1942-43 of hundreds of Army Air Corps personnel and Morris-Knudsen engineers to build on the site of the

When a young, single woman, Evada Richards, turned up about this time, first visiting homesteading relatives and then filing on a place of her own on the road to Ashwood, Tom took immediate matrimonial notice — as did most of the other young bachelors thereabouts

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embryonic Madras airfield a full-scale Air Corps flight training center. Madras, with a population of 412, tripled in size in a few months with military and construction people filling hotels, boarding houses, and private homes.

For the county and its rudimentary government, the airbase challenge had more to do with roads and bridges, military requisitions of county property (notably Round Butte, one side of which was carved out to supply cinders and gravel for runways), and so on. It must have been one bureaucratic headache after another for the county court, but the airbase got built and then enlarged and the military personnel found housing on base and in apartments in town and squadrons of 2nd Air Force B-17 bombers and then 4th Air Force P-39 fighter planes and their young crews came, trained, and left to do aerial battle in Europe and the Pacific. (See Jarold Ramsey, "Airacobra: In Memoriam 2nd Lt. Robert Cranston," in *Words Marked by a Place: Local Histories in Central Oregon*, Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2018, pp. 167-189.)

Given Power's sociability and sense of community, it's easy to understand how, in 1943, with the

airbase filling up with GIs, he joined up with the wife of the founding commanding officer of the base, Mrs. Joseph Arnold, to create a USO center in the old Madras Community Center on Sixth Street. She was an attractive young woman with theatrical interests, and together they enlisted enthusiastic city and county support. By summer 1944, when Mrs. Arnold and her husband left for Walla Walla (he became CO of the big regional airbase there), the Madras center had become by far the biggest and most popular USO in Central Oregon, drawing hundreds of GIs every weekend from Redmond, Bend, Prineville, and even Camp Abbot (now Sunriver). Featuring traveling Army-sponsored vaudeville and musical acts, bands, and dancing with well-chaperoned local girls, it was a source of entertainment locally unrivaled until the emergence of the Les Schwab Amphitheater half a century later. (See Jane Ahern's article on the life and times of the Madras USO in THE AGATE, Spring 2015.)

Meanwhile, of course, along with the military imperatives of the war years, the county's government had to deal with the usual tasks of running county affairs — assessing and collecting

taxes, formulating budgets, hiring and firing staff, and keeping up the roads across an area as big as some states. Ashwood native Tom McDonald fondly recalls a wartime encounter he and his father had with Judge Power on the old Ashwood Road. Tom was about 12 at the time. Of course, Mr. McDonald and the Judge pulled over to visit. Noticing young Tom, the Judge asked if he could drive. Mr. McDonald replied, "Yes, of course, on the ranch — but he doesn't have a license yet." The Judge replied, "Well, that wouldn't matter out here." Turning to young Tom, he said, "The county road-grader is working on the road and every day when he parks the grader and quits, he has to walk all the way back to the pickup to go home. How'd you like a job driving the county pickup so as to keep up with him? He has two or three more days of work on the road, and the county would pay you five dollars a day." So — never mind the rules and restrictions that might have pertained even then — young Tom got his first job. Thinking of it on the spot and making the offer was altogether characteristic of Tom Power, who loved kids but never had any of his own.

By the end of the war in August 1945, work on the



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much-delayed North Unit Irrigation project was accelerating and its completion in 1946-48 brought new frontiers to the county government. With the arrival of hundreds of new farming families and the need for new and better roads, canals and ditches to be built across county lands and a drastic revaluation of properties here, it must have been challenging for Judge Power and the commissioners and the county workforce. The North Unit project introduced another large and potentially unwieldy federal presence to the county, succeeding the U.S. Army Air Corps. Now it was the Federal Bureau of Reclamation, official sponsor of the project, and a new source of regulatory complications for the local government.

The scope of the monumental changes that the county had to navigate between 1940, when Power became judge, and 1952, when he retired, can be appreciated by considering these statistics:

County population

1940-1,942 (Madras – 412)
1950 – 5,536 (Madras – 1,258)

County budget

1940 — \$51,058
1952 — \$134, 858
2022 — \$77,516,520

It must have been quite a ride for “the flying judge” and his colleagues — but they did their jobs, and prevailed.

Previous to this, in 1944, the Powers had decided to sell the TeePee Ranch, and it was bought by A.S. and Wilma Ramsey for summer range for their cattle, and as a family retreat. In the 1950s, the Powers helped to establish the Jefferson County Pioneer Association (a predecessor of today’s historical society), and Evada became a prolific local historian, often drawing on her husband’s endless fund of colorful stories about local events and characters. Many of her articles appeared in the

Redmond *Spokesman*, and her long essay on the history of the Hay Creek area is a landmark in *Jefferson County Reminiscences*. In their last years, the Powers lived in Prineville, where they owned an apartment complex. Tom passed away in 1959, and Evada in 1969. They are buried at Mountain View Cemetery in Madras.

In her “Hay Creek” essay in *Jefferson County Reminiscences*, Evada Power quotes her husband’s reflections on their lives and times on the TeePee Ranch from early homesteading days into the postwar era:

“The place fulfilled a city-dweller’s dream of independence. It was situated at the foot of the Ochoco Mountains with a western view of the Cascades, with sometimes thirteen snow-covered peaks visible ... There was grass and water in abundance, with fairly level fields just waiting for the plow. I became, indeed, lord of all I

surveyed. Although it wasn’t as easy as it sounds, I have never regretted my decision [to homestead]. I have found health, the one thing I lacked when I lived in a crowded city. I have found peace of mind and happiness and a modicum of this world’s goods in Central Oregon.” (*Jefferson County Reminiscences*, p. 38)

Like many of his generation, Tom Power’s gratitude for what this “new-found” country gave him in opportunities for a good life, he amply repaid as a good neighbor and dedicated public servant. A local hero for sure, and not to be forgotten.



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Tom and Evada Power at the TP ranch with relatives, 1944

THE GREAT BLIZZARD OF 1884 AND 'THE BALLAD OF WHISTLING SMITH'

By Jarold Ramsey

Growing up on our home place at the head of John Brown Canyon on Agency Plains, one of my favorite playing grounds was around a massive free-stone fireplace and chimney north of our house. It stood, its hearth facing the canyon, very close to the rimrock edge, only 12 or 15 feet back, and I puzzled over how what must have been a very small cabin could have needed such an impressive fireplace. The cabin itself was long gone — nobody remembered it — and maybe, I conjectured, it burned down because the fireplace was too big? But there it stood, mysteriously, and serving as the site of numerous wiener-roasts, and as the setting for many “pioneer” play-acting episodes starring me and my chums.

Its rimrock components were so monumental, and so carefully fitted together, that I regularly climbed high up on its sloping sides without damaging either it or myself. Regrettably, it somehow collapsed sometime in the early 1960s, when I was away at college — possibly a minor earthquake shook it down? It may well have been part of the first frame dwelling on Agency Plains.

Who built it, and lived here? My father said it was probably the line-shack of “Whistling” Smith, a sheepherder who tended flocks all over the plains in the 1880s, and froze to death down in our canyon during a blizzard, trying to save his sheep. So, on my boyhood forays down into the upper reaches of the canyon, I fantasized a little apprehensively about Whistling Smith and his sad demise, sometimes imagining that I could hear him whistling, no doubt conflating him and the host of a popular radio mystery program, “The Whistler,” and his eerie theme-music whistling to open the show.

I learned more from our dear neighbor and



John Brown Canyon



Whistling Smith's fireplace, with author at age 6.

friend, John Campbell, who lived further down in the canyon. According to John, poor Smith was employed as a herder by a very early rancher in these parts, Alonzo Boyce, who in the 1880s had established his sheep headquarters in the northwest corner of The Basin, which eventually became Madras — apparently located about where Madras Auto Parts stands today, between Fourth and Fifth streets on Northwest A Street. Boyce and his brother/partner had about 2,500 sheep on and around Agency Plains in 1884, without supplementary feed for them, and in the blizzard that winter, with chest-high snow and sub-zero temperatures, they lost more than 2,000 head. Somehow Boyce survived this loss, took

up a new, bigger homestead in the hills south of Madras (Boyce Corrals out on the Crooked River National Grassland marks the place today), and after the creation of Jefferson County, he became the first elected Jefferson County judge (1916-1920).

One of John Campbell's many contributions to the preservation of local history was his chapter on “Vanora” in *Jefferson County Reminiscences* (Portland: Binford and Mort, 1957, 1998). In that essay, along with telling the story of John Brown, the first Black homesteader in Central Oregon (1881), Campbell outlines the unhappy tale of Whistling Smith's demise in the blizzard of '84, with the discovery of his body after the snow melted, the official identification of it by his nearest neighbor, John Brown, and the accidental disturbing and eventual loss of the remains. Where he came from, whether he had family somewhere, remains unknown.

Poor Whistling Smith, I used to think, listening for his whistle at the head of the cabin — nothing left of him up here but his fireplace and some words in the form of a rudimentary story about his last days as a faithful sheepherder. Many years later, it occurred to me that at least I could try to make his story into a *ballad*, and maybe give it some durable imaginative shape and currency. So here goes. (No doubt there are other ballad-worthy tales and yarns embedded in our county's oral history?)

Riders in 1898
at the ranch of
Smith's boss,
Alonzo Boyce.

Campbell family
photo



“The Ballad of Whistling Smith” - By Jarold Ramsey

—in memory of John L. Campbell, who saved the story

*Whistling Smith, oh Whistling Smith,
can you hear him whistling in the snow
way down, way down in John Brown Canyon,
and the air at forty below?*

*East of the mountains, out on the range,
you hear tales of the Blizzard of Eighty Four--
four days and nights of heavy snow
and then Jack Frost went on a tear*

*and dropped the mercury to forty below
and the snow was up to your chest!*

*Whistling Smith was Boyce's man
and for herding sheep he was the best.*

*At the head of a canyon, he had a shack
with a rimrock fireplace quite amazing
while it stood, where he ate and slept
when not with his sheep at their grazing.*

*A quiet man, but he was always whistling,
they say, both day and night,*

*and the flocks in his care were calm and easy
hearing him, out of sight.*

*No one remembers the tunes he whistled.
But you're welcome to guess, if you like:
“Yankee Doodle,” and “Shenandoah,”
and “Dixie,” and “Sweet Betsy from Pike”?*

*Late in the day the blizzard began
with his sheep in the canyon, he tried
to hike down for a look, but the going was tough,
so he came home and went inside.*

*The next day at noon, with the snow still falling,
for his boss he left a short screed —
“Am heading down to check on the critters.
Will stay at Brown's if I need.”*

*So he started down, and whistled as he struggled,
breasting the snow for a mile
or more, finding no trace of the sheep,
until he stopped for a while*

*under a sheltering juniper tree
to ease his pounding heart,
and find what little warmth he could
before the day turned to dark.*

*When the snow had finally melted away
in early March, they found
him there, and his mortal remains were attested
by his friend and neighbor John Brown.*

*The sheep had mostly died, and their wool
you could see it for years in clumps.
His bones were buried in a canyonside field
Until a homesteader plowed them up.*

*Whistling Smith, oh Whistling Smith,
can you hear him whistling in the snow
way down, way down in John Brown Canyon
and the air at forty below?*

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PICTURE THIS: HISTORY PUB RETURNS

By Holly M. Gill

A large, enthusiastic crowd turned out Feb. 9 for the return of the Jefferson County Historical Society's popular History Pub series, which delves into various aspects of area history. Started a decade ago – in early spring 2013 – the event had been on a three-year hiatus due to the pandemic. The society hopes to build on the success of the first event with another History Pub in the fall.

This year's free event – "Picture This" – showcased photos and objects from the JCHS collection, which is currently in storage, as we work to raise funds for a permanent home for the collection. Unlike previous events, this one featured seven presenters – all JCHS members – who dove into topics ranging from farm irrigation to early steam locomotives to a historic graveyard. The event was held at Mecca Grade Estate Malt malt house, located on the historic Klann/Luelling farm, about 10 miles north of Madras.

"Our community has a very rich history that deserves to be preserved and shared," said JCHS board member Margee O'Brien, who came up with the theme for the event. "The success of the History Pub illustrates the interest and need for a museum in Jefferson County."

Jerry Ramsey, who retired from the JCHS Board last year but remains a treasured Historical Society member, discussed the "treasures that are paper" – important historical documents in the society's collection, including the personal papers of Madras' first mayor, Howard Turner; the diary of Ethel Larkin, who, with her husband Gaylord, filed for a homestead in 1913; records from Hay Creek Ranch; and a ledger from the USO community center that served the military men at the Madras airbase during World War II.

Other informative topics included the evolution of irrigation in the North Unit Irrigation District by Scott Samsel; windmill-powered electrical systems by Dave Campbell; water-powered windmills by Gregg Macy; and steam locomotives

by John Campbell.

Lynn Schmaltz, great-granddaughter of homesteaders Seth and Cora Luelling, discussed Mecca Grade, a single-lane road which winds down to the Deschutes River from the north end of Agency Plains. Schmaltz lives on the private road, which was used by settlers until 1939, but is now gated and occasionally opened for a JCHS tour.

Cora Luelling photographed the homestead – now owned and farmed by her great-grandson Brad Klann, and his son, Seth – as well as Mecca Grade, after which the Klanns named their malting operation.

About 124 people are buried in the private Milo Gard Cemetery, established in 1903 on an acre donated by homesteader Milo Gard, according to Marla Rae Vibbert, who gave an entertaining presentation on the many homesteaders and important local figures buried there. Located on Northwest Fir Lane, west of Northwest Columbia Drive, the cemetery was the final resting place of 57 pioneers, including her great-great grandfather, Jens Christensen, who was buried there in 1904.

In addition to hosting the History Pub, the Historical Society also holds an annual dinner and fundraiser – this year set for Saturday, April 15, at the Jefferson County Community Center, with historian Steve Lent as speaker.

Other activities include the society's popular Trivia Nights, which are typically held on the second Saturday of each month. Later in the year, JCHS will hold its seventh annual old-fashioned Threshing Bee, set for Saturday, Sept. 9, at a new location – the Casads' farm on Northwest Elm Lane – and conduct



Scottie Samsel and helpers demonstrating irrigation "siphons"

its annual meeting with an ice cream social in the fall. The dates, times and locations of upcoming events can be found under the "Events" tab on our website – jeffcohistorical.org – as they are scheduled.



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PLANS FOR THE NEW MUSEUM— AND WHY LOCAL HISTORY MATTERS

By Tom Manning

(Editor's note: when Tom Manning, JCHS board member and chairman of the Museum Committee, was invited recently to talk to the Rotary Club, he rose to the occasion with an eloquent statement not only on the society's current planning for a new museum, but also on the importance of preserving and understanding our local history — all of it — and why supporting a new museum now ought to be a communitywide obligation.)

My grandparents immigrated from Ireland, settling on Bridge Creek near its mouth on the John Day River in the early 1900s. Grandpa and my dad worked in the mine at Horseheaven during the Great Depression before moving to Redmond in 1938.

I grew up hearing the names of many of the people and places that echo in Jefferson County history while sitting around the dining room table. After completing my formal education, I returned to Jefferson County as a physician with the Indian Health Service in 1983, living in Warm Springs initially, then moving to Madras in 1985. I retired from the Indian Health Service in 2010. Shortly thereafter, Jerry Ramsey corralled me into the Historical Society and as they say, "The rest is history."

The Jefferson County Museum journey has been a long and winding road. We've had a few breakdowns and snagged a few gateposts along the way. We once had a collection of artifacts in the top floor of the old, old (not a typo) county courthouse — Madras City Hall — which has its own story in Jefferson County lore. While containing many items old and historic, there were definite challenges in presenting our story to the public. The building itself would need significant revision and extensive restoration to safely serve visitors in any capacity as a

museum.

There were dreams of a new facility, a Central Oregon Heritage Center, much more expansive and inclusive, a real destination attraction. But expensive begets expensive

the collection was gathered up and stored with anticipation of more accessible accommodations, in yet another local building with history of its own, the old Madras High School-Madras Junior High-Westside-now

Bridges building. The plan was for the museum to be part of a "Westside Community Center." Once again, for a variety of reasons, it was not to be, which was fortunate in a way as the school district found it necessary to reclaim the building to address continued growth in our schools and community.

But that put our itinerant collection on the road once again. It has now been more than 10 years since the public has been able to lay eyes on those things connecting us with our past.

In the meantime, we have been hard

at work keeping the story

alive. While I use the word "we" loosely, I do need to acknowledge a few of the heavy lifters in this effort:

and those dreams collided headlong into the economic realities of the Great Recession.

With those chapters drawn to a close,



Tom Manning, JCHS board member and Museum Committee chair.

The Agate, initially published from 2007 to 2011 by Beth Crow, was, in 2014, resuscitated and now thrives primarily through the efforts of Jerry Ramsey, Jane Ahern and the Madras Pioneer. Continuing to bring the past into the present twice yearly, it was recognized by the Oregon Heritage Commission in 2017 with their Excellence Award for efforts in preserving the histories of the region.

History Trunk: Margee O'Brien, Dave Campbell, with their trunk full of artifacts, have traveled the county in Dave's Model T, demonstrating to younger generations and reminding senior generations what it was like back then.

Threshing Bee: Born of the

imagination, persistence and toil of Dave and John Campbell and held annually, the threshing bee brings to life the dryland farming days of early Jefferson County.

Public Presentations, and lately our History Pub series, taking deeper looks at people and places. Examples include:

- Ron Ochs: His personal story, which eventually led to the present-day Air Show of the Cascades.
- When the Water Came: Documenting the arrival of irrigation to the North Unit with audio capturing the first sounds of water flowing down Millard Eakin's furrows.
- Tony Dorsch video: Walt McCain and Priday Holmes' cattle drive the way it was once done with the herd crossing the High

Bridge and moving on to summer range in the shadows of the Three Sisters.

Never giving up on an actual museum, the Jefferson County Historical Society has taken on a renewed effort in this past year to create that space to better illustrate and tell our story. But it takes money to make money. To that end, we are currently in active pursuit of grant funds that will allow us to enhance those plans, hire the right people to help us with further financial development, and start on actual plans for a building that will let us rearticulate the history of Jefferson County.

In applying for a Central Oregon Future Funds grant earlier this year, we were asked to identify sources of community

support backing us in our endeavor. The results to date have been most gratifying, with letters of support from the Jefferson County Commission, including commitment for annual funding; Jefferson County Fair Board, with potential siting for the facility; the city of Madras; the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce; the Jefferson County Library; The Bean Foundation; and the Oregon Historical Society.

Let me take a little side trip here.

Mnemosyne was the Greek goddess of memory and time. She was the creator of language and words. Her daughters were the Muses, the inspiration of literature, science, and the arts.

The word museum describes a temple or shrine of the Muses, a place of study and reflection on

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these disciplines.

Also from ancient Greek, historia (his-TO-REE-a) refers to knowledge acquired by investigation. A further refinement of that word is “story”; telling a story doesn’t always mean telling a fib or a fiction, it also means an accounting.

So, there you have it — a museum of history. That collection of knowledge, an accounting of those memories of a place through time, including those that lived there and why and how and what they did.

Before there was ever Jefferson County or Crook or Wasco County or the Oregon Territory or even the New World, before that there was history. We can see it from Three Fingered Jack to the breaks of the John Day to the basalt palisades overlooking Lake Billy Chinook. It’s in the petrified aspens on the Warm Springs grade identified by Mel Ashwill — that geologic pre-history of fire and fury and mud forming the land as we see it today.

There is history of indigenous life of which we know little. There are petroglyphs rescued from the Deschutes and Crooked River canyons prior to the completion of the Pelton Project. There are stories and traditions, like one related to me by the late Terry Courtney Jr.

While demonstrating dip net fishing one spring at Sherar’s Falls as part of a historical society tour, Terry told of learning from the elders to watch for the appearance of a certain yellow flower telling the people it was time for them to journey to the river to greet the returning salmon.

Our story starts at a different place. We were not here first, but we are here now. With that in mind, how do we illustrate and reflect the story of Jefferson County?

The known history of exploration and settlement in Central Oregon begins with Peter Skene Ogden, John C. Fremont, Henry Abbott, with fur trappers finding beaver the size of sheep.

Time then progresses to the early days of homesteading, ranching, dryland farming, timber harvesting from the slopes of Grizzly, the Ochocos and the Cascades to build the barns and houses of Hay Creek, The Muddy Company, and Cherry Creek Ranch along with houses, schools, stores, churches, saloons and brothels not only of Madras, Culver and Metolius, but also Ashwood, Donnybrook, Gateway, Geneva, Grandview, Grizzly, Lamonta, Mecca, Opal City, Vanora and Willowdale.

Some of these places rose organically from their location as a strategic crossroad, or because of surrounding ranches and resources, others were platted out in detail with anticipation of coming railroads and water.

With the Dust Bowl and the Depression, many of these places faded from the map, now barely hanging on in memory, marked only by a scattering of stone foundations, a standing chimney, perhaps a cemetery, or the occasional rusting remains of an old truck or grain drill.

As
20th

the

Our blessing is that we have many of the materials and resources to create a great museum for Jefferson County. The challenge is that some of those resources are in our wallets.

century progressed, change. Josef Stalin sent his man to Hay Creek Ranch in the late 1920s, to purchase the best of its breeding stock from what was considered one of the finest herds of Rambouillet sheep in the world. Sitting on a chair in the middle of the corral, the commissar inspected each sheep brought forward, giving it a “da” or “nyet.” Stalin had hoped to replicate Hay Creek’s success on collectives in the USSR. As it turned out at the time, the Russian

people were starving, and the sheep were eaten long before any breeding program could be developed. His only success was in wiping out the best both here and in Russia.

On the upside, the promise of water was ultimately delivered upon, with significant contribution by WWII conscientious objectors providing alternative service in the construction of dams and canals. New crops, new farmers, new ideas, new farm laborers expanding the cultural multiplicity of the region to include a Latino influence that exists as a vital part of who we are today.

The story continues, from dry land wheat to Ladino clover, from clover to potatoes, from potatoes to mint, mint to garlic, to grass seed, to sugar beets, to carrot seed, to coriander ...

There are so many more chapters to our story. I’ve skimmed some, left others out completely. Mining at Horseheaven, and Pat’s Cabin relate to my family history. The Reservation, timber, Camp Sherman, the Great Courthouse Raid, WWII and the Airbase, Rex Barber, Jacob DeShazer, the Pelton Project, Rancho Rajneesh.

So what exactly do we have envisioned? What we’re looking at is a \$1.5 million project for a 5,000-square-foot building located at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds adjacent to the Farrell homestead house, country schoolhouse, and vintage farm implement collection.

We want it to look like Jefferson County not only in its architecture, but also in its atmosphere of informality and neighborliness. We want it to be an inviting place to learn the stories, and to tell the stories.

We have an extensive collection of recorded histories from past generations on reel to reel, cassette, and on CDs originally recorded by Harold Moore and his students, collectively titled “The Voices of Experience.” These need to be updated and made available again. We have an abundance of photographic history needing to be restored and exhibited.

A common perception of a museum is that it is a collection of old things. While old things are helpful in illustrating and demonstrating how things were, it is the stories that are the most critical in bringing the past to life.

In closing, as the pastor told his flock, “Life presents us all with blessings and challenges.”

Our blessing is that we have many of the materials and resources to create a great museum for Jefferson County. The challenge is that some of those resources are in our wallet.

— CAMPBELL'S CORNER —

Threshing Bee 2023

By Jennie Campbell Smith

It has been a bit of a scramble to find a new location to hold the JCHS Threshing Bee. This is the 7th year the historical society has held the Threshing Bee. Previously, the location has been at the Historical Pioneer Homestead House complex located at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds. The fields west of the homestead had rock removed, weeds eradicated and old pieces of concrete hauled off from when it was a ballfield. A section was planted in wheat each spring, allowing the other sections to be fallow. The heritage wheat was harvested in August for the Threshing Bee. The organization of the Threshing Bee and work has been done by JCHS Board member David Campbell and his band of merry volunteers.

Finding an alternative location has been a challenge. The ideal would be at least 3 acres of dryland, close to town for the convenience of people who like to attend and witness farming as it “used to be back in the day.” Casad Family Farms, a local organic farm, has been wonderful to offer us a location. Many of the details are yet to be determined but what we know is that the heritage Sonora wheat seed from last year's crop will be planted this spring. The goal is to plant at least 10 pounds to the acre, depending on acreage, for a successful dryland crop.

September 9, 2023 will be the day the wheat is cut, bound and threshed. As before, it will be harvested with a team of Mike McIntosh's draft horses pulling a vintage binder. The wheat bundles are then loaded onto a Model T pickup and moved to the location of the old thresher where the wheat is threshed. The process is done with a team of willing volunteers and old-time equipment.

Some of the folks from the #248 Early Day Gas Engine & Tractor Association will be there with their old engine displays. Each year they have been a part of the Threshing Bee with the group bringing more and more displays. There may also be potatoes to harvest which might be dug up with a horse-pulled potato digger.

Set-up day is September 8th, the horse drawn binder and threshing will start early morning on September 9th. Takedown and head home on the 10th. Hopefully, there will be dry camping available but no campfires. There is a lot still in the planning stages so, as the old saying goes, “stay tuned.” Updates will be posted on the JCHS website, Facebook and articles in the *Madras Pioneer*.

The location is Casad Family Farms, 2595 NW Elm Lane, Madras, Oregon.



Reaper and team at 2022 Bee at Fairgrounds



Cate Casad at Casad Family Farms, site of 2023 Bee

BOOK *PREVIEW & REVIEW*

Lack of space in this issue prevents offering full reviews of these new and forthcoming publications on Central Oregon, but because they may be of interest to AGATE readers, we want to “pre-view” them briefly here.

STEVE LENT, EDITOR, *CROOK COUNTY CHRONICLES*

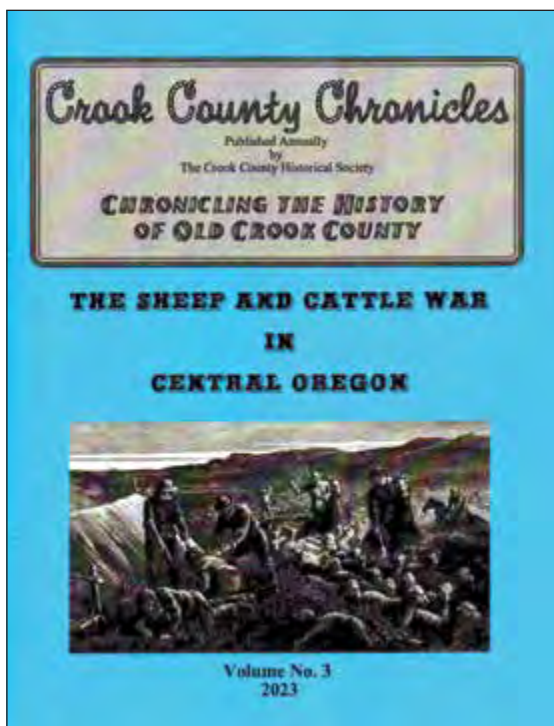
(PRINEVILLE: CROOK COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 2023)

The focus of this volume of the *Chronicles* is on the “Sheepshooters’ War” in old Crook County (including what became Jefferson County), as waged intermittently from the 1890s until about 1904 against sheep owners

by cattle-ranchers, who in the days before federal grazing controls believed (with some cause) that herds of sheep were devouring the then-open ranges of Central Oregon, not just for a season but permanently. (Allowed to over-graze, sheep can crop bunchgrass and other wild forage so close to the roots as to stunt or even kill the plants.) From a wide range of sources, Lent has compiled a very readable anthology of commentary on the one-sided “war” in which the main casualties were whole flocks of sheep slaughtered on the range as their herders looked on helplessly, including most of one flock grazing east of Ashwood, owned by Jefferson County sheepmen Morrow and Keenan. There were also several homicides related to the conflict. Finally, in 1904 the newly-established U.S. Forest Service established regulations governing livestock grazing on open range — but the fact remains in our region’s history that no “sheepshooters” were ever convicted or even brought to trial for their unlawful actions.

raiding the Warm Springs Indian Reservation. These aggressions led to a horrific (and still little known) campaign by U.S. troops aimed quite openly at exterminating the Paiute aggressors and their families. It was during the “Snake War” that some Paiutes were forcibly resettled on the Warm Springs Reservation, amongst their erstwhile enemies the Wascos and Warm Springs tribes. In 1872, a large number of Paiutes were settled on a newly created “Malheur Reservation.” Under a capable and fair-minded superintendent, peace prevailed, and with federal support the Paiutes thrived for a time—until a thoroughly crooked superintendent, William Rinehart, took charge of the reservation, and proceeded to cheat the people out of their government allowances.

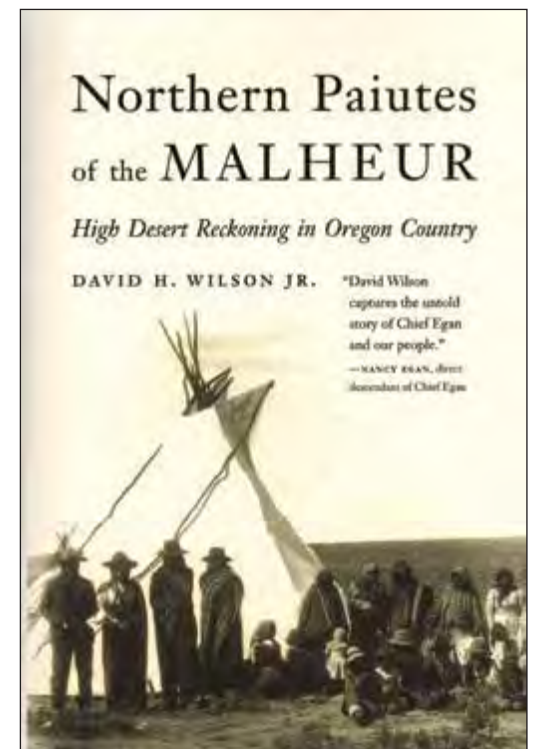
When the “Bannock War” broke out in Eastern Oregon, Rinehart even blamed the Paiutes for helping to instigate the conflict, and sought through government channels to discredit the Paiutes’ champion, Sarah Winnemucca



DAVID H. WILSON JR., *NORTHERN PAIUTES OF THE MALHEUR: HIGH DESERT RECKONING IN OREGON COUNTRY*

(LINCOLN: UNIVERSITY OF
NEBRASKA PRESS, 2022)

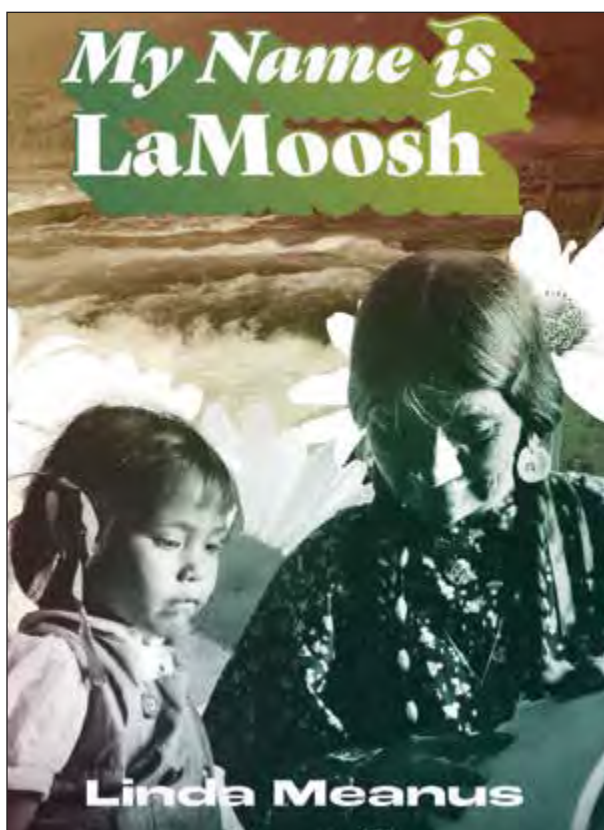
A generation before the Sheepshooters conflict (which didn’t involve Central Oregon’s Native populations), in the late 1860s, Northern Paiute bands were defending their homelands by harassing settlers across Central and southeastern Oregon, and repeatedly



(daughter of the Nevada Paiute leader Winnemucca), which led to her expulsion from the Malheur Reservation. In 1878, despite its success up to that point, the Malheur Reservation was officially terminated, leaving the Paiute community there without a reservation land-base, lacking in government support, and destitute. Unlike their relocated kin at Warm Springs, they were to endure nearly a century of poverty and neglect around Burns and elsewhere. Wilson's book presents, for the first time, something like the full appalling story of the Northern Paiutes' prolonged mistreatment by federal and state officials, and it ought to be read by everybody who wants to get at Oregon history as it really happened, the nefarious and scandalous episodes as well as the honorable ones.

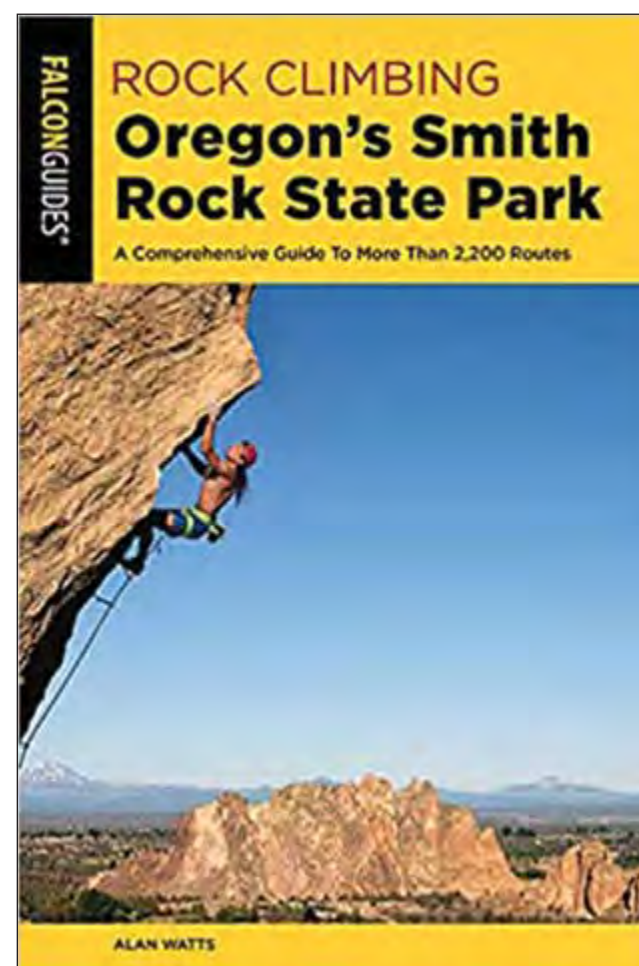
LINDA MEANUS,
MY NAME IS LAMOOSH
(CORVALLIS: OREGON STATE
UNIVERSITY PRESS, IN
COLLABORATION WITH
CONFLUENCE, 2023)

Linda Meanus, a grand-daughter of the celebrated Celilo chief Tommy Thompson and his wife Flora, has written for young readers an entertaining and illuminating account of her life as a modern Northwest Indian committed to continuing and living the traditional ways and values of her people into the twenty-first century, and educating "the rest of us" about the importance of that commitment. Hats off to the Columbia River stewardship alliance "Confluence" and Oregon State Press for publishing it.



ALAN WATTS,
*ROCK CLIMBING
OREGON'S SMITH
ROCK STATE PARK: A
COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE ,
3RD EDITION*
(LANHAM, MD.: FALCON GUIDES,/
ROWMAN AND LITTLEFIELD,
PUBLICATION AUGUST 1, 2023)

THE AGATE "previewed" Alan Watts's work on this third edition of his monumental Smith Rock climbing guide in Spring 2021. The book was first published in 1992; the 2nd edition appeared in 2010, and the 3rd edition will be published in August 2023. Watts, a native of Madras, notes that the latest edition will include details on over 800 new climbing routes at Smith, for a total of 2371! Even if rock-climbing is not your game, this is certain to be a fascinating and informative book, loaded with photographs and maps, about a unique Central Oregon place that draws rock-climbers from all over the world. It's one to have on hand to show your out-of-town visitors, and to take along when you visit Smith Rock State Park.



The North Unit Irrigation District is located in the Deschutes River Basin and supplies irrigation water to nearly 59,000 acres of farmland in Jefferson County.



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Madras circa 1930s

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Be a part of something amazing for local history and our community! Join the JCHS!



MUHS Class of 1928



Our biggest goal for 2023? Firm up plans and funding for a new museum at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds. It's time we build our own museum, and we're determined to make it happen. We're also planning our biggest membership drive of the century. The goal: double our membership!

A taste of what's up in 2023: Annual Spring Dinner and Fundraiser April 15 • Monthly "Team Trivia Nights" • Interesting and fun History Pubs • Tours of the Homestead House during the fair • September Threshing Bee • Fall Banquet

For information on joining the Jefferson County Historical Society, see page 32, or contact a board member, whose names and numbers are listed on page 2.

A SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY ON AND AROUND JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORY

In keeping with THE AGATE'S practice, as a journal of local history, of providing documentation with its articles, we've prepared the following selective bibliography of writings about Jefferson County—probably the first of its kind. Along with recent signs of growth and new vitality in the historical societies and museums of Central Oregon, a sure indication of strong interest in our region's history is the current surge of new books on the subject, and we've included most of them on our list.

Our hope is that, for AGATE readers who want to delve into some local historical topic, the following compilation of resources will be helpful at the start. No doubt we've inadvertently left out books and articles that should be included here—please let us know if you spot such omissions.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Madras *Pioneer* (1904-) bound volumes by year in *Pioneer* office, for use on site by permission

Bend *Bulletin*—on-line archives

THE AGATE— all issues 2013- archived on JCHS website: www.jeffcohistorical.org

Jefferson County Historical Society—archives and photo collection (currently in storage)

Jefferson County Official Records—Google “Jefferson County Records Inventory,” or go to <https://sos.oregon.gov/archives/records/county>

Oregon Encyclopedia (online: incomplete coverage of Central Oregon so far, but progress is being made)

Ellen Bishop, *In Search of Ancient Oregon* (Portland: Timber Press, 2003)—excellent introduction to the geological history of Oregon, with special emphasis on Central Oregon



Map of Jefferson County 1915

GENERAL HISTORIES OF CENTRAL OREGON (including coverage of Jefferson County)

Phil Brogan, *East of the Cascades* (Portland: Binford and Mort, 1964)—excellent treatment of the region's history, but outdated for events and developments here after 1963)

Steve Lent, *Place Names of Central Oregon, Vol. 2, Jefferson County* (Bend: Maverick Publications, 2008) --invaluable resource, and its historical coverage carries on from where Brogan leaves off. See also Vol. 1. Crook County, and Vol. 3, Deschutes County

Many Hands, *Jefferson County Reminiscences* (Portland: Binford and Mort, 1957, 1999)—indispensable accounts of Jefferson County communities written by members of early families.

History of Jefferson County, Oregon, 1914-1983 (Madras, Jefferson County Historical Society, 1984)-- primarily a “families” history, with notable gaps and omissions, but it does cover families and local history after the coming of irrigation in 1946, thus supplementing *Reminiscences*, and it offers extensive family photos

Thomas R. Cox, *The Other Oregon: People, Environment, and History East of the Cascades* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2019) – The book suffers from its attempt to identify all of eastern Oregon, from the Cascades to the Snake River, as somehow one self-conscious entity— but it's worth consulting.

SELECTIVE, TOPICAL ACCOUNTS OF LOCAL HISTORY; MEMOIRS ETC.

Jarold Ramsey, *New Era: Reflections on the Human*

and *Natural History of Central Oregon* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2003)

_____, *Words Marked by a Place: Local Histories in Central Oregon* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2017)

_____, "Some 'What Ifs' in Jefferson County History," THE AGATE, Fall 2017, pp. 8-11

Stan Pine, *Hiking Historical Jefferson County Oregon* (Bend: Maverick Publications, 2019)

_____, *Historic Drives through Scenic Jefferson County, Oregon* (Bend: Maverick Publications, 2022)

Guy Swanson, *Finding Hope: The True Story of Hope Nance Growing Up in the Homestead Community of Grandview, Oregon* (Bend: Maverick Publications, 2022)

C.S. Luelling, "Saga of the Sagebrush Country," photocopied memoir, copies in county library and JCHS

LIBRARY

Gilma Endicott Greenhoot, *Rattlesnake Homestead* (Springfield: Gilma Greenhoot, 1988)

Bess Stangland Raber, *Some Bright Morning* (Bend: Maverick Publications, 1983)

Ethel Klann Cornwell, *Rimrocks and Water Barrels* (Monona, WI: Lakeside Press, 1979)

Cecil C. Moore, *Random Recollections* (Madras: Stone Mt. Enterprises, 1992)—selected *Pioneer* articles on Madras and local history 1900-'1930, by a perceptive local historian

Dorothy Moore Nelson, *Remembering* (Madras: Stone Mt. Enterprises, 1989)—historical coverage parallel to *Random Recollections*, by Cecil Moore's younger sister)

EARLY EXPLORATIONS AND TRAVEL THROUGH JEFFERSON COUNTY AND CENTRAL OREGON

Peter Skene Ogden, *Snake Country Journals 1824-*

5 and 1825-6, ed. E.E. Rich (London, 1950), and *Snake Country Journals 1826-7*, ed. R.E. Davies (London, 1961)—Ogden made winter treks through this country in quest of beavers for the Hudson's Bay Company, and was the first recorded explorer of the country.

Nathaniel Wyeth, *The Journals of Capt. Nathaniel Wyeth* (Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1969)—Wyeth came out from Massachusetts twice in the 1830s attempting to establish an American fur-trading competitor to the Hudson's Bay Company. In winter, he followed the Deschutes River south to beyond modern Sunriver.

John Fremont, *Report of the Exploratory Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842 and to Oregon and North Carolina in the Years 1843-4* (Washington D.C.: War Department, 1847)

Henry Larcom Abbot, *Pacific Railroad Exploration Surveys, Vol. 6* (Washington, D.C.: Department of War, 1857). —Abbot's field journals have been edited by Robert Sawyer: *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 33, Nos. 1 and 2 (March 1932 and June 1932). See also Jarold Ramsey, "Henry Larcom Abbot in Central Oregon," in *Words Marked by a Place*

Brooks Geer Ragen, *The Meek Cutoff: Tracing the Oregon Trail's Lost Wagon Train of 1845* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013)—incomplete coverage of the Meek Party's route (especially for its tragic course through what is now Jefferson County); magnificent photos

James and Theona Hambleton, *Meek Cutoff of 1845* (Caldwell: Caxton Press, 2014)—thorough coverage of the complete ordeal of the Meek party through Central Oregon, and plausible new light on the illness that killed numerous members, especially in Jefferson County—they apparently sickened and, in some cases, died of using alkali salts they found en route after they ran out of baking soda.

WARM SPRINGS INDIAN RESERVATION; WASCO, WARM SPRINGS, NORTHERN PAIUTE

George Aguilar, *When the River Ran Wild!* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005)—tribal elder's history of his Chinookan legacy, from the

Columbia River to the Reservation

_____, "Memories of Wolford Canyon," THE AGATE, Spring 2016, pp.15-16

_____, *Shattered Civilization* (Amazon Books online, 2012)—a personal/mythological view of the Columbia River native peoples

Wilson Wewa, *Legends of the Northern Paiute* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2017)—superb presentations in English from Paiute oral traditions, including previously untranscribed stories set in Central Oregon, Smith Rock, for example

Jarold Ramsey, *Coyote was Going There: Indian Literatures of the Oregon Country* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977)—see Parts Three and Six for oral narratives from the Wasco Chinookan, Warm Springs Sahaptin, and Northern Paiute traditions.

A.B. Meacham, *Wigwam and Warpath, or The Royal Chief in Chains* (Boston: John P. Dale, 1875)—Meacham was Oregon's first real "Indian Superintendent," and visited the Warm Springs Reservation during his tenure.

Dell Hymes, *"In Vain I Tried to Tell You": Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982)—illuminating commentary on Chinook Indian narratives. Hymes worked extensively with Warm Springs and Wasco elders.

Cynthia Stowell, *Faces of a Reservation* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1987)—superb photographic and verbal portraits of Warm Springs people

Michael Baughman and Charlotte Hadela, *Warm Springs Millennium* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010)—sociological study of a neglected subject, local Native/Anglo relations, but marred by the authors' inconsistent objectivity. For a more balanced treatment, see the following:

Susan Matheny, "Paiutes: Plateau Hunters and Gatherers," Madras *Pioneer*, April 2, 1997; "Wasco: Traders and Storytellers," Madras *Pioneer*, April 9, 1997; "Warm Springs: People of the River," Madras *Pioneer*, April 16, 1997—excellent evocations of Native communities on the Warm Springs Reservation

LATINOS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jane Ahern, "The Origins of the Latino Community in Jefferson County," *THE AGATE*, Fall 2016, pp. 3-13

COMMUNITY HISTORIES

MADRAS:

Howard Turner, "Madras," in *Jefferson County Reminiscences*

Tony Ahern, "Madras," *Oregon Encyclopedia* (online)

Steve Lent, "Madras," in Arcadia pictorial series (Charleston: Arcadia Publications, 2012)

Cecil C. Moore and Dorothy More Nelson, see above under "Memoirs"

Craig Leslie, *Burning Fences* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2008)—personal recollections by a distinguished novelist who went to high school in Madras—see his essay on Madras.

CULVER:

Jarold Ramsey, "Culver," in *Oregon Encyclopedia*

ASHWOOD COUNTRY

Peter Boag, "Ashwood on Trout Creek: A Study in Continuity and Change in Central Oregon," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 91 (Summer 1990), pp. 116-153

"Autobiography of Jacob Kaser," ed. by A.L. Kaser, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, fall 1980, pp.281-315— Kaser emigrated from Switzerland and took up a ranch in 1900 along Cherry Creek in far-eastern Jefferson County along Cherry Creek.

HAY CREEK:

Evada Power, "Hay Creek," in *Jefferson County Reminiscences*

Jarold Ramsey, "Two Ranches," in *Words Marked by a Place*

GRIZZLY:

Martin G. Morissette, *Green Gold* (www.oregon-greengold.com, 2005)—early logging and mills in Central Oregon, centering on Grizzly

GRANDVIEW:

Guy Swanson, "A History of Grandview, Oregon," *THE AGATE*, Fall 2017, pp. 3-7

_____, *Finding Hope* (see above)

CAMP SHERMAN/METOLIUS RIVER:

Finding This Place: An Early History of Camp Sherman (Camp Sherman Historical Society DVD, 2015)

Harry Heising, Rob Foster, and Ruth Bruns, "Camp Sherman, Metolius River, and Grandview" in *Jefferson County Reminiscences*

RAILROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

Leon Speroff MD, *The Deschutes Railroad War* (Portland: Arnica Publishing, 2007)

Walter Grande, *The Northwest's Own Railway* (Portland: Grande Press, 1991)—on the SP&S and Oregon Trunk

Jarold Ramsey, "The Railroad Era and Its Legacy," in *Words Marked by a Place*

Dan Chamness, "The Dalles to Canyon City Wagon Road," *THE AGATE*, Spring 2017, pp. 9-13

Jarold Ramsey, "The Great Road Re-naming Episode, 1951-3," *THE AGATE* Fall 2021, pp. 18-22

Jane Ahern, "Ways into and out of Madras: A Twisty Tale," *THE AGATE*, Fall 2015, pp.12-16

Lawrence Neilson, *Pioneer Roads in Central Oregon* (Bend: Maverick Publications, 1985)

MILITARY

Keith and Donna Clark, "William McKay's Journal 1866-7," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 79 (1978), pp. 267-338—McKay, a half-blood physician, took an active part in the Paiute Wars of the 1870s.

Jarold Ramsey, "The County's First Surveyor Was an Army Flu Victim in WWI—or Was He?" *THE AGATE*, Fall 2020, pp. 12-15

_____, "Airacobra" in Memoriam Lt. Robert L. Cranston, 1924-1944," in *Words Marked by a Place*

_____, "Jefferson County in the Battle of Midway," *THE AGATE*, Fall 2017, p. 15

Jane Ahern, "The USO in Madras," *THE AGATE* Spring 2015, pp. 3-9

Tor Hanson, *Central Oregon Aviation*, in Arcadia "Images of American" series (Charlotte: Arcadia Publishing, 2021)

HOMESTEADING, EARLY RANCHING

Joseph N. Teal, "Adventures of a Buckaroo," in *Many Faces: An Anthology of Oregon Autobiography*, ed. by Stephen Dow Beckham (Vol. 2 of the Oregon Literature Series, Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1993), pp. 207-215

Entries in *Jefferson County Reminiscences*

See "homesteading memoirs" above

Jarold Ramsey, essays in *New Era* and *Words Marked by a Place*

Jane Ahern, "The Marginal Lands Program in Jefferson County, 1934-1938," in *THE AGATE*, Spring 2018, pp. 3-12

Jarold Ramsey, "The Mystery Homesteaders," in *Words Marked by a Place*,

IRRIGATION

Chris Horting-Jones and Kelsey Doncaster, *Sagebrush to Clover*, Vols. One and Two (Washington D.C.: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, 2013)—official history of the North Unit

THE AGATE: special issue on irrigation and origins and first 75 years of the North Unit Irrigation District, Fall 2019

Gail Clowers, "Just After the Water Came," THE AGATE, Fall 2021, pp. 9-17

Jefferson County Historical Society, *First Water*, documentary DVD, 2020—available from JCHS

Harold Eidemiller, "Irrigation of Jefferson County," *Jefferson County Reminiscences*

Jane Ahern, "A Second Wave of Pioneering Families," THE AGATE, Fall 2019 pp. 16-18

Victor Shawe, "Rye Hay Williams," short story originally published in *Saturday Evening Post* in 1919 by a prolific writer who was an early homesteader in Jefferson County—about the efforts of Williams, who spearheads an early irrigation project that prefigures (fictively) the North Unit Reprinted in THE AGATE, Fall 2020, pp. 3-11

LOGGING AND MILLS

See *Green Gold* above

MINING

Dan Chamness, "Ashwood Mining, 1898-1905, THE AGATE, Spring 2019, pp. 3-9; "Ashwood Mining, 1905-current," THE AGATE, Fall 2019, pp. 13-17

Tom Manning, "Horse Heaven Revisited," THE AGATE, Fall 2019, pp. 18-19

Jarold Ramsey, "The Birth of Jefferson County, Parts One and Two," *Words Marked by a Place*

Frances Fitzgerald, *Cities on a Hill* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987)—chapters on the rise and fall of the Rajneeshpuram

Mark and Jay Duplass, producers, *Wild, Wild Country*, six-part documentary on the Rajneeshpuram, available on DVD from Netflix

EDUCATION

Irene Helms, *School Days of Old Crook County* (Prineville: Prineville Print Shop, 1980)—richly-detailed inventory of schools and teachers in Crook County, which until 1914 included all of what became Jefferson County

Essie Maguire, "Letters from Trail Crossing," THE AGATE, Spring 2020, pp. 3-8—vivid chronicle of teaching in a one-room country school at Trail Crossing, 1914-1915

Margaret McBride Lehrman, "The *White Buffalo*: A School Paper for the Ages," THE AGATE, Fall 2019, pp. 3-13—in-depth history of the remarkable, nationally-recognized Madras High School newspaper, the *White Buffalo*, and the professional legacy of its long-time adviser, E. Howard Hillis, compiled and written by one of his Madras students, who went on to become an Emmy-winning journalist for NBC

JOURNALISM

Jane Ahern, "(Almost) Forgotten Newspapers of Jefferson County," THE AGATE, Spring 2019, 9-14

Jarold Ramsey, "Neighborhood News: An Appreciation," THE AGATE, Fall 2017, pp. 18-23

Margaret Lehrman, see above

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Alan Watts, *Climbers Guide to Smith Rock* (Evergreen, CO: Chockstone Press, 1992; new edition forthcoming)

Jarold Ramsey, "Casey at the Bat in Jefferson County," THE AGATE, Spring 2022, pp. 10-18—a history of local "town teams" over the years

THE ARTS

Jane Ahern, "Recording Our History in Oil and Watercolor: Jeanette Macy's Legacy," THE AGATE, Spring 2022, pp. 14-19

LOCAL FOOD CULTURE

Special issue of THE AGATE on local foodways, notable eateries, memorable feasts, and a gathering of cherished recipes from Anglo, Native American, and Latino families—THE AGATE, Spring 2021

See also "memoirs" above

CHILDHOOD AND CHILD-LORE

Jane Ahern, "A Local History of What Kids Did, Back When," THE AGATE, Spring 2020, pp. 9-12



1936 MUHS football team

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President's Message

Hello to all of you Agate readers, I thought I would take this time to let you know what the historical society has been up to. This last year has had a lot of ups and downs for us. We got the notice from the school district that we needed to move our antiquities yet again, as they are going to use the entire school building and needed to begin an extensive remodel. Fortunately for us, a very kind member of the society offered a us a nice space for temporary storage of our items and in September, we moved it to this space. The good news is this lit a fire under the board to start pursuing the building of a museum to give these items a permanent home. We began laying the groundwork for planning such a venture. We are in the very beginning stages of this process and will have much more to share very soon. We will be looking for all the support we can get to make this dream become a reality. Keep your eyes and ears open for the roll out of our plan to build

Other activities the historical society has been involved in began this fall with a monthly trivia night at Mecca Grade Estate. It started as a few teams playing a friendly game to over 100 people attending in February. This is a fundraiser for the museum. Watch for times in the Pioneer, as well as our Facebook page.

We had our first history pub in three years in February. It was titled "Picture This." We had guest speakers who presented their stories on different historical items, stories and historical events. These local historians did a fantastic job, and it was great event. We estimate that over 150 people came to see it. So, look for our newest history pub in the fall.

Our annual dinner will be April 15. Our guest speaker is Steve Lent. Steve is a well-known Central Oregon historian. He has written many books and writes a weekly column for the Pioneer. His topic will be "Colorful Characters of Central Oregon." You do not want to miss this. Reservations are required, so please call Elaine (541-475-2306) or myself (541-475-7488) for more information. (

I wish I had more to share at this time, but don't worry, you will be hearing and seeing us a lot more this year.

Thank you for reading The Agate,
LOTTIE HOLCOMB

President
Jefferson County Historical Society



JCHS President Lottie Holcomb

New JCHS Members since September 25, 2022 to March 14, 2023

Tony and Shannan Ahern	Jefferson County Farm	Dennis Miller
Nancey L. Butler	Bureau	Eric and Sallie Nigg
Lynn and Donna Corwin	Deane and Nancy Jolstead	Lynn Schmaltz
Marty and Sandy Dickman	Thomas Laird	Sabrina Stout
Teri Drew	Elizabeth Lorenzen	
Annette Hildebrand	John and Karen Macy	

Donations and Memorial Gifts to the Society September 25, 2022 to March 14, 2023:

Alpha Omicron Ch. #3115	George and Mary Hawes	Tom and Barbara Manning
Charles Cunningham	Judson and Barbara Hyatt	Kathie Olson
Paul Clowers	John and Karen Macy	Stan Pine
Gary Harris	Rich Madden	

THE AGATE

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 647, Madras, Oregon 97741

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MEMBERSHIP DUES 2023:

(Individual: \$25 Family: \$50 Patron: \$150 Benefactor: \$500)

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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